Studies in West Frisian Grammar

Linguistik Aktuell/Linguistics Today (LA)

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Volume 161

Studies in West Frisian Grammar. Selected papers by Germen J. de Haan
Edited by Jarich Hoekstra, Willem Visser and Goffe Jensma

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Selected papers by Germen J. de Haan

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John Benjamins Publishing Company
Amsterdam / Philadelphia

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Studies in West Frisian grammar : selected papers by Germen J. de Haan / edited by Jarich Hoekstra, Willem Visser, Goffe Jensma.

p. cm. (Linguistik Aktuell/Linguistics Today, ISSN 0166-0829 ; v. 161)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Frisian language--Dialects--Netherlands--West Friesland. 2. Frisian language--Grammar, Generative. 3. Frisian language--Syntax. I. De Haan, Germen J. II. Hoekstra, Jarich, 1956- III. Visser, Willem. IV. Jensma, Goffe.

PF1497.W4S78 2010

439'.27--dc22 2010018687

ISBN 978 90 272 5544 0 (Hb ; alk. paper)

ISBN 978 90 272 8798 4 (Eb)

John Benjamins Publishing Co. · P.O. Box 36224 · 1020 ME Amsterdam · The Netherlands

John Benjamins North America · P.O. Box 27519 · Philadelphia PA 19118-0519 · USA

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Introduction

This volume brings together a selection of the articles on Frisian linguistics written by Germen de Haan, former professor of Frisian Language and Culture at the University of Groningen. It was dedicated to him at the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday. Germen de Haan held the chair of Frisian in Groningen from 1991 until 2009. Nearly all of the eighteen papers in this volume stem from this period; only one of them was written earlier, when Germen de Haan was an associate professor at the General Linguistics Institute of the University of Utrecht and an extraordinary professor of Frisian at the same university. Some papers which were originally written in Frisian or Dutch have been translated into English for the purpose of this publication by the author himself. The papers have been divided into three categories, reflecting the main research interests of the author with respect to Frisian: syntax, sociolinguistics and phonology.

The first article in this volume, 'Recent trends in Frisian linguistics', a contribution to the *Handbuch des Friesischen/Handbook of Frisian Studies* (Munske et al. (2001)), in which de Haan reports on the developments in post-war Frisian linguistics, also shows his own central role in this field. After generative grammar had been introduced to Frisian syntax (e.g. De Waart (1971, 1972)) and phonology (e.g. Tiersma (1979)), it was Germen de Haan who firmly established generative methods and ideas in the study of Modern West Frisian. Not only did he write a number of contributions on central issues in Frisian syntax (infinitival syntax, imperativus-pro-infinitivo, embedded root phenomena), by his programmatic and provocative style he also inspired many people to reactions and to further investigation of these and other matters. He was the supervisor of a number of dissertations on Frisian linguistics (Breuker (1993), Dyk (1997), Hoekstra (1997), Versloot (2008)). Many of his papers, even if one or two might seem to be somewhat outdated from a present-day perspective, thus form important links in the research history of the main topics in Frisian linguistics. In this introduction we shall therefore try to put the papers that are collected in this volume in their historical context, both those on general linguistics and those on Frisian linguistics, and, whenever possible, draw some general lines to more recent linguistic research.

Germen de Haan's syntactic research on Frisian centres around the syntax of verbs; it deals with topics such as Verb Second, embedded root phenomena,

the verbal complex, verbal complementation and complementizer agreement. In the choice of these themes he was clearly inspired by work in Dutch syntax in the nineteen-seventies and -eighties, among others by the Dutch syntacticians Arnold Evers and Hans den Besten. This is already clear from his first paper on Frisian syntax, from 1983, with the general title 'The position of finite verb in Frisian' (de Haan (1983), not in this volume), in which he discusses the properties of Frisian as a Verb Second language, following den Besten (1983) and Evers (1982) in assuming that the finite verb is attracted by a tense index in the complementizer position, and points out some cases in which Frisian has Verb Second in embedded contexts. A rejoinder by van der Meer (1987) on this paper and the paper 'Finiteness and Verb Fronting' (see below) lead to a rather harsh discussion between the strictly theory-oriented generativist de Haan (1988b) and the more 'eclectic' van der Meer (1988).

In a series of papers (among others, de Haan & Weerman (1986a), de Haan (2001a, 1990a), Ch. 4, 5 and 6 in this volume) the nature of finiteness and embedded root phenomena in Frisian are further investigated. In 'Finiteness and Verb Fronting' (Ch. 4 in this volume), a joint paper with Fred Weerman, it is argued on the basis of Frisian data that the basic ingredient of finiteness is not tense, but AGR(eement). An important role in this paper is played by the so-called *imperativus-pro-infinitivo* (IPI) or *en* 'and' + imperative construction (cf. *Ik ferpof it en doch dat*, litt. I refuse it and do that = 'I refuse to do that'). This construction shows fronting of an infinitival verb that is formally identical to an imperative in Modern West Frisian, as it seems, in an embedded context. The IPI construction has been discussed many times in Frisian linguistics, especially after the groundbreaking study of De Waart (1971, 1972). De Haan & Weerman propose that the verb in the IPI construction is a real imperative (i.e. [+AGR, –tense]), which would account for the fact that we have verb fronting in this construction. This proposal has not been generally accepted – in fact, in older West Frisian and in other Germanic dialects the verb in this construction is also formally an infinitive –, but it has lead to a renewed discussion of the status of the verb in the IPI construction; cf. Hoekstra (1987), who claims that the verb is generally an infinitive, and, more recently, Postma (2005, 2006), who argues that it is a subjunctive. Another point in the discussion of the IPI is the question of whether the construction is coordinating or subordinating. Traditional studies of the IPI considered the construction as formally coordinating and functionally subordinating. Since De Waart (1971, 1972) it is generally assumed that there are two types of IPI: a coordinating and a subordinating type. De Haan questions this typology in 'The imperativus-pro-infinitivo' (Ch. 6 in this volume) and argues that two types may be distinguished, but that both of them are subordinating. A recent partial return to the traditional position – both types are coordinating – is found in Hoekstra (2009). In 'More is

going on upstairs than downstairs' (Ch. 5 in this volume), on the other hand, de Haan shows that sentences in Frisian showing embedded root phenomena (cf. *Hy sei, hy wie siik* 'He said, he was ill' and *Hy sei, dat hy wie siik* 'He said that he was ill), although they seem to function as subordinate clauses, have many properties of paratactic constructions.

Frisian infinitives are interesting from a comparative Germanic perspective, because every Frisian verb has two of them, one ending in *-e* and one ending in *-en*, so that in principle Frisian might show distinctions that remain covert in other languages. The distribution and categorial status of these infinitives has inspired a number of papers in the eighties (Reuland (1981, 1990), de Haan (1984a,b)). Especially the use of the two infinitives in nominal infinitives has been investigated in some detail. De Haan (1986b, Ch. 7 in this volume) discusses the categorial status and internal structure of both types of nominal infinitives. The discussion was continued by Visser (1989) and Looyenga (1992) (see also Hoekstra (1997: 9–11)).

In connection to the study of infinitives one should also mention de Haan (1987, not in this volume), in which a typology of *to*-infinitives in Frisian is proposed. This typology was taken up and extended by Hoekstra (1989, 1992, 1997), who showed that in addition to the verbal to-infinitives (... *in boek te lêzen* 'to read a book') and adjectival *to*-infinitives (*Dat boek is net te lêzen* 'That book is unreadable'), also known from other Germanic languages, Frisian posesses two further types: prepositional *to*-infinitives (*Hy is te snoekfiskjen* 'lit. He is to pike-fish') and sententential *to*-infinives (*Hja komt moarn te kofjedrinken* 'lit. She comes tomorrow to coffee-drink'). Since prepositional and sententential *to*-infinitives allow noun incorporation between *to* and the infinitive proper, the discussion of the typology and the syntactic status of infinitives also (re)kindled the interest in noun incorporation in Frisian (Dyk (1997)).

De Haan (1992, Ch. 8 in this volume) is concerned with the verbal complex and complementation in Frisian, while de Haan (1993, Ch. 9 in this volume) discusses the same issue in relation to the so-called Third Construction (cf. den Besten et al. (1988)). In these papers he argues against the mainstream opinion in generative grammar that the verbal complex is the result of a syntactic process of Verb (Projection) Raising and defends a lexical analysis of verb clusters as also proposed by Hoeksema (1980–81) and Neeleman (1990).

Related to de Haan's interest in complementation is his work on complementizer agreement. Frisian has a rather restricted form of complementizer agreement compared to other West Germanic dialects (Bavarian, Flemish and other Dutch dialects): it only shows agreement in the 2nd person singular (*Hy sei, dat<u>st</u> (do) siik wiest* 'he said that you were ill'). Nonetheless, the Frisian case has played a modest role in the general discussion of the phenomenon (cf. Hoekstra & Smits (1997) and De Vogelaer (2008) for an overview). The status of the *st*-element

on the complementizer (inflectional ending or clitic?) has lead to some discussion in Frisian linguistics (cf. Visser (1988), Hoekstra & Marácz (1989a,b), van der Meer (1991)). An excellent summary of the debate and a lucid discussion of the main problems can be found in the de Haan (1994, not in this volume), where he adheres to the inflection analysis. De Haan returned to the matter in a further article 'Complementizer agreement' (de Haan (1997a), Ch. 10 in this volume), in which the nature of the agreement relation between the subject and the inflected complementizer (and the subject and the verb) is investigated in more detail.

His work on the syntax of Modern West Frisian made de Haan also look into Old Frisian syntax. He wrote an overview of the study of Old Frisian syntax for the *Handbuch des Friesischen/Handbook of Frisian Studies* (Ch. 3 in this volume). In a further paper (de Haan (2001b), Ch. 2 in this volume), de Haan revives the old discussion of the periodization of Frisian. He critisizes the traditional periodization of Frisian in Old Frisian (until 1550), Middle Frisian (1550 until 1800), Modern Frisian (1800 until now), which does not match at all with that of other Germanic languages. That there is no linguistic motivation for the distinction of a Middle Frisian period from 1550 until 1800 (the distinction was rather made on literary grounds) and that we are actually dealing here with early Modern Frisian, is generally accepted in Frisian Studies, although opinions may differ as to whether Middle Frisian as a name for this period should be completely abolished, as de Haan proposes. De Haan's claim that Old Frisian should rather be called Middle Frisian, because the Old Frisian texts (from the thirteenth century onwards) stem from the middle period in other Germanic traditions and are also linguistically younger than texts from the old period in other Germanic languages, was partly rejected by Versloot (2004), who showed that at least part of the older texts might very well be called Old Frisian on the basis of their linguistic properties. A critical overview of the periodization debate is given by Bremmer (2009: 119–125).

In the nineteen-nineties de Haan wrote a series of articles on Frisian-Dutch bilingualism and contact-induced change in Frisian (de Haan (1990b, 1995, 1996, 1997b, 1997c), Ch. 11–15 in this volume), elaborating on and critically evaluating previous work by Sjölin (1976) and Breuker (1993), among others. In these articles de Haan specifically tries to come to terms with the nature and the causes of a number of linguistic changes that have occurred in Frisian under the influence of Dutch and, more generally, attempts to answer the question, how contact-induced change must be dealt with in generative grammar. Special attention is given here to the rather dramatic changes in the verbal complex, which (at first sight) appears to be transforming from strictly left-branching (...*dat er dat dwaan wollen hie* 'that he had wanted to do that') to basically right-branching (as in Dutch) with the younger generations. This and similar phenomena are often referred to in the literature as cases of grammatical borrowing. De Haan argues that there is no such a thing

like grammatical borrowing, showing that linguistic change is not system-driven, but rather data-driven. He further argues that these interference phenomena must be ascribed to a levelling process that is furthered by the simultaneous acquisition of Frisian and Dutch in early childhood, the dominant position of Dutch, and the relatively small linguistic distance between both languages. In 'The (in)stability of Frisian' de Haan critically reviews the large language survey that was performed by the Fryske Akademy in 1994 (Gorter & Jonkman (1995)). He expresses doubts about the general conclusion of this survey, viz. that the Frisian language is relatively stable, showing that Frisian has moved from a situation of stable diglossia (in which it had a rather low status) to one of both social and linguistic instability (in which it has a higher status, but has to compete with Dutch in all domains).

In a number of papers de Haan addressed topics in the phonology of Modern West Frisian, mainly in discussion with the work of Willem Visser in this field. In response to Visser's (1985) analysis of nasalization in Frisian, de Haan (1988a, Ch. 16 in this volume) treats vowel lengthening in conjunction with vowel nasalization. He argues that vowel nasalization and lengthening of nasalized vowels must be separated, since lengthening is only allowed to operate before *s* and *z* in non-derived words. In a review of Dyk and de Haan (eds) (1988), Tiersma (1989) points out that this approach produces no lexical savings, because Frisian has long vowels underlyingly. The only function of the lengthening rule, therefore, would be the expression of lexical relationships, e.g. between the verbal stem *fyn* /fin/ 'to find', with a short vowel, and the derivative *fynst* /fin+st/ 'finding, discovery', with a long vowel. Such relations are better expressed in a more straightforward manner, i.e., by some relational device. Visser (1991) draws attention to the fact, that the model of Lexical Phonology, which is de Haan's point of departure, simply forbids a structure-changing phonological rule from applying to non-derived forms only. De Haan must be credited, however, for showing how important a role so-called schwa-appendices play in the initial syllabification in Frisian.

Frisian is said to have a symmetrical vowel inventory, consisting of nine short and nine corresponding long vowels. The short-long distinction has phonemic value. Mainly on distributional grounds, de Haan (1999a, Ch. 17 in this volume) challenges this traditional view, arriving at an asymmetrical classification. Especially noteworthy is the fact that the three closed vowels /i,y,u/, though phonetically short, are assumed to be long in a phonological sense, i.e., to occupy two structural phonological positions. In a reaction Visser (2003) defended the traditional symmetrical classification of the Frisian vowels in short and long, arguing that de Haan's distributional evidence is not very strong and that his theory meets with some serious problems when it comes to the representation of complex nuclei, especially falling diphthongs.

A central issue in Frisian phonology is the variation between a combination of schwa + sonorant consonant and a syllabic sonorant consonant. In the phonological literature, the alternation is accounted for in two, mutually exclusive, ways. One approach is to assume that a syllabic sonorant consonant derives from the sequence schwa + sonorant consonant by means of schwa deletion and some syllabification device, whereas another rests on the assumption that schwa is not present underlyingly, which renders the sonorant consonant unsyllabifiable. In response to this, the consonant becomes head of a syllable or a schwa is inserted before it, after which it is incorporated into the coda of the schwa syllable. The former position is defended in most literature on Frisian, viz. Riemersma (1979), Dyk (1987), Chapter 6 of Visser (1997). The latter position presents many distributional similarities between schwa syllables and syllabic sonorant consonants. De Haan (1999b, Ch. 18 in this volume) defends the other position, arguing that syllabic sonorant consonants are base-generated and that the schwa + sonorant consonant results from a rule of schwa epenthesis. De Haan does not claim, though, that his approach is superior to the other, because the alternatives differ in empirical coverage, whereas there are also varying intuitions on an number of cases. Syllabic sonorant consonants, therefore, remain a recalcitrant topic of Frisian phonology.

As this brief introduction may have shown, Germen de Haan's publications on Frisian syntax, sociolinguistics and phonology are in the centre of the Frisian linguistic debate, but also have wide implications beyond Frisian Studies. De Haan's work will undoubtedly continue to play an important role in the future discussion of some of the main issues in Frisian and general linguistics and it is our hope that this collection of his articles may help to promote this discussion.

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CHAPTER 1

Recent trends in Frisian linguistics

This paper presents an overview of the main trends that can be distinguished in the study of Frisian linguistics since the Second World War. We will not discuss the basic tools for linguistic research that have been constructed so abundantly in this period, but concentrate on research proper. Modern Frisian linguistics is, on the one hand, a continuation of a historical-philological and lexicographic tradition, and, on the other hand, a reflection of scientific innovations that has taken place in these decades. We observe three main trends, i.e. historical-philological research, studies of the role of Frisian language varieties in society, and studies of Frisian grammar within an explicit theoretical context. Due to the relatively small number of linguists studying Frisian, developments in this field tend to be a bit idiosyncratic.

1. Introduction

In the year that the Chomskyan revolution shook the linguistic world, 1957, a state-of-the-art report on Frisian linguistics was published (Fokkema (1957)). As is clear from this report, the first post-war decade of Frisian linguistics was mainly historically and philologically oriented as was most linguistics of those days in Western Europe. A lot of attention was paid to historical-comparative research, complemented by quite a number of editions of Old Frisian texts. There were, however, no grammatical studies of Old Frisian in this decade. Grammatical studies of the modern Frisian language varieties were also scarce, although two grammars were published (Sipma (1948–49) and Fokkema (1948)). In addition to historical studies, Fokkema reports that two important lexicographic projects were started: The Frisian Institute of the University of Groningen began with an ambitious lexicographic project which should ultimately lead (but has not done so far) to new dictionaries for Old Frisian as well as for Middle Frisian. The Frisian Academy did the same for West Frisian after 1800, i.e. Modern West Frisian. Recent trends in Frisian linguistics can be sketched partly as a continuation of this kind of historical, philological and lexicographic research, and partly as innovations inspired by the special position of the Frisian language varieties as minority languages, as well as by the Chomskyan revolution. In the following sections we will

give a sketch of these trends as we see them. It is important to note that this sketch will concentrate on publications that are written in a readily accessible language. Hence bibliographic references are not necessarily representative of the literature on which this sketch is based.

It should be noted that a significant part of post-war Frisian linguistics consists of the provision of basic tools for doing linguistic research: dictionaries, text editions, grammatical surveys and bibliographies. We will not give a detailed overview of these studies, but refer to the relevant articles in Munske et al. (eds) (2001): article 64 for Old Frisian dictionaries, articles 19 and 32 for dictionaries of varieties of Modern Frisian, article 54 for text editions, articles 59, 60 and 61 for grammatical surveys of Old Frisian, and articles 7 and 8 on bibliographies. We should only like to mention explicitly here the publication of some grammatical surveys for varieties of Modern Frisian. Grammars have been written for West Frisian in English (Tiersma (1985)), in Japanese (Kodama (1992)), in Russian (Zhluktenko (1984)), and in German (Hoekema (1992)), for East Frisian (Fort (1980)); Kramer (1982)) and for the North Frisian dialects (see article 29 of Munske et al. (eds) (2001)).

2. Historical linguistics

Historically oriented research remains an important branch of Frisian linguistics. The study of the oldest records of the Frisian language, Frisian runology, has its own tradition. For a detailed survey of the study of Frisian runes, see article 49 of Munske et al. (eds) (2001).

As to historical-comparative research of Old Frisian, two themes should be highlighted. The first concerns the interpretation of variation inside Old Frisian itself. The question is whether this variation should be considered as mainly geographically determined, that is, as pointing to distinct Old Frisian dialects from different regions, or whether it could be interpreted chronologically, that is as reflecting languages from different periods. The latter position is advocated by Sjölin (1966, 1984), who makes a chronological distinction between classical, post-classical, and 'charter' Old Frisan. This distinction is based mainly on criteria involving content and style. Hofmann (1971b) and Meijering (1990) argue that Sjölin's thesis is no reason for giving up the traditional geographic distinction between Old West Frisian and Old East Frisian, since this relies on phonological, morphological and lexical criteria. They both acknowledge the merits of Sjölin's proposals, and make clear that both divisions could be used as they are in fact compatible, being based on different criteria. For more details, see article 57 of Munske et al. (eds) (2001).

The second theme centres around the position of Old Frisian among the coastal Germanic dialects, in particular the relationship between Old Frisian, Old English and Old Saxon. According to Kuhn (1955, 1957) the common characteristics of Old English and Old Frisian rest upon the mutual influence of these languages across the sea *after* the invasion of England. Bremmer (1982) argues that this is not very likely and that there must already have been contacts on the continent which prepared for later common developments. The conclusion that parallels between Old English and Old Frisian stem at least in part from the pre-invasion period is also drawn by Nielsen (1981), although there appears to be no support for the hypothesis that there must once have been an Anglo-Frisian unity. Alternatively, Nielsen (1986) assumes a language continuum with Old English and Old Saxon at each ends, and Frisian in between. The debate about the construct of an Anglo-Frisian mother language is continued by Stiles (1995) and Fulk (1998). The relationship between Old Frisian and Old Saxon was discussed recently by Århammar (1990). For more details, article 48 of Munske et al. (eds) (2001).

The grammatical study of the older varieties of Frisian still lacks sufficient comprehensive synchronic descriptions. It is indicative that in the volume *Aspects of Old Frisian Philology* (Bremmer et al. (eds) (1990)) only 5 out of 27 contributions can be called grammatical (those by Bor, van der Meer, Schilt, Visser, and van der Wal), whereas *Approaches to Old Frisian Philology* (Bremmer et al. (eds) (1998)) has only 2 (Boutkan and Fulk)! On the positive side, there are the morphological studies of Ahlsson (1960, 1991) and the syntactic research done by Bor (for the latter, see de Haan (2001b)).

One of the classical problems of Middle (West) Frisian linguistics is the genesis of the dialects of the Frisian cities of Leeuwarden, Franeker, Dokkum, Harlingen, Bolsward, Staveren, and Sneek in the 16th and following centuries. The fundamental question is whether *Stedsfrysk* 'Town Frisian' is basically a Frisian or Dutch language variety, or a mixed language, i.e. a language in its own right. This discussion already started before World War II, and was recently taken up again by Ozinga (1983), Jonkman (1989, 1993), de Haan (1992b), van Bree (1994a, 1994b, 1997). Van Bree (1997) claims that Town Frisian syntax supports the hypothesis that it is a Dutch dialect with a Frisian substratum. He points out that this syntactic substratum is not only found in dialects spoken in the provinces of Groningen, Drente, Overijssel and the northern part of North Holland, but also in the North Frisian and Low German language areas. In this context, van Bree raises the old question whether we should label this substratum as *Ingvaeonic*, or perhaps as *North Sea Germanic*, as is done by J. Hoekstra (1992). Van Bree opts tentatively for the not quite unproblematic term *Frisian*. For a recent discussion on the question of a Frisian substratum in North Hollandic, see E. Hoekstra (1993b, 1994a).

The historical study of Frisian in the post-war decades has not undergone many changes. It is mainly individual research and descriptive (i.e. with an implicit theoretical framework, and not aiming at an explanation of descriptive statements). There has not been much influence from the explanatory theoretical linguistics resulting from the Chomskyan revolution in this field. There are at least two reasons for this. The first is a general one: Chomskyan linguistics tries to discover properties of the mind by studying language. Although there is no reason in principle why historical linguistics should not be relevant for such an approach, it is much 'easier' to obtain data from living languages. Thus it took some time for historical studies to be included in research programmes in explanatory theoretical linguistics. The second reason is a specific one: the number of linguists studying Frisian is relatively small. This means that the field is rather static, and the ability to absorb new developments is dependent on the individual that happens to be interested. This can also lead to idiosyncratic developments, such as the attention that is given in Frisian historical linguistics to graphematics (Sjölin (1970), Feitsma (1974), Meijering (1974), Boelens (1981)). This attention is unique in the context of post-war linguistic research in the Netherlands.

Frisian historical linguistics has also been influenced by ideas emanating from explanatory linguistic theories. Bor, who contributed considerably to the study of Old Frisian syntax, showed his interest in methodological issues by comparing analyses of Old Frisian based on the different methods of van Es, Uhlenbeck, Chomsky, Fillmore and Chafe (Bor (1974)). Costello (1977) presented an application of the Chomskyan *Aspects*-model to Old Frisian, but he treats this language as a kind of pseudo-English, and does no justice to the specific characteristics of the language itself (cf. McLintock (1979)). Moreover, the empirical scope of his work is extremely limited. This does not hold for the research published by van de Velde (1971a,b). In these works, van de Velde tries to develop his own (inductive) analytical method which he wishes to combine with the descriptive model of transformational grammar. Although he covers a lot of empirical ground, van de Velde's method does not go beyond the expository stage, and as a consequence his work is disappointing from a descriptive point of view, containing hardly any useful observational generalizations. Looking back, we can conclude that his analytical method has not proven successful either. The severe critique that van der Velde launches in his work on traditional philological approaches is adequately countered by Hofmann (1971a, 1973).

3. The study of grammar

The emergence of generative grammar at the end of the fifties implied several shifts of focus in linguistics. One is that the study of separate grammatical systems

became embedded within a general theory of language. Grammatical description of individual languages became part of a comparative paradigm and consequently turned the study of grammar into an international enterprise. It took some time for the effects of this orientation towards universal grammar with its simultaneous process of internationalization to become visible in the study of Frisian grammar. In 1959 Fokkema published a structural phonology of West Frisian as part of a monograph on Dutch phonology (Cohen et al. (1959, Chapter V and VI)). The book was not intended for an international audience. Some years after the publication of Chomsky and Halle's *The Sound Pattern of English* in 1968, the first, internationally oriented, publications on Frisian phonology within an explanatory linguistic paradigm appeared, written by an American linguist, born of Frisian immigrants, Pieter Meijes Tiersma (Tiersma 1975, 1978, 1979a, 1979b, 1980, 1983). In particular, Tiersma (1979b) covers many aspects of synchronic phonology, which are, however, restricted to the phonology of the dialect of Grou. He presents a sound inventory, discusses the morpho-lexical phenomena 'breaking' and 'shortening', verbal morphophonemics, phonological insertion and deletion rules, and phonetic realization rules. The general framework used by Tiersma is that of natural generative phonology. Another early generative approach to (West) Frisian phonology is Riemersma's MA thesis from 1979, a study on the syllabification of nasals and liquids, and its interaction with nasalization and assimilation. Not all Frisian phonologists took an explanatory theoretical point of view, see van der Meer (1976, 1977, 1979, 1985).

One of the central issues of West Frisian phonology discussed extensively in the literature concerns a sound change called *Modern Frisian Breaking*. Modern Frisian Breaking consists of a morphophonemic alternation between rising and falling diphthongs. This alternation appears to have been caused by the shortening of falling diphthongs in certain environments whereby rising diphthongs emerged. This process is dated in the late 17th and early 18th century. The historical development of breaking is discussed by Markey (1975), van der Meer (1977, 1985), and Tiersma (1979a). Its (highly irregular) synchronic status in Modern West Frisian is the subject of Tiersma (1979b, Chapter 1, 1983), whereas its phonetic properties are treated by de Graaf and Tiersma (1980). Booij (1989) analyzes rising diphthongs in terms of Frisian syllable structure, arguing that the first segment of such sequences, the glides, have to be considered as onset consonant phonemes. According to Booij, rising diphthongs do not exist in Frisian as vowel-vowel sequences. Recently Visser (1997, Chapter 3) presented evidence for the thesis that they are vowel-vowel sequences after all, suggesting that these constituent vowel parts are associated with one nucleus position. Visser's theory on Frisian rising diphthongs is part of a monograph on the syllable and syllabification processes analyzed within the Lexical Phonology Model and non-linear (prosodic) generative phonology. Visser (1997) is intended not only as a contribution to the

study of Frisian phonology, but is also directed at the community of linguists in general. As such it is a good example of the internationalization of the study of Frisian phonology that took place after the Chomskyan revolution.

The growing popularity of the study of Frisian grammar can also be demonstrated by the increase in publications in the field of morphology. A representative collection of such papers appears in Dyk & de Haan (eds) (1988), including studies on the measure noun forming suffix *-fol*, the verbal prefix *be-*, the adjectival suffix *-sk*, and cliticization. Other studies we would like to mention here are van der Meer (1987a) on adjectival inflection, J. Hoekstra (1985b) on diminutivization, van der Meer (1989b) on adjectivizing suffixes, van der Meer (1986) on the competing nominal suffixes *-ens* and *-heid*. See for the last topic also van der Meer (1988b, 1988c) and J. Hoekstra (1990). A general overview of Frisian morphology is J. Hoekstra (1998). Easy accessible publications on (theoretical) morphology are scarce. Van der Meer (1988a, 1989a) discusses *k*-verbs in West Germanic languages, including Frisian. In a discussion of grammatical change, de Haan (1990b) refers to morphological interference between Frisian and Dutch, in particular verbal morphology and diminutives. Werner (1992) treats the inflection of the West Frisian *je*-verbs, i.e. a subset of weak verbs with an infinitive form ending on *-je*.

Another shift of focus that was caused by the rise of generative grammar in the fifties and sixties was an enormous growth of interest in the study of syntax. Again it took quite a long time for it to affect the study of Frisian. A general reason for this is the small number of linguists interested in the synchronic study of modern Frisian grammar. A specific reason might have been the feeling that Frisian hardly has syntax of its own. Fehling (1980: 358) neatly expresses this feeling in writing: 'dying dialects which lack the support of a written literature never seem to have any real syntax of their own. I am told by experts that Frisian is such a case. It is spoken with Dutch, German, or partly Danish syntax, but a Frisian syntax hardly exists'. Note that this opinion of 'experts' cannot have been based on any research results, since these were almost totally lacking at the time. It is amazing, to put it mildy, that Fehling expresses such an opinion without checking it.

In 1971 the first generative approach to West Frisian syntax appeared: de Waart (1971, with an addendum in 1972). De Waart tried to analyze the so-called *en*+imperative construction in transformational terms. This construction consists of two clauses of which the second one is preceded by *en* 'and', and which contains a verb form in initial position which is formally, but not functionally, an imperative. De Waart raised a number of interesting questions with respect to this construction, but his paper was criticized in a rather harsh way by Hoekema (1971, 1975) and van der Meer (1972, 1975). Their criticism should be understood, probably, against the background of a generally negative attitude towards explanatory grammar. Perhaps due to this lack of appreciation of theoretical linguistics among scholars of Frisian at that time, de Waart's paper did not have much influence.

In the eighties and nineties it did play a significant role, however, in the discussion about verb movement phenomena. But before that happened, Frisian syntax had already become a subject of study for generative grammar. Reuland examined West Frisian from this point of view in his studies of principles of subordination (Reuland (1979)), extraposition of infinitival complements (Reuland (1981)) and auxiliaries (Reuland (1983a)). De Haan (1983) investigated the distribution of finite verbs as a root phenomenon in subordinate clauses and its relevance for generative theories of verb movement. De Haan & Weerman (1986) did the same, but also took into account the *en*+imperative construction. De Haan (1984b) discussed properties of bare infinitivals and de Haan (1987b) the syntactic behaviour of different types of *te*+infinitive phrases. J. Hoekstra (1989) demonstrated that de Haan's typology should be enlarged. Hiemstra (1986) showed that Frisian also displays so-called partial *wh*-Movement phenomena, which involve long *wh*-Movement going together with a kind of *wh*-residue in the intermediate complementizer position. This suffices to illustrate that the study of West Frisian syntax became theoretically oriented in the eighties and, as a consequence, internationalized. It has stayed that way until this very day. In retrospect we should like to single out the following main points of attention.

West Frisian has the interesting feature of having two infinitives, one ending in *-e* and one on *-en*. A basic description of their morphological and syntactic properties is given by J. Hoekstra (1997b: 1–10). The distribution of these infinitives is discussed in the publications just mentioned (by Reuland, de Haan, and Hoekstra) and Reuland (1990). J. Hoekstra (1992) concentrates on *te*+infinitives in Fering, the North Frisian dialect of Föhr and Amrum, placing these in a comparative perspective. Infinitives ending in *-en* also function as nominal infinitives, see de Haan (1986), Visser (1989), Looyenga (1990, 1992).

Another interesting aspect of Frisian verbal syntax is the clustering of verbs at the end of the sentence, the *verbal complex*. This clustering fits into a general phenomenon that is familiar from Continental West Germanic. The verbal complex in Frisian is rigidly left-branching (with exception of a right-branching type of *te*+infinitives), and does not show the *Infinitivus-Pro-Participio Effect*. In a number of Germanic languages, a past participle governing a verb is replaced with an infinitive. This effect is lacking in Frisian. There are clear indications, however, that exactly these properties of the verbal complex are subject to change, i.e. the verbal clustering is becoming right-branching to a certain extent whereas the right-branching cluster shows the Infinitivus-Pro-Participio Effect, see de Haan (1995, 1996b), Wolf (1997). The verbal complex and some related phenomena are discussed in den Dikken (1989), van der Meer (1990b), de Haan (1992a, 1993, 1996b), Abraham (1994), E. Hoekstra (1997).

The discussion of the *en*+imperative initiated by de Waart (1971, 1972) is taken up by de Haan & Weerman (1986), de Haan (1987a), J. Hoekstra (1987),

van der Meer (1989c), de Haan (1990a). Apart from questions concerning the status of the construction itself, the *en*-imperative is theoretically interesting since it appears to involve 'verb movement' in a subordinate context. In addition this verb movement applies to a verb form whose finite character is not clear. And even if it was, it originates from similar constructions with imperatives replaced by infinitival verb forms. Hence this construction, or at least its ancestor, forms a problem for traditional verb second theories which claim that verb movement is triggered by 'finiteness'. For a discussion of the position of Frisian in such a context, we refer to de Haan & Weerman (1986) and Hoekstra & Marácz (1989a,b).

Another syntactic phenomenon in West Frisian that has received some attention is *complementizer agreement*. Complementizers introducing an embedded sentence with a finite verb, inflected with *-st* for the second person singular, also get an element *-st* attached. The question is whether this element should be considered as a clitic (Tiersma (1985: 65), van der Meer (1991)), or as an inflectional suffix in combination with an empty subject (de Haan (1994, 1997a)). The relation between complementizer agreement and empty subjects ('*pro*-drop') in West Germanic is discussed by J. Hoekstra (1997a).

A topic that is on the borderline between syntax and morphology, is addressed by Dyk (1997): *noun incorporation*. In a number of languages a verb and a noun can build a verbal complex, while at the same time there is a parallel construction in which the noun is the head of a noun phrase that functions as the syntactic argument of the verb. Noun incorporation is a relatively systematic process in West Frisian. Dyk analyzes this process against the background of noun incorporation in general, and compares it with the possibility of noun incorporation in the other Germanic languages. He argues in favour of a morphological treatment of Frisian noun incorporation.

The contributions to the theoretical study of Frisian grammar discussed so far suggest that until now, research has been a little one-sided in the sense that relatively speaking, a lot of attention has been given to West Frisian, and hardly any to the other varieties of Frisian. Although syntactic aspects of North Frisian dialects have been discussed within a comparative context, for example by Dyk (1992a), J. Hoekstra (1992, 1997a), Ebert & Hoekstra (1996), this impression seems to be correct, and is in agreement with the statement by Walker (1984) that on the whole the study of North Frisian alternates between the fulfilment of practical needs and a scientific interest in the relation between language and society. There appears to be little interest in explanatory grammatical questions. A notable exception is the grammatical research that has been carried out by Karin Ebert with regard to Fering. If we are not mistaken, Ebert should even be credited for the publication of the first modern, theoretical approach to Frisian, Ebert (1971). In this publication of her 1970 dissertation, Ebert studied the grammatical, semantic, textual and contextual properties of the definite article in Fering. Although her study is

not written within an *a priori* given theoretical framework, Ebert acknowledges that her linguistic point of departure is generative grammar (p. 19). In 1973 she contributed a squib on this topic to the most influential journal on theoretical linguistics of those days, *Linguistic Inquiry*, in cooperation with Edward Keenan. In the past two decades she has published regularly on Fering, Ebert (1980, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1996, in cooperation with J. Hoekstra).

4. Dialectology

The description of individual Frisian dialects can be classified as part of the study of grammar. In this section on dialectology the emphasis is on dialectal relationships in Frisia. A not very recent, but helpful, general overview of the state of the art of Frisian dialectology is given by Århammar (1968). Since its publication a small number of important studies on dialectal relationships have appeared. The first structural dialect geographical study of North Frisian is Stork (1971). He describes systematically phonological and phonetic variation in the dialect of the Middle Goesharde. Also worthy of mention is Walker (1980b), which compares 13 North Frisian dialect varieties of the Bökingharde and surroundings from a structural point of view. Walker (1980b: 8–30) also presents a short introduction to general and individual studies of North Frisian dialects. Wilts (1979) and Walker (1983) try to characterize North Frisian with respect to the surrounding standard languages, Danish and German. Braunmüller (1997) discusses a number of possible classifications of the North Frisian linguistic varieties according to different typological criteria. The phonology of linguistic varieties of the Nordergoesharde is described by Jones (1978) (Langenhorn) and De Wit (1980) (Dörpum); that of Neukirchen (Wiedingharde) by Leach (1980).

As for West Frisian, there has not been much dialect geographical research since World War II. Hof (1933) is still the standard work here. In his tradition, van der Veen (1986, 1994) deals with the classification of West Frisian dialects and their relative distance. We should also mention Miedema & Steenmeijer-Wielinga (eds) (1972) and Miedema (1986) which present material on dialects of the west and south coast of Fryslân. The former consists of unpublished material resulting from Fokkema's fieldwork.

5. Sociology of language

Post-war linguistics is characterized by the establishment of disciplines such as theoretical linguistics and applied linguistics. In addition new fields of study emerged based on a combination of linguistics with disciplines such as psychology and

sociology. It does not come as a surprise that with respect to the Frisian language varieties as minority languages, the interdisciplinary study of the role of language in society became central. Depending on the emphasis on social or linguistic properties, we distinguish between the sociology of language and sociolinguistics, although the distinction is not sharp and not always clear.

A dominant feature of Frisian sociology of language are large-scale surveys relating to the use of language, in particular in the province of Fryslân. As early as the fifties such a survey was carried out by Boelens & van der Veen (1956), who were looking for characteristics of the way language was used by all primary school children in Fryslân. A more general study was conducted by Pietersen (1969). Pietersen wanted to gain insight into the speaking and reading habits of the inhabitants of Fryslân, their language behaviour in general, and their attitudes towards language. His survey made clear that the Frisian language was used by the great majority of the population in the province, and this result had an enormous impact on the language policy in the years to come. A similar, but more limited, study was undertaken by Smith (1980). Smith examined the linguistic situation affairs of Terherne, a rural bilingual village in the Frisian lake district. His aim was to describe the existing language variation and to link this to demographic and social variables and to language attitudes. His research results underscored 'the central role of Frisian in the life of this rural Frisian community' (p. 276), but also 'a major degree of displacement of Frisian by Dutch' (p. 277). In 1980 Pietersen's survey was replicated, be it with a considerably extended questionnaire. The publication of the results of this survey, Gorter et al. 1984, gave detailed information on language abilities and attitudes, on the geographical and social spread of Frisian, Dutch and other regional languages, on intergenerational language transmission, and on language use in different domains. For an English summary, see Gorter et al. (1988). Gorter et al. (1991) used the same model on a smaller scale to investigate the language use of a trilingual area within the province of Groningen near the border with Fryslân (a pre-publication of this study is Jansma & Jelsma (1987)). In 1994 another survey similar to Gorter et al. 1984 was carried out. A preliminary publication of the results appeared as Gorter & Jonkman (1995) (see for a summary Gorter (1997)). Gorter and Jonkman wanted their survey to be as compatible as possible with those of the eighties and the seventies in order to be able to draw conclusions about developments in the societal position of the language varieties involved. Their overall conclusion was that the position of the Frisian language is one of stability in as far as proficiency, use and attitudes are concerned. In de Haan (1996a) this conclusion is criticized for lack of supporting evidence and for the fact that Gorter and Jonkman do not take into consideration research results that are in conflict with their claim.

These surveys are complemented by two related dissertation projects which both make use of a multi-method approach. Gorter (1993) investigates language

use and language attitudes regarding Frisian and Dutch in contacts between civil servants and inhabitants in the local council office of the municipality Heerenveen. To accomplish this, Gorter uses a survey method, interviews, and direct observation of language behaviour. Jonkman (1993) studies the social position and the functioning of 'Leewarders' (the vernacular in Leeuwarden) in relation to Dutch and Frisian. His results are based on interviews, a questionnaire, evaluation of language varieties by means of semantic differential scales, and field work (participant observation). A preliminary presentation of the results of this project is given in Jonkman (1990).

Large-scale surveys as conducted for West Frisian are not available for the other Frisian varieties. Information that is made public does not make one optimistic for their future. Århammar (1971, 1975a) discusses the demographic and geographic spread of the language varieties on the island of Föhr, and also the language use by the younger generation. A discussion of the general situation of North Frisian language can be found in Århammar (1975b). It appears that with the exception of the island of Föhr the shift of the younger generation towards Low or High German has now been completed almost everywhere. See for a recent appraisal of this situation, Århammar (1990/91). Spenter (1977) and Larsen (1983) deal with the multilingual community of Rödenas, immediately south of the Danish-German border. A quantitative analysis of the latter shows that North Frisian is increasingly the language of the older generation, and is used exclusively in the domestic domain, cf. also Wilts (1978), Jörgensen (1980), Kööp (1982/83). Based on Spenter (1977), Walker (1978a) and Århammar (1990/91), Ebert (1994: 10) refers to the North and East Frisian language varieties as being 'am Aussterben'.

Given the importance of education for minority languages, it might be expected that Frisian sociology of language has a particular interest in solving problems in this area. This is indeed the case, see for example Zondag (ed.) (1993: 113–118) for a bibliography of publications in English on bilingual education in Fryslân. A general description of the position of the Frisian language varieties in education is given in Ytsma (1986) (West Frisian), Fort (1988) (East Frisian), and Martinen & Walker (1988) (North Frisian). A short history of bilingual education is presented in de Jong & Riemersma (1994: 13–51) (Fryslân) and O. Tångeberg (1978) (North Frisia). See for North Frisia also Stand des Friesischunterrichts (1982), M. Tångeberg (1990) and Århammar (1990/91). Walker (1980a) attempts an analysis of the factors that led to a rejection of Frisian tuition in the schools of a North Frisian community. For a detailed survey of the use of North Frisian, see article 28 in Munske et al. (eds) (2001).

The position of Frisian in the curriculum of primary schools in Fryslân is such that in principle all children have been taught Frisian in addition to Dutch since 1980. Against this background, research into language proficiency of both Frisian- and Dutch-speaking children has been conducted by de Jong & Riemersma

(1994) and Ytsma (1995). De Jong & Riemersma (1994) examined the ability of both Frisian and Dutch-speaking children to understand, speak, read and write Frisian and Dutch at the end of elementary school. As to proficiency in Frisian, it transpired that the understanding of Frisian was adequate for both Dutch- and Frisian-speaking pupils, but the former category had serious difficulty when speaking Frisian. As to proficiency in Dutch, the results for all abilities were satisfactory for all pupils. Interestingly, the study also showed that there is no connection between the level of the pupil's fluency in Dutch and home language, nor the language environment of the school the pupil attends. Teaching a minority language need not affect achievements in the dominant language! Ytsma (1995) differs from de Jong & Riemersma (1994) in that it does not look at communicative language skills, but tries to assess the acquisition of Frisian as a first and second language. As to first language acquisition, Ytsma wants to determine whether children's knowledge of Frisian differs systematically from that of their parents and whether this knowledge is dependent on age, sex, language environment and attitude. Central questions with respect to second language acquisition are whether Dutch-speaking children's knowledge of Frisian correlates with these same variables, and furthermore whether there is a relationship between these variables and socio-psychological variables such as attitudes, motivation and self-confidence.

Finally we should like to mention some publications that discuss aspects of language planning, on North Frisian: Steensen (1986, 1987), Hamerß (1989a,b), von Mutius (1990), Århammar (1990/91); on West Frisian, van Dijk (1987), Fishman (1991). The politico-linguistic situation in Fryslân is described within a theoretical model by van Dijk & Gorter (1983), van Rijn & Sieben (1987).

An analysis of this short review of publications on the sociology of the Frisian language shows that the approach to this field is inspired by 'practical' rather than scientific considerations. Most of the researchers want to contribute with their research to the solution of problems of language policy. It also explains why some of the major publications are written in Frisian (Gorter et al. (1984), Gorter (1993), Jonkman (1993), Gorter & Jonkman (1995)). In this context it does not come as a surprise that results of research on multilingualism in Fryslân plays only a marginal role in the international literature on this topic.

6. Sociolinguistics

In Frisian linguistics, relatively little attention has been given to the relation between (external and internal) language variation and social factors. The majority of the sociolinguistic studies that did, carried out their investigations against the

background of the unstable linguistic situation in Frisian-speaking areas. The general impression emanating from this work is that there is a strong process of levelling going on between the subordinate languages (the Frisian varieties) and the dominant languages (Dutch, High German and to a lesser extent, Low German). One of the earliest publications that should be mentioned here is Sjölin (1976b). Sjölin tries to pin-down the factors that govern the considerable increase of transfer from Dutch to West Frisian. A revised version appeared as Sjölin (1980). Feitsma et al. (1987) focus on a number of West Frisian pronunciation phenomena that can be classified as Frisian, non-Frisian, or neutral. They relate this variation to social variables (sex, age, occupation, and education) and attempt to test the hypothesis that there is a change from a Frisian-like pronunciation to a more non-Frisian, or Dutch one. The results of this inquiry are tentative at best since, as is acknowledged by the authors (p. 93), the research 'is not complete' and the speakers tested 'are not representative of the "the Frisian-speaking Frisians"'. Follow-up publications are van der Kuip (1986) and Meekma (1989), but definite research results have not been published yet. The function of Frisian and Dutch as standard languages and their mutual influence is discussed in Breuker (1993). Changes in West Frisian under the influence of Dutch is also the topic of de Haan (1990b, 1995, 1996a, 1997b). The last paper gives an exhaustive overview of interference phenomena from Dutch into West Frisian and discusses linguistic and social circumstances that are relevant to this levelling process. Strong levelling and loss of dialectal features are also observed with respect to North Frisian. We refer to Parker (1993) and in particular Ebert (1994) for contact-induced changes in the dialect of West Föhr. Hansen-Jaax (1997) uses switching and borrowing processes caused by contact between High German and Low German/North Frisian to demonstrate their systematic nature. Spenter (1983) gives an overview of mutual interferences between Low German and the Frisian language varieties, which are reflections in most cases of contact situations of long ago.

7. Concluding remarks

In the foregoing sections we have distinguished three trends that have dominated Frisian linguistics in recent years. The first is a continuation of a historical and philological tradition. This research is mainly descriptive in character, internationally oriented, albeit that some researchers complain that the treatment of Old Frisian within the study of Old Germanic is not in balance with that of the older stages of neighbouring languages, including Old English (see Hofstra (1989: 38, 46)). The second is the study of the role of the Frisian language varieties in society. This trend can be characterized as descriptive, and as far as the study of the social

function of West Frisian is concerned, influenced by political considerations. The third is the study of Frisian grammar within an explanatory context. Research within this trend is mainly generative in nature and has become part of theoretical linguistics as an international enterprise. Finally we would like to repeat a point made earlier. Since the number of linguists studying Frisian is relatively small, the field will change slowly. For the same reason, developments in the study of Frisian linguistics will always be idiosyncratic to some extent.

CHAPTER 2

Why Old Frisian is really Middle Frisian

Traditionally the history of the development of the Frisian language is divided into he following periods: Pre-Old Frisian before ca 1275, Old Frisian ca 1275–1550, Middle Frisian ca 1550–1800, Modern Frisian ca 1800 – present. Several aspects of this periodization have been discussed in the literature, in particular the discongruity between the labels Old/Middle Frisian and the corresponding labels for related Germanic languages. We note that the bulk of the arguments for the traditional periodization of Frisian is based on non-linguistic evidence. This is true in particular for the Old Frisian period. This leads to the central question of this paper: is the traditional notion of Old Frisian linguistically spoken really 'Old Germanic', or may be rather 'Middle Germanic', or something in between? We approach this question by looking at linguistic criteria that have been used in the literature for distinguishing between 'old' and 'middle' stages of closely related Germanic languages. These criteria involve mainly changes in unstressed syllables and inflection. Applying these criteria to Frisian, we conclude there is ample evidence to replace the term 'Old Frisian' with 'Middle Frisian'.

> *The language known as Old Frisian is recorded in manuscripts from about 1300 to 1500, and might be more properly described as Middle Frisian.*
> A. Campbell (1959: 2)

1. Introduction

It is quite common to distinguish the following stages in the history of Frisian:[1]

(1)	before ca 1275:	Pre-Old Frisian;	
	ca 1275–1550:	Old Frisian;	
		ca 1275–1400:	Classical Old Frisian;
		ca 1400–1550:	Post-Classical Old Frisian; Charter Frisian
	ca 1550–1800:	Middle Frisian	
	ca 1800-present:	Modern Frisian	

1. See, for example, Miedema (1968: 123), and Århammar (1995: 72), although the former uses different labels for the stages involved, see below. Note that linguistic material from the period before 1275 is not quite absent, but very fragmentary.

According to Ralph (2000),[2] traditional distinctions of stages in the history of a language are quite often based on outdated assumptions; therefore there is every reason to reconsider them. In our opinion, this also applies to the periodization of Frisian given in (1). This periodization is problematic for several reasons. The problem we want to address in this paper in particular, is the use of the label 'Old Frisian' for the period 1275–1550. That there might be something wrong with this label, can be illustrated with a quotation from Markey (1981: 40). Markey states that 'the term "Old Frisian" is, in comparison with the chronological limits set for the other [Germanic, GdH] dialects, both misleading and, strictly speaking, a misnomer'. This term wrongly suggests that Old Frisian belongs chronologically to the same historical period as Old English, Old Saxon, Old High German and Old Dutch, while, as indicated in (1), the written tradition of Old Frisian texts starts much later (around 1300). On the other hand, Markey notes that 'the term "Old Frisian" is not altogether inappropriate', since 'these comparatively recent codices contain materials and often reflect stages of the language that are appreciably older than the manuscripts themselves' (*op. cit.* p. 41). So Markey claims that the term 'Old Frisian' can be juistified on the basis of linguistic properties. This raises the question that is central to this paper: is it possible to argue on linguistic grounds that Old Frisian is 'old' in the sense of related Old Germanic languages? We emphasize that we are interested here in linguistic factors only, although we realize of course that all kinds of criteria such as textual, political, and cultural factors can be used, and are used, for the distinction of stages in the historical development of a language.[3]

Before we attempt to answer our central question, we turn to two other problematic aspects of the periodization in (1): the turning point 1800, and the splitting up of Old Frisian in a Classical and a Post-Classical stage (turning point 1400).[4]

1.1 Turning point 1800

In the early days of the study of Frisian, most scholars have departed from the idea that the history of the written tradition of Frisian should be divided into two stages with the end of the Middle Ages as a turning point. According to Breuker (1981: 17), Ottema (1844) has been the first to suggest that there is a second turning point in the history of Frisian, namely 1800. Ottema does not motivate this

2. We thank Muriel Norde for bringing this paper to our attention.

3. See, for extensive discussion, Roelcke (1995), especially Chapter 5.

4. The year 1400 is mentioned explicitly as a turning point by Miedema (1968: 123), and Århammar (1995: 72).

turning point on the basis of linguistic arguments, but on the relation between the use of Frisian and political circumstances. It should be stressed that his discussion is limited to West Frisian. The resulting tripartition in Old Frisian (1275–1550), Middle (West) Frisian (1550–1800), and Modern (West) Frisian (1800-present) has been adopted by Buitenrust Hettema for his edition of an anthology of West Frisian texts (1887/1888). Since then, this tripartition has been generally accepted. This might be called remarkable, because the idea that there has to be distinguished a Middle Frisian stage from 1550–1800 has been criticized almost from the beginning. The dispute involved not only the unfortunate term 'Middle Frisian', which suggests that the Frisian language of this stage is similar to other Middle Germanic languages (recall Markey's complaint concerning the same misleading implication of the term 'Old Frisian'); more importantly, the assumption of 1800 as a turning point is criticized for its lack of linguistic support.

As early as 1889, Bremer notes that the Frisian language did not undergo such changes in the period 1600–1800 that a special term such as 'Middle Frisian' is justified. Van Helten (1890: VIII) subscribes to this viewpoint. In later years, similar opinions are expressed by Siebs (1901: 1173), Boersma (1939), Krogmann (1957: 1909) and van der Meer (1987b: 61). The last author considers the fact that the dictionary of Modern Frisian begins at 1800 as a shortcoming; a dictionary of Middle Frisian should be seen as an indispensable supplement.

Miedema (1968) presents an alternative periodization of the Frisian language without a Middle Frisian stage. However, he maintains 1800 as a turning point, but now as a subdivision of a Modern West Frisian stage from 1500 until present. His objection to the label 'Middle Frisian' seems to be therefore mainly a terminological matter. Interestingly, he himself puts forward a strong linguistic argument against this subdivision of Modern Frisian based on the case of post-medieval breaking in the Frisian vowel system. This diachronic process, highly characteristic for Modern West Frisian,[5] starts before 1700 and continues after 1800, undermining, from a linguistic perspective, this date as a turning point.

We know of no linguistic arguments from the literature which support the idea that the West Frisian language of the period 1550–1800 differs essentially from that after 1800. A caveat is in order, however, since research on the development of Frisian in these period is not abundant, so new investigations could prove otherwise. On the basis of what is known, we will assume for the time being that there is no linguistically motivated turning point between 1550 and present. It is

5. Breaking results in a set of so-called rising diphthongs. See van der Meer (1985: 49) for the dating of this process.

natural therefore to use the term Modern (West) Frisian for the language of this period. This gives us the following modified periodization:

(2)

before ca 1275:	Pre-Old Frisian;	
ca 1275–1550:	Old Frisian;	
	ca 1275–1400:	Classical Old Frisian;
	ca 1400–1550:	Post-Classical Old Frisian; Charter Frisian
ca 1550-present:	Modern Frisian	

1.2 Turning point 1400

It has been assumed by scholars for a long time that Old Frisian should be divided into two subsets of dialects of different geographical origin: Old *East* Frisian and Old *West* Frisian, with the river Lauwers as the dividing line. This geographical split up has been attacked by Sjölin (1966, 1984), who has argued that the variation in the manuscripts should not be interpreted geographically, but chronologically. He proposes to replace the distinction between Old East Frisian and Old West Frisian with a chronological division. Although Sjölin himself is careful in avoiding to mention a specific year as the turning point, it is in the spirit of his work and others (see Note 4), to consider 1400 as such.[6] The manuscripts that are labeled as Classical Old Frisian are roughly from before 1400, and the Post-Classical ones are from after 1400. In addition, the language of charters is distinguished as a separate category, which belongs chronologically to the period of Post-Classical Old Frisian.[7]

As Sjölin (1984: 62) makes clear, his chronological classification applies to Old Frisian as it has come down to us as a set of written texts, and is not intended for Old Frisian as a spoken language. This explains why the evidence he uses is mainly based on considerations involving style and content, and orthographic properties. This has the important implication that the distinction between Classical and Post-Classical Old Frisian as proposed by Sjölin does not necessarily reflect a chronological development in the language itself. In fact, the question whether a periodization of Old Frisian based on linguistic criteria is justified, is entirely open.

In answering this question, it should be noted, that several authors have argued that Old Frisian shows dialect variation from early on. Four well-known criteria for regional variety of Old Frisian are:

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6. Markey (1981: 45) argues for 1475 as the relevant turning point.

7. All of these charters except one originate from the area to the west of the Lauwers. The oldest charter dates from 1370, and the youngest from 1547.

i. Germanic *a* before nasal in closed syllables goes to Old East Frisian *o*, and remains *a* in Old West Frisian (Hofmann (1970));
ii. the distribution of Old East Frisian *hīr* 'here' versus Old West Frisian *hēr*;
iii. an exclusive occurrence of *hebba* 'to have' in Old East Frisian, while Old West Frisian strongly prefers *habba*;
iv. the variation between long forms *stonda* 'to stand', *gunga* to go' and short forms *stān* and *gān*, correlating with the presence or absence of *-n* in monosyllabic (contracted) infinitives: Old East Frisian has monosyllabic infinitives without *-n*, *dwā* 'to do' and *sia* 'to see', and long forms *stonda* and *gunga*, while Old West Frisian has monosyllabic infinitives on *-n*, *dwān* and *siān*, and the short forms *stān* and *gān* (Meijering (1990)).

An example of dialect variation that plays a role in the remainder of this paper concerns the distribution of full vowels in unstressed final syllables. In the East Frisian Riustringer manuscripts R_1 and R_2, dating from ca 1300, the full vowels *i*, *u*, and *o* are preserved in unstressed final syllables after short stressed syllables. These vowels are reduced to *e* in the contemporary, or even slightly older East Frisian manuscript B_1, stemming from Brokmerland:

(3)

R_1	B_1	
hir	*here*	'army'
sunu	*sune*	'son'
fretho	*frethe*	'peace'

One could speculate that the Riustringer manuscripts represent an older stage of the language than the one from Brokmerland. However, the contrast between full and reduced vowels cannot be used as an argument for a chronological difference between the languages involved. This is clear from the fact that the Riustringer full vowels are maintained in much younger stages of the dialects of Wangerooge and Wursten under the same conditions.[8] So the difference is more likely to be a dialectal one.

The conclusion that geographically determined dialect variation has been reported from the beginning of the written tradition of Old Frisian, even within the East Frisian area, has important consequences for theorizing about a periodization of Old Frisian in linguistic terms. The older varieties of Old Frisian are Old *East* Frisian. The only exception seems to be the first part of the Codex Unia, see Siebs (1901: 1172). The younger varieties are Old *West* Frisian, again almost

8. This argument goes back to Bremer (1889: 252), and is more recently made by Hofmann (1971b: 367).

without exception. Consequently, the geographically determined distinction between Old East Frisian and Old West Frisian coincides (almost) with Sjölin's chronological distinction between Classical and Post-classical Old Frisian. This has the important implication that the language of the Old West Frisian manuscripts cannot be considered to be the continuation of the language of the Old East Frisian manuscripts. Because the linguistic evidence of 'early' West Frisian and 'late' East Frisian is very limited, it is hardly possible to verify empiricially whether a chronological division such as the one proposed by Sjölin corresponds to a linguistic development. The linguistic differences between Classical and Post-Classical Old Frisian may be dialectal, and cannot be used to underpin a linguistic periodization of Old Frisian. Therefore, Sjölin's bipartition of Old Frisian is not useful for the approach taken in this paper, which attempts to reconsider the periodization of Frisian on the basis of linguistic criteria only. For the time being, we take the label 'Old Frisian' to be an umbrella term for a collection of genetically related dialects from 1275 until 1550, without a further breakdown into (linguistically definable) subperiods. This brings us to a second adjustment of the traditional periodization of Frisian:

(4) before ca 1275: Pre-Old Frisian;
ca 1275–1550: Old Frisian;
ca 1550–present: Modern Frisian

1.3 Old Frisian

If we compare the periodization under (4) with that of Germanic languages closely related to Frisian, i.e. the West Germanic languages,[9] (4) still has a number of problematic aspects. From the literature, it is possible to compile the following overview:

(5) ca 700–1100: Old English, Old Saxon, Old High German, Old Dutch;
ca 1100–1500: Middle English, Middle Low German, Middle High German, Middle Dutch;
ca 1500-present: Modern English, Modern Low German, Modern High German, Modern Dutch

Comparing the periodizations (4) and (5), it is striking that in (4), the label 'Old' is used for a West Germanic language from the period 1275–1550. Furthermore,

9. We do not include the Scandinavian languages in our discussion. Their periodization is partly similar to (5) (Danish), and partly not (Swedish and Norwegian), see Ralph (2000: 215).