A new toy in the world of modern electronic communications has arrived in Fryslân, namely Internet, and along with it e-mail. When asked what these new media might be called in Frisian, the answers internet and e-mail are hardly surprising. We can see that both Fryslân and the Frisian language are also taking part in the digitalisation of the world. New concepts, new words in technology retain their original Anglo-American names in most European languages. This paper will deal with the process of developing and renewing the Frisian lexicon. But first I am going to give a brief introduction to Fryslân itself.

Fryslân is one of the twelve provinces of the kingdom of the Netherlands and is situated in the northern part of the country. Fryslân is a flat province, much of its territory being below sea level. It is protected from the sea by dikes. The capital of Fryslân is Ljouwert, or Leeuwarden, as it is known in Dutch. In the past, Fryslân was an agricultural province with more cattle living there than people. Nowadays farming still plays an important role in Fryslân’s economy, but both the service industries and industry itself have also become important. Fryslân has a population of about 600,000 and approximately 55% of them consider Frisian to be their first language. While about 74% of the population claim that they can speak Frisian, 94% say that they can understand it when it is spoken, 65% claim that they can read Frisian, but only 17% say that they can write it (Gorter & Jonkman 1995:9–11).

Along with Dutch, German and English, Frisian is an ancient West Germanic language, differing from and yet closely related to Dutch. Linguistically, however, it is considered to be the language most closely related to English. Traditionally the history of the Frisian language is classified into three periods: Old Frisian, which was spoken before 1550; Middle Frisian, spoken between 1550 and 1800; and Modern Frisian, spoken after 1800. Old Frisian was not only used in the spoken form, but also as a written language for administrative and judicial purposes. The earliest documentation of Frisian stems from East and Westerlauwers Fryslân, mainly in the form of runic inscriptions. The oldest complete texts in Frisian are legal documents dating from the late Middle Ages.
up to 1550. At that time Fryslân was monolingual, and Frisian was spoken in what today is known as the province of Fryslân, as well as in Groningen and German East Fryslân (Tiersma 1985:1–4, Boelens 1993:3–5).

In the late Middle Ages, certain historical changes took place and for this reason the position of the Frisian language also changed. Dutch became more influential in Fryslân. The government and the judiciary started to use the Dutch language exclusively, as did schools and churches. Frisian became restricted to use in the home and rural areas and hardly existed in written form. During this Middle Frisian period an incidental revival of the language was only to be found in literature. The most well-known poet of this period was Gysbert Japicx, who lived from 1603 to 1666. Many authors of the early 19th century were influenced by him. Particularly worth mentioning here are the Halbertsma brothers from Grou. Their writing represented a new lease of life for Frisian and even today their work is still published in Rimen en Teltsjes (“Rhymes and Tales”), a book which is popular among Frisians. Since the advent of the Halbertsma brothers, the inhabitants of Fryslân have been able to read much more in their mother tongue.

Along with this 19th century revival of Frisian literature, the Fryske Beweging (“Frisian Movement”) also came into being, which fought for recognition of the Frisian language. And in the course of the 20th century, Frisian has regained its current position within the spheres of government, judicature and education. However, although the position of Frisian has improved within these spheres, its prestige has not improved to the same degree. Frisian is still often given dialect status only, and its right to be officially recognised on the same level as Dutch is often ignored. However, surveys like Taal yn Fryslân, which were held in 1980 and 1994, showed “that Frisian is becoming increasingly more accepted as the customary language in areas which used to be exclusively reserved to the Dutch language” (Boelens 1993:12).

Several dialects are spoken in Fryslân, among them those spoken in the town of Hylpen and on the islands of Skylge and Skiermuontseach. While these are Frisian dialects, they differ significantly from those spoken on the mainland. The Frisian dialects of the Fryslân mainland can roughly be divided into three varieties: these being that of South-West Fryslân, de Súdwesthoeke; that of the North, de Klaai and the East, de Wálden. The differences between these dialects are phonological rather than lexical (van der Veen 1986:21). Some examples where the difference in pronunciation can be seen are Klaaifrysk hait [haiɪ] and Wáldfrysk heit [heɪt] “father”. Pronouns like hy, my “he”, “me” also show the difference between these dialects. When an inhabitant of the Wálden says hy [hi] or my [mi], we can hear the same words pronounced as hij [heɪ] and mij [meɪ] by the Klaaifriezen. The dialect of the Súdwesthoeke differs from the others in the absence of the phonological process of “breaking”. This phenomenon involves the alternation of rising and falling diphthongs. For example, the rising diphthong [œa] in a singular noun like doar is “broken” to a falling diphthong [wa] in the plural form doarren (Tiersma 1985:20–21).
In the north-western part of the province, the Bilts dialect is spoken in the municipality of It Bilt. Bilts is a mixture of the Dutch dialects spoken in the province of Southern Holland and Frisian itself. In the southern region of De Stellingwerven, people speak a Saxon dialect known as Stellingwerfs, whereas, in the cities of Ljouwert, Dokkum, Frjentsjer, Harns, Boalsert and Snits people not only speak Frisian or Dutch, but also Stedfrysk (“city Frisian”), which is a mixture of Dutch and Frisian.

The current position of Frisian can be described as moving from dialect status to a more official status within a bilingual province. With the use of Frisian in official circles, one can see how this movement has taken place. Seventy years ago the governor of Fryslân did not allow Frisian in the sessions of Provincial States, the regional parliament. Today this policy has changed. A brochure of the province of Fryslân states: “The province of Fryslân and a number of Frisian municipalities sometimes use the Frisian language in their written communications. Proclamations, ordinances, personnel advertisements, letters and other provincial and municipal documents are in certain cases drawn up in Frisian. The province believes that in official circles the Frisian language should occupy a position equal to that of Dutch, both in administrative and judicial matters” (Boelens 1993:19).

One of the successful achievements of the Frisian movement has been the introduction of Frisian in schools. In 1907 the Provincial Government provided a grant to support the teaching of Frisian as a subject after regular school hours. In 1937, the 1920 Education Act on primary education was changed. From then on a regional dialect was allowed to be taught as an optional subject. The word “dialect” is indicative of the idea that was behind the 1937 Amendment, in other words the recognition of Frisian as a second language in the Netherlands would have had political consequences. In 1955, the 1920 Education Act was changed yet again. Frisian was allowed to be used as a medium of instruction in grades 1–3 and as a subject in grades 1–6. Since 1980 Frisian has been a mandatory subject in elementary schools in Friesland and Frisian can be used as a medium of instruction in all grades of primary education (Zondag 1993:17). Schools in Fryslân mostly use the Dutch language as a medium of instruction, but there are a number of bilingual schools, which also use Frisian. In the lower classes of these bilingual schools, children learn to read and write Frisian. Dutch is used later on in school life.

There is a basic education system in secondary schools in the Netherlands. Pupils attending the first three years follow an integrated programme. “Within this programme differentiation in time and level is not only possible but recommended” (Zondag 1993:16). In Fryslân, Frisian (as part of Dutch as a subject) is on the curriculum of what is known as the basic education programme. On the other hand, Frisian is hardly used as a language of instruction in secondary schools. Since 1985 kindergartens have been integrated into primary schools. Here the same situation can be found. Some schools use both languages, but most of them are Dutch monolingual. Whether or not Frisian is
taught or used in primary schools will depend on the ability and will of the teachers themselves. "Frisian is a mandatory subject, but in a situation where educational freedom prevails, the government will not prescribe precise guidelines as to how Frisian should be taught. The number of classroom hours spent on Frisian as a subject is limited to a minimum of 30 or 45 minutes per week in every grade" (Zondag 1993:15).

Eight years ago a small group of parents started a monolingual pre-school kindergarten in Ljouwert. Until that time Frisian had scarcely been used in nursery playgroups. Over a period of eight years, six *pjutteboartersplakken*, as they are called in Frisian, were opened. About 100 children attend these six nursery schools. The aim of the founding organisation is to open a new pre-school kindergarten every year. Even non-Frisian speaking parents decided to send their children to these *pjutteboartersplakken*.

**Media**

The use of Frisian in the media has always been restricted. While magazines and newspapers accepted Frisian, it still did not occupy very much space. Dutch remained the dominant language. The main reason for not using Frisian in newspapers and magazines was, and still is, that most native speakers of Frisian can read Dutch better than Frisian. So the number of articles in Frisian has remained at the same level. When Frisian speakers are interviewed in newspapers, they are also quoted in Frisian. News about Frisian culture and activities is often written in Frisian. But this news is only a small part of the total amount of news and the group interested in this news is also a small one.

In 1995 a new phenomenon was introduced, namely the F-page. In both regional newspapers, the *Friesch Dagblad* and the *Leeuwarder Courant*, one page is published once a week with items of interest in Frisian: recipes, proverbs, book reviews, short stories and popular linguistic information all go to make up this friendly page.

A monthly family magazine called *Frysk en Frij* is also published in Frisian. Furthermore there are two literary magazines and several other journals on education, linguistics and science.

Finally, the regional radio station, *Omrop Fryslân*, broadcasts in Frisian every day. These radio programmes consist of the news, the weather, music, question and answer services, cultural affairs and children's programmes. Three years ago *Omrop Fryslân* also started to broadcast television programmes. Every day there is an hourly broadcast in Frisian consisting of items like the daily regional news or information about current affairs. Sports, cultural affairs and the weather forecast are also part of this programme. Both the radio and television programmes are very popular. They are very important for the Frisian language. Language is thus used in modern media, and with the help of radio and television, popular information can be provided on the Frisian
language. Courses in Frisian, and question and answer services on the Frisian language are ways of using these media to strengthen the position of the language.

Religion

With the reformation of the Church in the 16th century, the language of church and religion became Dutch rather than Frisian. Both the Protestant and Catholic Church still use Dutch as their official language. Christian Frisian activists have worked hard for more Frisian to be introduced into church and religious life, and they have achieved some good results. In 1915 the first sermon was held in Frisian. Since 1943 there has been a complete bible in Frisian. A new translation into more modern Frisian was published in 1978. In 1978 a book was also published containing both hymns and the rhymed versions of the psalms. There is a list of about 100 ministers who are able to conduct a sermon in Frisian, but every week only about 15 from a total of 500 sermons are actually held in Frisian. People are not used to hearing the Word of God in their own language. It is considered disrespectful to use an ordinary “dialect” with no prestige and which has the status of being a “farmers’ language”, instead of the more formal and official language. People are of the opinion that a formal language is needed to talk about or to a supreme being like God. The Frisian language is not considered to be formal and it is therefore neglected or rejected in religious life.

Standard variety

A language that has been the official language of a country for a long time develops its own standard variety. In the Middle Ages, several Germanic dialects were in use in the Netherlands, and Frisian was one of them. At that time there was no real standard variety, either in Frisian or in any other language. This situation changed as the region of Holland became more powerful and gained more influence over the Netherlands. The language of Holland thus came to be increasingly used in administration, trade, schools, churches and many other domains. Dutch became the official language of the Netherlands and developed a standard variety which was also in use in Fryslân.

On the other hand, Frisian had not been used as an official language since the Middle Ages and had thus had no chance to develop its own standard variety. When it was once again recognized to a small degree as an official language, creating a standard language for use in written form turned out to be a problem. Standard languages are often created from one of the main dialects of a country. The dialect spoken by the largest number of speakers or by those
having the greatest power is either accepted by all other speakers or is enforced as a "standard" (Tiersma 1985:6).

The standard variety of Frisian did not develop in the same way as our "big brother", Dutch, did. As Frisian was not used in the media, schools, churches or government, but merely as a language within the home or in informal speech, none of the Frisian dialects could become a standard variety. But through the revival of Frisian consciousness, especially in the 20th century, a development towards a standard variety commenced.

"Frisian scholars and activists [...] developed a literary language which was based largely on the Klaaifrysk dialects. As with other such languages, standard Frisian is quite conservative in nature, often resisting the use of Dutch loanwords after they have become firmly entrenched in spoken Frisian." (Tiersma 1985:6)

Frisian does not have as strict a norm as many other standard languages do. In literary Frisian, there is a certain amount of dialectical diversity.

Frisian dictionaries are based upon the standard language, but they also contain dialect forms. The Algemeine Fryske Underrjocht Kommisje institute of education considers the dictionaries currently in use to be the norm in Frisian and prescribes this norm to their students, also using it in their course-books.

Where other languages have a long history of developing a standard variety, a minority language like Frisian either has no history at all or very little history. Nevertheless, the process of renewing and developing the Frisian language actually started in the 19th century.

Linguistic terminology was one of the first domains to be systematically extended. A grammatical description of a language needs the right terms. However, such terms did not exist in the Frisian language. Consequently, early 20th century scholars created new grammatical terms for a Frisian grammar published in 1904 which were based on German grammatical terminology. A list of modern grammatical terms was then compiled in the seventies, and this list has since become standard. Some of the following examples show how Frisian borrowed from German, instead of from Dutch. The word *tiidwurd* was used for "verb" (viz. the German *Zeitwort* as opposed to the Dutch *werkwoord*). Other examples of this kind are *ferhåldingswurd* for "preposition" (viz. the German *Verhältniswort* as opposed to the Dutch *voorzetsel*) and *iental/meartal* for "singular/plural" (viz. the German *Einzahl/Mehrzahl* as opposed to the Dutch *enkelvoud/meervoud*). New terms were also created such as *wurdlid* ("word part") to refer to a syllable (De Haan & Hoekstra 1993:15).

The development of the Frisian language continued under the influence of the literary movement of the Jongfriezen ("Young Frisians") around 1915. They claimed that Frisian should have a role in all domains of society and therefore they introduced new words in order for it to do so. Some of them are still frequently used in both the spoken and written language. Examples of these are: *gearkomste* "meeting" and *karbrief* "regulations". The work of Dr. Jacob Botke needs to be mentioned in this context. In the first part of this cen-
tury he wrote many articles and several books on subjects such as geology and biology. He created Frisian terms which are still used in publications in this sphere.

When the *Fryske Akademy* was founded in 1938, a new stimulus was given to the lexical expansion of Frisian. Scientific books on several subjects created and used new terminology in these subject areas. New lists with standardised biological terms were created for lexicographical purposes (De Haan & Hoekstra 1993:16).

**Terminology**

Modernising the lexicon of Frisian today is mostly an institutional matter and sometimes it takes place spontaneously. Since 1980, when the *taalburo* ("language department") was founded, a terminologist has been working on this job. He is trying to modernise the Frisian language by creating acceptable new words using the rules of Frisian word formation. Several domains have been selected rather than involving the entire lexicon in this terminological development of Frisian. When the terminological work at the language department started, the first area to receive special attention was the administrative domain. Official words and terms in Dutch were collected and with the cooperation of a group of informants, a list of Frisian equivalents was compiled. This list then found its way to the officials' desks and has been quite a help in writing official papers. Some examples of these new terms are: *stojiske* "fly ash", *riemplicht* "obligation to keep a dog on a leash", *trochskynkeamer* "through lounge", *knyppunt* "bottleneck, pressure point". A second domain the terminologist has concentrated on is education. At the moment he is working on a list of words to be used in school subjects like chemistry, mathematics, biology and geography.

A list of words has also been published on food, eating and cooking. For folkloric reasons restaurants like to serve meals with a menu in Frisian, and they often ask the *Fryske Akademy* for help in translating Dutch into Frisian. They can create as many Frisian menus as they like with the *List fan iterijwurden* ("List of Vocabulary on Food"). It is not known whether food in Frisian restaurants has become tastier than it was in the past.

**Dictionaries and databases**

A dictionary can show how language is changing. To demonstrate this, a comparison between one part of the macrostructures of two dictionaries is made: between an older dictionary and one which is in preparation and is to be pub-
lished in about five years. Several database systems are used to compile these dictionaries.

Since 1938, two collections of lexical material on the Frisian language have been compiled at the Fryske Akademy. The main purpose of these card indexes was to form a database for use in compiling dictionaries, in particular the Wurdboek fan de Friske taal ("Dictionary of the Frisian language"). The material collected for what is known as "the old card index" was based on older literature dating back to the period between 1800-1975, which means that it consists mainly of Frisian words representative of this period. Old handicrafts and 19th century agrarian words are well-described and lots of material is available on these subjects. More modern words, representative of our time are not included, because the collection of material stopped in 1975.

The way this old card index was compiled was neither very professional nor systematic. Voluntary workers read books and newspapers and whenever they found any interesting language material, they wrote it on cards for the database. Thus the more unusual language found its way to the database, proverbs and old sayings, in particular. More common words like prepositions and pronouns were considered to be too normal and were not noted. The lack of such language material was felt in the early fifties and the solution was to create a new, more representative database, which today is known as "the new index". In order to form this new database, a selection of written language from the period between 1800-1950 was selected and indexed. This meant that over 2,000,000 tokens were now available to the lexicographer, including lots of index cards with grammatical words like dat, dy't, de (40,000 tokens) and frequently used verbs such as hawwe, wêze, gean "to have, to be, to go", etc.

The bilingual dictionary, Frysk Wurdboek. Frysk-nederlânsk, published in 1984 was based upon the old collection of material. This dictionary has 1,200 pages and about 55,000 entries. The Frisian headwords are translated or defined through the medium of Dutch. This book is first and foremost a translation dictionary, but it is also used as an explanatory dictionary. Together with part 2, (Dutch-Frisian), these dictionaries are still called the new dictionaries, although they were published twelve years ago. As the macrostructure of part one was based on the old handwritten card index, it contains the more traditional part of the lexicon of Frisian.

Since the publication of these bilingual dictionaries, the need for a monolingual explanatory dictionary in modern Frisian has remained. So a new project was started in 1990. The aim of this project was to compile a dictionary of modern 20th century Frisian, based on a new electronic corpus, together with the older corpus that had been used in the Wurdboek fan de Friske taal.

Since 1985 a new corpus of language material has been created, namely an electronic database of Frisian. The purpose of this database is to create a corpus for linguistic and lexicological research and for the compilation of dictionaries. With these aims in mind therefore, a corpus was needed which would cover the lexicon of the Frisian language as widely as possible. In order to achieve this, the compilers selected 1,100 titles, extending over all kinds of
topics. Political manifestos, journalese, the Bible, juridical texts, novels, poetry and spoken texts such as radio news have all been incorporated into the database. At present the corpus contains 20,000,000 word forms (tokens) representing about 400,000 different words (types) (Dykstra & Reitsma 1993:63). The period covered is the 20th century including the early nineties.

This new database has been formed much more systematically than the old corpus was. So the macrostructure of a dictionary compiled with the help of this new corpus will not only be more complete and representative than that of the older dictionaries, but it will also contain neologisms.

To check this some parts of the macrostructures of both dictionaries have been selected and compared with each other. While the old dictionary had 753 words in the k to kau part, the new dictionary has 818 entries. This difference of 65 entries between one dictionary and the other is not just a matter of neologisms but also an increase in the number of entries as a result of the new method of compiling lexical databases.

Words from the domain of the new media are: kabeltelevyzje (and words connected with this subject like kabelabonnee, kabelkrante, kabelnet, kamerafrou, kamerman, kameraploech).

Audio: kassette, kassettedek, kassetterekorder.

New food: kamembert “camembert (French cheese)” and trends in food: karmenu “several menus that can be chosen from” and kasgriente “greenhouse vegetables”.

Leisure: kampearauto, kampearwein “camper”.

Drugs: kannabis.

The word kangeroebuert “kangaroo neighbourhood” is also new. Kangeroebuert is not a neighbourhood where dangerous kangaroos jump to and fro on precious new cars, but a neighbourhood with newly built houses. What is meant here by kangeroe is that the owners of these new houses jump very high in financial terms, but they have empty pouches (or purses).

The financial world is also represented with words like kaptaalmerk, kaptaalrinte and kaptaaltyntinsyf.

The domain of health care can be found in words like kardiogram, kardiology, kardiolooc.

Another new word is kantoartún “office garden” (a big room with many desks separated from each other by plants). Other words on this topic are: kadobon “gift coupon” and kadostelsel “gift system”.

Popular religious topics can be found: karma.

And of course sports: katamaran.

From another part of the new dictionary a topical issue like the environment results in 12 new compounds containing the word miljeu “environment”, these being: miljeu, miljeuaktivist, miljeubeheer “environmental conservation control”, miljeubelesting “environmental tax”, miljeubeskerming “environmental protection”, miljeubewust, miljeudeinsje, miljeufersmoarging “environmental pollution”, miljeufreonlik, miljeuheffing, miljeuhygienë, miljeupolysje, and
miljeuramp, whereas the old dictionary only had miljeu and miljeufersmoarging.

In conclusion it can therefore be seen that a substantial part of new word entries are to be found in the new monolingual dictionary. A large part of these new entries are relatively new words for new concepts which did not exist at the time when the old card indexes were compiled.

Looking more closely at these new words, it can be seen that they are mostly international words that have been borrowed and adapted to the spelling, grammar and pronunciation of Frisian. The compounds with miljeu demonstrate this process very clearly.

This process of forming new words is of course not unique to Frisian. Every language borrows from other languages. But this process is more marked with minority languages. Most of the time, the dominating language has already found new words for new concepts because its language infrastructure is more developed. Speakers of minority languages are confronted with these new concepts in the dominating language and consequently they will usually choose the words of this language when they need to refer to them. Words like kompjûter, floppydisk, interface, windows, internet and e-mail are further examples of this phenomenon. Even the Dutch language goes through this process. Purists see this anglicising as a real problem and a threat to their own language, and the same is true for the Dutchifying of Frisian. It is also true that the characteristic qualities of a language will thus start to disappear or at least decrease. This is part of the struggle that minority languages have to go through.

A positive attitude both on the part of the speakers of minority languages and the government can, however, create a basis for the survival of these languages. Acceptance of the fact that Frisian exists and acceptance of the right to use Frisian in all domains and circumstances is a minimal requirement for this goal to be reached. Provided that these circumstances are realised, a living language will continue to exist and will be able to deal with every challenge that is met.

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This process of forming new words is of course not unique to Frisian. Many minority languages (some of which are covered in this book) are also losing their identity. Most of the time, the dominant languages simply found new words for new concepts because its language had to change to reflect the changes in society. However, we cannot forget that the new concepts in the dominant languages are often taken over by the minority languages when they need to refer to these. Words like ambulance, supermarket, software, television, internet and e-mail are further examples of this phenomenon. Even the Dutch language goes through this process. Frisian can also be considered as a real problem and a threat to their own language, and the same is true for the Dutchifying of Frisian. It is also true that the characteristics of a language will start to disappear or at least decrease. This is part of the struggle that minority languages have to go through.

A positive attitude both on the part of the speakers of minority languages and the government can, however, create a basis for the survival of these languages. Acceptance of the fact that Frisian exists and acceptance of the right to use Frisian in all domains and circumstances is a minimal requirement for this goal to be reached. Provided that these circumstances are realised, a living language will continue to exist and will be able to deal with every challenge that is met.

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