Foot Structure and Word Stress in Middle Dutch

Evidence from ‘Lutgart’

Paula Fikkert

1. Introduction

Whereas word stress in modern Dutch is subject to continuous debate (cf. Kager 1989, Trommelen and Zonneveld 1989, Booij 1995), word stress in the older stages of the language is seldom discussed. One of the few exceptions is Zonneveld’s (1992, 1993a) investigation of word stress in the Middle Dutch (MNL) text ‘Het Leven van Sinte Lutgart’ [Saint Lutgart’s Life]. Zonneveld’s work points out several interesting issues. His main conclusions are, however, challenged in this paper.

Zonneveld’s first conclusion is that not much has changed in the last 700 years with respect to word stress and that the stress system in ‘Lutgart’ is very similar to that of modern Dutch. In this paper I argue that the prosodic system of ‘Lutgart’ resembles that of the old and middle stages of the other West Germanic (WGmc) languages. It still has a Germanic foot, and moreover, Open Syllable Lengthening (OSL) has not yet run its full course. This latter claim challenges the assumption of all MNL grammars, namely that OSL took place in Old Dutch (ONL) and was a fact in MNL. The only evidence given for this assumption comes from rhyme. However, rhyme in ‘Lutgart’ does not motivate this assumption.

Zonneveld’s second conclusion is that the prosodic variation found in ‘Lutgart’ is largely due to the status of the schwa as a stress attractor. This confirms his synchronic analysis of modern Dutch, which also assumes the stress attracting nature of schwa (Trommelen and Zonneveld 1989, Kager and Zonneveld 1986). I will argue that the variation is not due to the nature of schwa per se, but is due to prosodic preferences at play at the time of ‘Lutgart’. Variation is found only in certain environments, which partly coincide with those where English showed Trisyllabic Shortening (TSS) (Lahiri and Fikkert, 1996). Dutch did not have TSS but chose another way of dealing with less favoured prosodic structures, as we will see below.
2. Prosodic structure of WGmc compared with that of modern Dutch

It is well documented that word stress in the older stages of the WGmc languages was different from the modern situation (see Lahiri, Riad and Jacobs in press for an overview). Stress was by and large initial in WGmc. Most MNL grammars mention that stress was still mainly initial, and attribute non-initial word stress to three different groups of words (cf. Schönfeld 1947, Franck 1910, van Bree 1977, 1987). First, prefixed verbs have word stress on the root, resulting in non-initial word stress. Second, certain suffixes (mostly native ones) attract stress to the syllable immediately preceding the suffix, as in driehoek — driehoekig (‘triangle’ — ‘triangular’). Third, loan words maintain main stress in their original position. Schönfeld (1947) remarks “Since many French loans entered the Dutch language the common feeling for initial stress could get lost”. The question is: why could this happen in Dutch but not in English, where French loans did not keep final word stress?

None of the MNL grammars mention foot structure. However, it has been argued that the older stages of WGmc had a resolved quantity-sensitive trochee, where the head of the foot must have two moras (Dresher and Lahiri 1991). Feet were built from left to right and main stress was on the leftmost foot. Long vowels and closed syllables count as heavy in WGmc. It has been argued that the Germanic foot was still prevalent in Middle English (ME) (Lahiri and Dresher 1994, Lahiri and Fikkert 1996, Lahiri, Riad and Jacobs in press), and that the stress system changed in early modern English (cf. Halle and Keyser 1971, Lahiri and Fikkert 1996). In this paper, I will assume that early MNL also had the resolved moraic trochee. Dresher and Lahiri (1991) further argue that final non-branching (i.e. monosyllabic) feet underwent destressing.

The situation in modern Dutch is quite different from that in WGmc. Most authors agree that feet are built from right to left, where main stress falls on the rightmost foot, and also that the foot is a quantity-sensitive trochee (cf. Kager 1989). The exact form of the foot is still a matter of dispute, but in any event the modern Dutch metrical pattern is not the same as in early Germanic. Also, quantity is different: in modern Dutch only closed syllables count as heavy, long vowels do not. Non-branching heavy (but not superheavy) feet still seem to have a special status in Dutch: they are extrametrical for main stress assignment (Lahiri and Koreman 1988, Kager 1989).

The aim here is to gain more insight into the prosodic structure of MNL at the time of ‘Lutgart’. 
3. The 'Lutgart': facts and meter

3.1 General facts

The 'Sente Lutgart' is a much more elaborated Dutch adaptation of Thomas van Cantimpré’s 'vita piae Lutgardes' probably by Willem van Affligem (van Veerdeghem 1899, Knuvelder 1982). 'Sente Lutgart' is the earliest long poem of Middle Dutch (Gysseling 1985); it counts 20,406 pairwise rhyming lines. It was probably written between 1263 and 1270. Only books two and three still exist.

The work describes the life of 'Lutgart', who was born in Tongeren in 1182. In 1194 she entered the Benedictine convent in Sint Truiden and moved to the convent Aywières near Liège in 1206. There she stayed until her death in 1246. Much of her life she was occupied with fasting (except for bread and beer) for the sins of her fellow men. Almost immediately after her death the original Latin prose version was written. The Dutch adaptation is more than a translation: it is a poem written in a rich style.

3.2 Meter in 'Lutgart'

The meter of 'Lutgart' is remarkable because it is the only MNL text written in pure iambic meter. According to Zonneveld the definitions given for Chaucer’s iambic pentameter by Halle and Keyser (1966) are by and large applicable to 'Lutgart'. They are given in (1):

(1) Metrical principles for Chaucer's iambic pentameter
   a. **Principle I**: The iambic pentameter verse consists of ten positions to which may be appended one or more extrametrical syllables
   b. **Principle II**: A position is normally occupied by a single syllable, but under certain conditions it may be occupied by more than one syllable or none. Two vowels may constitute a single position provided that they adjoin, or are separated by a word-boundary which may be followed by h-
   c. **Principle III**: A stress maximum is constituted by a syllable bearing linguistically determined stress that is greater than that of the two syllables adjacent to it in the same verse. A stress maximum may only occupy even positions within a verse, but not every even position need be so occupied.

'Lutgart' is written in a rhyming iambic tetrameter, which consists of eight (instead of 10) positions as can be seen in L9 in (2), to which may be appended one extrametrical syllable to create a feminine rhyme (LL1–4, 7–8). This
extrametrical syllable must contain a schwa; i.e. it cannot have a full vowel (Zonneveld 1992, 1993a).

(2)  First lines of ‘Lutgart’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00001</td>
<td>Nu hébbic ’v met wáren wárden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00002</td>
<td>En déel der uíten uán lutgárden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00003</td>
<td>Uerclárt gi héré énde vrówen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00004</td>
<td>Daer íc in mí te góeder trówen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00005</td>
<td>Gepínet hébbe al sönder wánc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00006</td>
<td>Tehoudene ál den séluen gánc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00007</td>
<td>Jn dídsche, ende ín den séluen wégen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00008</td>
<td>Te gáne, die íc vánt geslégen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00009</td>
<td>Jn din latíne uóre mí.;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

L7 shows that the number of syllables can be higher than 9. The underlined schwas are in elision position (see Halle and Keyser’s Principle II). This not only occurs in the context of schwa plus vowel, but also if schwa is followed by a word starting with /h/(3a) or a coronal consonant (3b):

(3)  Contexts for elision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Ende häre wél gerákde léuen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dat sí daer léiddhe hebídhe gehóert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Ende nít onthóuden dádt men séít</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ende dáér dat sácrámént onttínc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dat gí uwes sinne wórdt so uróet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jnt héilege lánt van óuer zée</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Line-initial and line-final positions often behave differently. In line-final position no unstressed syllables with full vowels occur. Here word stress is sometimes shifted, since the rhyming element must bear stress. This poses a limit on the kind of variation, as shown in (4): viant can occur with initial or final stress line-internally, but only occurs with final stress line-finally.

(4)  No variation line-finally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13548</td>
<td>Hi vindt din viant wél so kóene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12197</td>
<td>Dats die viánt die félle ghír</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13551</td>
<td>Dat gí die pláche dint viánt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13552</td>
<td>En rúmet nít. want hí in hánt)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most important principle for analysing prosodic systems is principle III. According to Zonneveld the basic rules for ‘Lutgart’ are: (i) all monosyllabic content words bear stress; (ii) all polysyllabic words with one full vowel bear...
stress on that vowel; (iii) stress in words with more than one full vowel falls where the modern Dutch speaker would expect it. The focus here is on those cases which run against the intuition of the modern Dutch speaker, many of which show prosodic variation.

4. Zonneveld’s analysis of word stress in ‘Lutgart’

4.1 Word stress in ‘Lutgart’

Based on a metrical analysis of ‘Lutgart’ Zonneveld arrives at the observations in (5), concluding that word stress is largely the same as in modern Dutch.

(5) Zonneveld’s observations regarding main stress in ‘Lutgart’

a. Words ending in a vowel have penultimate stress: gracie, glorie, sententie, remédie, ymaginatie.

b. Disyllabic words ending in a VC rhyme have final stress: procés, rabát, Davíd. In trisyllabic words it is difficult to decide whether main stress is final or initial: Názaréth, Béthléém, Gáбриél.

c. Words ending in VVC have final stress: parlöer, Damáes, juéel, amoréus, kappeláen, latijn, abíjt, paradíjs, dignitéit.

d. Words ending in VCC have final stress, too: convént, prosént. In trisyllabic words it is most likely also final: árgumént.

As mentioned in the introduction, the standard analysis of Dutch word stress assumes that main stress is assigned to the last foot. However, either a final -VC foot (Lahiri and Koreman 1988), or a -VC syllable (Trommelen and Zonneveld 1989, Kager 1989) is made extrametrical and will not receive main stress. Superheavy syllables are not made extrametrical, hence they usually receive main stress. From this short description it can be seen that, although (5acd) follow the rules for modern Dutch word stress, words ending in a stress-bearing -VC rhyme (5b) do not.

4.2 Prosodic variation and the schwa

Zonneveld’s second conclusion is that the attested variation in ‘Lutgart’ is largely due to the stress-attracting nature of the schwa (Zonneveld 1992). He observes that variation occurs in complex words (including (pseudo-)compounds like lichame, antwerde, ambacht, bisschop, bispel, prefixed and suffixed forms). If the complex word ends in a schwa, stress is invariably on the syllable immediately
preceding schwa (6a); absence of the final schwa results in initial stress (6b). A few exceptions occur: disyllabic complex words and proper names with final stress occur (6c), as well as complex words where stress does not fall on the syllable immediately preceding the schwa (6d).

(6) Prosodic variation and schwa

a. 00709 Mettin ijonfrówen ínt geúoch
   03758–3 Gewárech gnóch littéeken gáf
   10894 Dat cláre ansíchte vá́n der vrówen
   01034 Die séíde góds uríndínne máer
   02552 Die die uiánde méest onttréden
b. 01814–3 Dat ámbacht dátten wéder déinsen
   04060 Dat sál v ámbacht wésen dáer
   02129 Dit bíspeal dát ic ´v uertráć
   02148 Din uiánt quaët. din bósen ghír
c. 07970 Wrachte hár ámbächt die gódes mínne
   00676–3 Heft dánt thomáś die prédekáre
   00548–3 Want díe uiánt fel énde quaët
   00323–3 Óude ende ijóngé orlóf genómen
d. 13397 Ì Bi désen bíspele és verclárt
   14283 Si bát vor cóninge énde gráuen

According to Zonneveld (1992) the forms in (6c) and (6d) indicate pure confusion with respect to the stress rule before schwa. In the next section I argue that this variation is due to conditions on foot structure in relation to the metrical conditions that are at stake in ‘Lutgart’.

5. Word stress in ‘Lutgart’: a different perspective

In this section we consider the prosodic variation in ‘Lutgart’ from the viewpoint of the early WGmc prosodic system, i.e. the foot is the Germanic foot; feet are built from left to right; main stress falls on the initial foot, and final non-branching feet are defooted. Based on these assumptions variation occurs in two types of prosodic words: those consisting of two monosyllabic feet (H)(H) and those consisting of two feet of which the first is monosyllabic, and the second branching (H)(HL), as can be seen in (7a, b), where H stands for heavy syllables, L for light ones, defooted feet are underlined and bold indicates the position of stress. These forms have variable word stress in ‘Lutgart’ or have stress patterns different from the intuition of the speaker of modern Dutch. Some examples are given in (8), where vowel length is marked above the relevant vowels:
(7) Variation in prosodic forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Expected Structure</th>
<th>Attested Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. HH</td>
<td>(H)(H)</td>
<td>(H)(H) and (H)(H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. HHL</td>
<td>(H)(HL)</td>
<td>(H)(HL) and (H)(HL)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(8) a. ambacht, torment, àuont, blischap, bernart, bischop, vîant, mesdaet, òrlôf, anschi(j)n, bîsper, kerkhof
b. abdesse, ambachte, erminge, ermoede, kinnesse, uonnesse

5.1 (H)(HL)

Structures of the type (H)(HL) with stress on two adjacent syllables have a stress clash. The clash can in principle be resolved by deleting stress from either foot. The structures with a branching second foot and a non-branching first foot predominantly have stress on the branching foot (9a), but cases with the predicted initial stress pattern are also attested (9b). It seems irrelevant whether the word is a monomorphemic, compound, prefixed or suffixed form.

Why does stress shift to the second foot in (9a)? The situation in which the main stressed foot is less complex than the secondary stressed foot seems to be marked (cf. Dresher and van der Hulst 1995, Lahiri and Dresher 1994, Lahiri and Fikkert 1996). Ideally, the main stressed foot is at least as complex as secondary stressed feet. The MNL language of 'Lutgart' apparently chose to shift stress to the more complex second foot, whereas English chose restructuring of the word by applying trisyllabic shortening, as we will see in §6.
Words consisting of two heavy syllables, i.e. two feet, also have a stress clash. Since final non-branching feet generally undergo destressing in WGmc, one would expect to find initial stress, and this indeed is the predominant pattern as shown in (10a), although final stress forms also occur (10b).

(10) a. 04060 Dat sál v ámbacht wésen dáér
07099 Die uíánt dě se wíde uèllén
02133 Daer íc dat bíspel áue lás
01619–3 Her bérnart hère wánt gi mi
00536 Want síne schónheit wás uerlóren

b. 03361 Dat dě uíánt harg áne lêide
01053–3 Was dís ambáchts aldáér geplón
00245–3 Want ábsolútie énde afláet
01498–3 Die brúder wás ende hít bernárt

Table (11) shows where the variation occurs in (H)(H) words, and where not. The number of instances in which the form is attested in line-final position is given in parentheses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Line-final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ambacht</td>
<td>14/12(5)</td>
<td>17/ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v/uíant</td>
<td>75/36(25)</td>
<td>11/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brabant</td>
<td>2/10(8)</td>
<td>- / -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conuent</td>
<td>- / 28(19)</td>
<td>11/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abijt</td>
<td>- / 15(11)</td>
<td>1/ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>òrlóf</td>
<td>12/9(3)</td>
<td>3/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anschi(j)n</td>
<td>8/10(9)</td>
<td>- / -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bispel</td>
<td>28/4(2)</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mesdaet</td>
<td>1/2(2)</td>
<td>10/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afl(f)laet</td>
<td>- / 10(7)</td>
<td>- / -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blíscap</td>
<td>14/-</td>
<td>1/1(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u/vrifheit</td>
<td>13/-</td>
<td>1/1(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schuldech</td>
<td>18/-</td>
<td>- / -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following observations can be made. First, we can see that many finally stressed forms occur line-finally, where a very strong constraint against extrametrical syllables with full vowels holds: there are no cases of extrametrical syllables with full vowels in ‘Lutgart’ (Zonneveld 1992, 1993a). However, this does certainly not account for all variation. Second, some words do not show any variation at all. Romance loans do not show any variation, but invariably occur with final stress, as shown in (12):

(12) 00904–3 Behóert noch ín tormént tesíne
02773 Nutt éen pulmént met úwen bróede
09160 Die hem consént uan hérten géuet
00244–3 Daer hí sermóen ten úólke déde
5758 Ende ínt parlióer en téken mákët

Most Romance loans with final stress end in a superheavy syllable (-VVC or -VCC), which is also reflected in the spelling (see § 5.3.). These superheavy syllables seem to be regarded as branching feet, i.e. they are analysed as having the structure (H)(HL), where stress is preferred on the branching foot. In this way the words could keep their original final stress, without disturbing the prosodic constraints of the language. Even though this same analysis could be extended to native words (and has been for modern Dutch (cf. Langeweg 1988, Zonneveld 1993b)), this does not work for words like ambacht and viant. Whereas these words vary in stress in ‘Lutgart’, in modern Dutch variation is levelled out in favour of initial stress, making them exceptional with respect to the stress rules of modern Dutch. I assume that in these cases the final coronal obstruent does not add weight to a heavy syllable. A similar analysis is proposed to account for the fact that certain -VCC_{COR} syllables count as light under consonant (cluster) extrametricality in Middle English (Lahiri and Fikkert 1996).

Suffixed words with the structure (H)(H), where the final foot contains a strong native suffix, like -doem, -heït, -lïjk, -scap, -kijn, -inghe, -inc, -linc, -ich, -ech, -nisse, -âre, etc., which according to many authors (cf. Franck 1910: §11) always carried secondary accent, usually do not show any variation in ‘Lutgart’: they invariably have stress on the first foot. The only exceptions seem to be instances of the word ermínc (‘poor one’), as shown in (13):

(13) 05623 Dat íc ermínc ende íc kaitïjf
08369 Mar íc ermínc die téseen stónden

The lack of variation here might be accidental. Nevertheless, there seems to be a strong tendency to have stress on the root rather than on the suffix. It could be that feet containing suffixes have a different status than feet that are (part of) a monomorphemic word. This suggests that these suffixes, which were independent
words, have been grammaticalised at the time of ‘Lutgart’ and reduced to suffixes (cf. Schönfeld 1947).

Alternatively, one could hypothesise that in ‘Lutgart’ native suffixes are reanalysed as level II suffixes, attached after stress assignment. This analysis cannot account for the following fact. Under attachment of an inflectional ending these derivational suffixes are disyllabic. When attached to a monosyllabic base they have the prosodic shape (H)(HL), where stress is predominantly on the second foot, independent of the morphological nature of the word (§4.1). In other words, there seems to be an interaction between the nature of the prosodic structure of the final foot and the morphological status as a derivational suffix. If the final foot is more complex than the initial one, the final foot tends to receive stress. If both feet are equally complex, there is a strong preference to have main stress on the root, rather than on the suffix.

Prefixed words show a similar behaviour: many prefixed words (both verbs and nouns!) like aff(f)lået, afhônst, mesdâen, onrécht, etc., have stress on the root, and show no variation. Here, the prefix often consists of a heavy syllable, whereas the base has a superheavy syllable: they could be analysed as having a (H)(HL) structure, accounting for stress on the second foot. Alternatively, these prefixes have lost their status as independent words at the time of ‘Lutgart’, and are reduced to prefixes. If a word consists of two feet of equal complexity main stress preferably falls on the root.

5.3  \textit{LH and LHL}

Table (11) only gives words of the shape (H)(H). I have excluded words with originally short initial vowels; i.e. I have assumed that OSL has not taken place and that these words have the structure (LH). Some LH forms are given in table (14). Strikingly, they all have initial stress, even if an ending is added to the disyllabic form, creating a LHL form, as shown in (15).

(14)  \textit{LH(L) words}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LHL</th>
<th>(\sigma\sigma)</th>
<th>(\sigma'\sigma)</th>
<th>(\sigma\sigma\sigma)</th>
<th>(\sigma'\sigma\sigma)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c/köringen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘verzoeking’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c/köninc</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bêsech</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mènech</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sâlech</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mònek</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(15) 10836 Die cóñinc uán din páráðíse
03819–3 Conuéers noch mónek hém en dóchte
01438–3 Si dóedden mónëke énde nónnen
09203 Met córíngen suar 'vtermáten
14283 Si bát vor cóñinge énde gráuen

Why does a word like coninc invariably have initial stress, while erming does not? This is not due to confusion about the behaviour of the schwa. Rather, it seems that these words have a different prosodic structure, relating to different stress patterns. Whereas both coninc and coninge comprise one foot, erming and erminge both consist of two feet. This can only be understood if we assume that OSL has not yet applied and that the Germanic foot was still prevalent. The different structures are given in (16):

(16) No OSL; Germanic foot

$$([L\ H])\ (L\ H\ L)\ (H\ L)$$

co ninc co nin ge er ming er min ge

All MNL grammars assume that OSL was completed by the time of the first MNL texts (Franck 1910: §13, Schönfeld §30, van Bree 1977: §29.4). The spelling in MNL texts is not very helpful. In ‘Lutgart’ only originally long vowels are written long, although not consistently so. In addition, some Romance loans are spelled with long vowels. Originally short vowels, however, are never spelled long. This in itself is no evidence that OSL did or did not apply: since it was entirely predictable which vowels would have been lengthened by OSL, there was no need to reflect it in the spelling. The only evidence for assuming OSL comes from rhyme: it is claimed that originally long vowels and vowels lengthened by OSL can be rhyme-fellows. However, ‘Lutgart’ predominantly has rhyming pairs where either both have originally long vowels, or both have originally short vowels (cf. also Franck 1910: §13, 39). Therefore, even the evidence from rhyme in ‘Lutgart’ is not convincing.

6. Prosodic changes in ME compared with MNL

In § 5.1 it was shown that in MNL main word stress was on the final branching foot if the first foot was not branching; i.e. (H)(HL). Exactly the same forms were being restructured in Old and Middle English by way of trisyllabic shortening (TSS) (Lahiri and Fikkert 1996). Whereas Dutch still had long vowels in closed final syllables, these did not exist any longer in OE (Hogg 1992). Therefore, the only contrast in final syllables was between closed (heavy) and open
(light) syllables. Final syllables never bore stress due to final destressing. This state of affairs could easily have led to a reinterpretation of final destressing as consonant extrametricality (CEM). CEM results in more uniformity of metrical patterns by abolishing the distinction between final H and final L syllables. Further, since a light syllable can be the weak member of a foot where a heavy syllable cannot, many previously defooted final syllables can be included into a foot under a CEM analysis, as in (17a). On the other hand, these changes also result in some less desirable consequences. First, CEM led to an increase in words where the second foot is branching while the main stressed foot is not (17a, b). Assuming that the stressed foot is preferably as complex as, or more complex than, its dependent, this is not an optimal configuration. Whereas Dutch chose to improve this structure by shifting stress, in English TSS improved these metrical structures, as can be seen in (17a). TSS also improved another set of less optimal structures. CEM led to many more final stranded syllables (17c, d). A final light syllable can never form a foot; when the weak branch of the preceding foot is occupied, it remains stranded. This situation is also less than optimal on the assumption that languages prefer to parse syllables into feet whenever possible. TSS improved these metrical patterns, too.

(17)  

\[ \begin{array}{llllll}  
\textit{Old English} & \textit{ME 1: CEM} & \textit{ME 2: TSS} & \textit{Examples} \\
\text{a.} & (\text{H}\text{(H)(H)}) & (\text{H})(\text{HL}) & ([\text{LH}]\text{L}) & *\text{hearinges} > \text{heringes} \\
\text{b.} & (\text{H})(\text{HL}) & \text{—} & ([\text{LH}]\text{L}) & *\text{laverke} > \text{laverke} \\
\text{c.} & (\text{HL})(\text{H}) & (\text{HL})\text{L} & ([\text{LL}]\text{L}) & *\text{ciences} > \text{cicenes} \\
\text{d.} & (\text{HL})\text{L} & \text{—} & ([\text{LL}]\text{L}) & *\text{clavere} > \text{clavere} \\
\end{array} \]

Why did the two languages choose different strategies for improvement of less optimal structures? Although both still had the Germanic foot, there were other differences between the two languages. First, whereas English did not have a vowel length contrast in final syllables, Dutch did. Therefore, final defooting was not easily reinterpretable as consonant extrametricality in Dutch. Second, a huge number of Romance loans entered MNL with final stress, whereas this was not the case in Middle English (cf. Lahiri and Fikkert 1996). In the medieval time the French influence in English was not so overwhelming as in Dutch. French loans where adopted with the prosodic preferences of the languages at the time of borrowing: they entered with initial stress in English, but could be adopted with final stress in Dutch.
7. Conclusions

In this paper I have argued that the word stress system at the time of 'Lutgart' was not the same as that of modern Dutch, but was more similar to that of the other West Germanic languages in the old and middle period; i.e. the Germanic foot was still prevalent. It has furthermore been argued that Open Syllable Lengthening was not yet completed in 'Lutgart': only by assuming that OSL had not applied can we understand why stress in words like coninc and coninge is invariably initial: they both comprise one foot, respectively a ([LH]) and a ([LHL]) foot. If OSL had applied we would have expected to find variation in the stress pattern, particularly in the case of an inflectional ending. It has furthermore been shown that variation in the prosodic structures of 'Lutgart' is not due to the stress-attracting nature of the schwa, but is due to complex interactions between prosodic preferences and morphological structure.

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Notes

1. The addition of -3 to a line number indicates that the line comes from book 3.
2. Under the headings with a final schwa are also considered forms in which the schwa is followed by a nasal or 's' as in ambáchtes and mesdaden.

References


