

Regularization in Frisian and Dutch 3SG PRS: *Zij wilt* and *Sy wol*

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In this paper we investigate the regularization of the 3SG PRS of the Dutch modal verb *willen* ‘to want’ and explore the validity of several possible explanations for this development by comparing it to developments in Frisian.

As some of the other Dutch modal verbs, *willen* exhibits the irregularity that it lacks a regular suffix *-t* on the 3SG PRS (Haeseryn et al. 1997). Currently, however, some speakers seem to regularize this 3SG PRS of *willen* into *hij/zij wilt* (Bennis, 2021). In several ways, this could be a case of paradigm internal levelling: It could be the finalization of the process of complete regularization of *willen*, which already has a regular past tense next to its strong past tense. Another, possibly complementary, paradigm internal hypothesis suggested by Bennis (2021) is that there could be a pressure towards creating uniformity in the present tense paradigm; something that is also happening to modal verbs *kunnen* and *zullen* (Bennis & MacLean, 2006; Postma, 1993).

However, since there are no data at hand as to what individuals’ paradigms of the verb *willen* actually look like, these hypotheses cannot be substantiated. Therefore, in this study we elicit individual participants’ past and present tense paradigms of *willen* with the aid of a filling in the gaps questionnaire.

In addition, this paper tries and complicate the matter by also eliciting and analysing paradigms of Frisian verbs and comparing them to the Dutch results. Frisian makes for an interesting parallel, for a few reasons. First, although the paradigm of the Frisian verb *wolle* shows the same irregular 3SG PRS as Dutch *willen*, it has not been reported that the 3SG PRS of Frisian *wolle* is changing from *wol* to *wolt*.

	Person/Nr	bakke (‘to bake’)	wolle (‘to want’)
PRS	1SG	bak	wol
	2SG	bak-st	wol-st
	3SG	bak-t	wol *wol-t
	PL	bak-e	wol-e
PST	1SG	bak-te	woe
	PL	bak-test	woe-den / woe-ne(n)
	PTCP	bak-te	wol-d / wol-en

Table 1: Paradigms of *bakke* and *wolle*

Secondly, the (non-modal) Frisian verb *kenne* (Dutch *kennen*, Eng ‘to know’) does seem to exhibit the same change as Dutch *willen*, as the 3SG PRS *ken* is said to be replaced by *ken-t*. Contrary to this, however, it has not been reported that this happens to the phonologically and morphologically very similar modal verb *kinne* (‘to can, be able to’). Investigating these contrastive developments in the Frisian paradigms and comparing them to the developments of Dutch *willen* sheds more light on the levelling hypotheses and the nature of the change from *wil* to *wilt*.

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Haeseryn, W. J. M., Romijn, K., Geerts, G., Rooij, J. D., & Van den Toorn, M. C. (1997). *Algemene Nederlandse spraakkunst*. Groningen: Martinus Nijhoff.

Postma, G. (1993). Jij kan en jij heb, Over structuurbehoud van analogische taalveranderingen. *TABU*, 23, 115–129.