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2.2.2.3. *Final devoicing*

The voiced obstruents (b, d, γ, v, z) cannot occur at the end of a word in Frisian. When these voiced segments do come to stand in final position, they are subject to a rule of final devoicing. This process, which is relatively new to the language, converts [b d γ v z] into [p t x f s], respectively:

<i>kâld</i>	'cold'	→ [kə:t]
<i>slaab</i>	'bib'	→ [sla:p]
<i>rêch</i>	'back' (pl. <i>regen</i>)	→ [rɛ:x]
<i>brief</i>	'letter' (pl. <i>brieven</i>)	→ [briəf]
<i>glês</i>	'glass' (pl. <i>glêzen</i>)	→ [glɛ:s]

The underlying voiced consonant remains in the inflected forms, as can be seen above. Notice that while the underlying voiced stops *b* and *d* are written at the end of a word like *slaab*, the underlying voiced fricatives are spelled as *f*, *s*, and *ch* in final position. In other words, the spelling reflects final devoicing in fricatives but not in stops.

Final devoicing may further take place when a stem enters into a compound or is part of a derived word. All diminutives are subject to devoicing before the diminutive suffix:

<i>sydleane</i>	'side lane'	→ [sitlənə]
<i>slabke</i>	'small bib'	→ [sləpkə]
<i>bedsje</i>	'small bed'	→ [bɛtsjə]

This situation is complicated by its interaction with assimilation, however. The compound *syddoar* 'side door' should undergo devoicing to *[sitdoər], but by voicing assimilation (sec. 2.2.2.1) the [t] reverts to [d] to produce [siddoər].

Beyond this, while all stems are devoiced before the diminutive, only certain ones are devoiced preceding the suffix *-lik*: *soarchlik* and *be-weechlik* 'mobile' are devoiced, whereas *deeglik* 'suitable' and *mooglik* 'possible' retain the underlying voiced fricative. This may be related to the fact that the stem is readily apparent for the former two words, while it is synchronically quite obscure with the latter two, hence they are less felt to be complex words with an internal word boundary.

NOTE: Though a very old process in Dutch and German, records indicate that final devoicing in Frisian is a phenomenon of recent origin. In the phonetic study of language of Grou by Eijkman (1907:19), *b* and *d* are said to be largely voiced at the end of a word. But in Sipma's grammar (1913), there are signs that devoicing has started to set in. His transcriptions, although not entirely consistent, suggest that devoicing had taken place following long vowels, falling diphthongs, and liquids, but not after short vowels or rising diphthongs.

2.2.2.9. *D-insertion*

When a stem ends in an *r*, there must be a *d* inserted before the suffix *-er*. With stems terminating in *n* or *l*, the *d* may be inserted but is not required:

Obligatory:

<i>djoer</i>	'expensive'	→	<i>djoerder</i>	'more expensive'
<i>fier</i>	'far'	→	<i>fierder</i>	'farther'
<i>nuver</i>	'strange'	→	<i>nuverder</i>	'stranger'
<i>farre</i>	'sail'	→	<i>farder</i>	'sailor'
<i>hiere</i>	'rent'	→	<i>hierder</i>	'renter'

Optional:

<i>rinne</i>	'walk'	→	<i>rinder</i>	'walker' or <i>rinner</i>
<i>sile</i>	'sail'	→	<i>sylder</i>	'sailor' or <i>siler</i>
<i>giel</i>	'yellow'	→	<i>gielder</i>	'yellower' or <i>gieler</i>
<i>brún</i>	'brown'	→	<i>brúnder</i>	'brownier' or <i>bruner</i>

Within words this process also took place and generated forms like *kelder* 'cellar' and *daalder* 'one and one half guilders' from original **keller* and **daler*. Here the *d* is now simply part of the word, rather than being inserted by rule.

Rather more subtle are cases of a stem plus suffix which, often due to irregularities in meaning, are no longer generated from the base form by rule. Thus even though they can be analyzed into separate morphemes, they act as words and the *d* is therefore part of that lexical item, rather than being viewed as inserted. An example of this is *minder* 'worse, fewer', which is strictly speaking the comparative of *min* 'bad' but deviates from it semantically. Similar is the word *bjinder* 'brush', which is technically an agentive of *bjinne* 'scrub', but is no longer a true agentive in meaning. It is therefore a word unto itself, and the *d* is part of that word. *Bjinner* is the real agentive of *bjinne* in the meaning of 'a person who scrubs'.

With other stems ending in *n* or *l* the insertion of *d* is essentially optional, although some comparatives and agentives are preferred with it (*postrinder* 'postman') and others without. For the most part, older and more conservative speakers tend to insert *d* frequently in this environment, while younger people do so seldom or never.

NOTE: See Tiersma (1980), chapter 2, for further information on d-insertion.

2.2.2.10. *The nature of /g/*

What is written *g* in Frisian may have several different phonetic manifestations. At the beginning of a word it is universally the voiced velar stop [g], as in *gean* 'go' or *gjin* 'none'. This also holds when a prefix is

attached to the stem, as in *begjinne* 'begin' and *meigean* 'go along'. In addition, when *g* occurs word-internally with stress on the immediately following syllable, it is also articulated as a stop: *augústus* 'August' or *begáúzje* 'baggage'.

In other positions it is always a fricative, however, whose basic form I will assume to be the voiced velar fricative [ɣ]. This is found, for example, in *bargje* 'spill' and *meager* 'thin', and it must be kept distinct from the [x] in words like *kachel* 'stove'. The [ɣ] becomes voiceless at times by final devoicing and assimilation: compare *baarch* 'pig' with the plural *bargen*, in which the [ɣ] remains voiced, as well as *heech* 'high' and *heechst* 'highest' with *heger* 'higher'. Recall also that devoicing takes place before the diminutive suffix, as in *barchje* 'small pig', which contrasts with *bargje* 'spill, act like a pig', the latter without devoicing.

One final observation is that when any [x] stands before an *s*, it may undergo dissimilation to [k]:

<i>liichst</i>	'(you) lie'	→ [li:kst]
<i>heechst</i>	'highest'	→ [he:kst]
<i>nachts</i>	'at night'	→ [naks]
<i>achtst</i>	'eighth'	→ [akst]

In the last two examples, the *t* must be deleted by consonant cluster simplification before dissimilation can occur.

NOTE: Loanwords (often originally Greek) which begin with [x] in Dutch are nativized to [g] in Frisian, as in *gloar* [gloər] 'chlorine' and *gemysk* [ge:misk] 'chemical'. Some dialects allow [g] intervocally, as in [da:gən] 'days' (*dagen*) for the more common [da:ɣən].

2.3. Stress

Word stress in Frisian is phonetically much like that of English, with stress being related to an increase in pitch and amplitude. In other words, a stressed syllable is louder than an unstressed one, and is furthermore spoken on a slightly higher pitch. Stress is indicated here by the mark [ˈ] before the stressed syllable.

In native (or nearly native) words of more than one syllable, the stress is generally on the first vowel:

'*boarger* 'búzehappert 'mantel 'suster

Non-native words, especially those of French origin, are stressed on the final syllable: