Word stress in Dutch might be one of the best studied topics in phonology: especially in the 1980s and early 1990s, rule-based, parameter-based and constraint-based theories of stress typologies have all been applied to the Dutch data. However, it can be shown that those theories are all based on the structure of existing Dutch words, and in earlier work I pointed out it is not clear to what extent such data are representative of the knowledge which native speakers have. In particular, many of the relevant words are loanwords from Latin and Romance languages, and the fact that the Dutch stress system is very similar to that of such languages (trochaic, word stress in a final three-syllable window, partly quantity-sensitive) could just be the result of the fact that the stress of the words has come unchanged, not that they have adapted to a system.

For this reason, we present the data of two relatively large empirical studies in which participants were asked to give intuitions on new data. In the first, about 2000 native speakers marked stress on 100 biblical names (randomly chosen out of a name of 2000) each; in the second, almost 1000 native speakers did something similar with especially designed nonsense words. In this presentation, I show how these data allow us to sort out the 'real' generalisations from the accidental results of linguistic history, and present an 'amphichronic' model in which both of these have their place.