ABSOLUTELY INTENSIFYING ADJECTIVES AND THE EMPHATIC MARKER -E IN NORTH FRISIAN (FERING-ÖÖMRANG), WEST FRISIAN AND OTHER WEST GERMANIC LANGUAGES

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0. Introduction

In Fering-Öömrang, the North Frisian dialect of the islands of Feer (Germ. Föhr) and Oomram (Germ. Amrum), word-final schwa has been generally dropped as a result of a historical process of apocope (cf. Århammar (1969, 12)). The apocope not only affected schwa at the end of simplex words (e.g. Old Frisian nose 'nose' > Fering-Öömrang nöös), but also swept away all inflectional endings consisting of a single schwa. The loss of the e-endings had major consequences for the inflectional system of Fering-Öömrang. Thus the adjectival inflection of the language was considerably simplified: in Modern Fering-Öömrang adjectives get an ending -en when preceding an indefinite singular masculine noun; otherwise they remain uninflected (cf. Schmidt-Petersen & Craigie (1928, 31-32)). Compare the Fering-Öömrang examples in (1) with those in (2), which are taken from the mainland North Frisian dialect of the Bökingharde (Mooring), where schwa was retained (cf. Tams Jörgensen (1972, 17), Walker (1989, 13-14)):  

(1) de ual maan 'the old man' (Fering-Öömrang)
(dön) ual maaner '(the) old men'
(en) ualen maan '(an) old man'

(2) di jongste Bruller 'the youngest brother'

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1. This process of apocope, which affected all insular North Frisian dialects, probably took place somewhere around the end of the Old Frisian period (1550). In the oldest text written in Fering, the Fering Catechism from circa 1600 (Ziesemer (1922)), forms with and without final schwa occur next to each other, which might suggest that the apocope had not yet been fully completed at that time (cf. Faltings (1992, 86; note 59)). Also in the so-called Old Fering ballad (cf. Hofmann (1984)), we find a few non-apocopated forms, e.g. di jongste Bruller 'the youngest brother'.

2. These consequences have not yet been studied in any detail. Hofmann (1956, 85) points out, that the loss of the plural ending -e (< -a) in insular North Frisian lead to the expansion of the remaining plural endings -er and -en in these dialects.

3. Constructed examples for Fering-Öömrang are given in West Fering in the official spelling used in Wb. (1986). Whenever subdialectal differences are relevant, this will be noted. Quoted examples appear in the subdialect (West Fering, East Fering, Öömrang) and the spelling of the original.
Yet, although, as a rule, -e has disappeared from the adjectival inflection in Fering-Öömrang, an ending -e does occur with certain adjectives. Consider the examples in (3):

(3) min hiale leewent 'my whole life'
a riane masgonst 'sheer envy'
en woor stood 'a real splendor'
dön Ferdreit knoop 'those damned buttons'

This phenomenon has passed practically unnoticed in the literature on Fering-Öömrang. In the grammatical survey preceding his Fering-Öömrang reader, Peters (1925, 8) makes the following brief remark on the issue:

In formelhaften Wendungen hört man die Endsilbe au ch noch bisweilen vor dem weiblichen Hauptwort: un 'e oonjonke Naacht (in der stockdunklen Nacht), un 'e batterste Koll (in der bittersten Kälte), iüssens lewe Godd (unser lieber Gott).

Peters seems to consider the ending -e as a relic, an old inflectional ending fossilized in a number of fixed expressions. Århammar, on the other hand, attributes the ending -e to Low of High German influence. In Århammar (1984, 937), -e with attributive superlatives (cf. section 1.3.) and hial or gans 'whole' (cf. section 1.1.) in Fering-Öömrang is labeled as a case of High German-Frisian grammatical interference. In Århammar (1971, 56; footnote 95), the ending in hiali (hiale) 'whole' is ascribed to Low German influence.

Neither of these approaches does full justice to the phenomenon of the

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4. Where Fering has an ending -e (pronounced as [l]) with adjectives, Öömrang normally has an ending -er (min hialer leewent, etc.). We get, however, -e instead of -er in Öömrang, if the adjective contains a sequence of vowel + r, e.g. woore, arke. In a few set phrases, both Fering and Öömrang show an ending -er on the adjective (e.g. tu liker tidj 'at the same time'); these are, however, petrified dative (fem. sg.) endings. In older (19th century) Fering-Öömrang texts one may find the ending -a instead of -er.

5. Note that the ending -e does not only occur before feminine nouns, as Peters wants us to believe. Of his own examples, Naacht and Koll are originally feminine (although in Modern Fering-Öömrang they are masculine), but Godd is masculine.
adjectival ending *e in Fering-Öömrang. Although the ending quite often appears in formulaic expressions, it is by no means limited to them. And although it may be true that in many cases the ending *e entered Fering-Öömrang as a Low (or High) German interference, it seems to have been integrated in the language somehow and acquired a special function. This is already indicated by the fact that the ending is found with some adjectives, but not with others; in (4), for example, an ending *e on the adjective would be totally unacceptable:

(4) dön suart(*e) honkluaser ‘the black gloves’

It is the aim of this study to establish the exact grammatical status of the adjectival ending *e in Fering-Öömrang. The article is organized as follows:

In section 1, I will present a survey of the adjectives with which the ending *e may occur in Fering-Öömrang. In section 2, I will show that these adjectives form a natural semantic class in that they are absolutely intensifying. I will claim that the ending *e with these adjectives does not function as an inflectional ending, but should be analysed as an emphatic marker. In section 3, I will show that West Frisian has an emphatic marker *e (alongside an inflectional ending *-e) with precisely the same class of adjectives as Fering-Öömrang. Section 4 will be devoted to a general discussion of the development and status of the emphatic marker *e in West Germanic. Section 5 concludes the article.

1. Adjectives ending in *e in Fering-Öömrang

In this section, I will give a survey of the adjectives that may bear the ending *e in Fering-Öömrang.6 For presentational reasons, I have divided the data into four types, but it will become clear that the borderlines between these types are rather vague, and in section 2 I will show that their semantics actually allows us to lump them together.

1.1. Type 1: 'whole'

The quantifying adjective *ial 'whole, in its entirety' normally gets an ending *e in

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6. The bulk of the data has been gathered from a wide variety of 19th and 20th century Fering-Öömrang texts. Not all occurrences of the ending *e found there are necessarily known to or accepted by all speakers of Modern Fering-Öömrang. This does not bear upon the general point I would like to make, however, viz. that the ending *e, when it occurs in Fering-Öömrang, functions as an emphatic marker.
Fering-Öömrag, whatever its syntactic context. Only between the indefinite article and a masculine noun, the ending is -en. Compare:

(5) a hiale wäält 'the whole world'
   at hiale wegaanj 'the whole weekend'
   en hialen somer 'a whole summer' (a somer)
   en hiale skööl 'a whole bunch' (at skööl)

The form hiale not only appears with common nouns, as in (5), but also with proper names, as in (6):

(6) a. Sin Dringer küdd det hiali Njiblem kuppi. [Omi Petji 39]
   'His sons could buy the whole of Njiblem'

   b. Sant een muun as 'ar üüb't steed uk en letj frei radiohüs,
      üüs 'ar uun hiale Frankrik al 1500 soken bestun.  
      [FN 28 (1978) p. 17]
      'For one month now there is also a small free radiostation,
      of which there are already 1500 in the whole of France'

Note that, although the ending -e with hial represents the normal case in Modern Fering-Öömrag, it is not fully obligatory. The form without -e is still used by some speakers and also occurs in the literature, especially in older texts.

The germanism gans, that often supplants hial in younger Fering-Öömrag, normally gets an -e as well:

(7) a gans dai kreeb hi uun hüüs ambi.  [Breipot 3, 26 (1974)]
   'All day he hung around at home'

The adjective leew 'dear' can be used in much the same (quantifying) sense as hial and gans, in which case it gets an ending -e:

(i) a. Det wüf fersteet gau det hiale fein iidj an det win uun a oon  
   [Teelen 50]
   'The woman quickly hid all the fine food and the wine in the oven'

   b. A jongst bruler ging troch a hiale rümen faan Triibergem  
   [Leewent 32]
   'The youngest brother went through all the rooms of Triibergem'
(8) a. Hokker sin lewe Tidj unt Hüss klewwet, / könn nian Frögels finj. [Krassen 19] ‘Who sticks in the house all the time, can find no joy’

b. de leewe loonge dai ‘the livelong day’ [Wb. (1986) s.v. leew]

c. An en engel häält waacht/ troch a hial leewe naacht. [Liitjinbuk 21] ‘And an angel keeps guard, the whole night through’

In (8b), loong gets an -e in the wake of leewe. In (8c), hial remains without ending for rythmical reasons.

1.2. Type 2: ‘nothing but...’

The ending -e seems to be fixed with some adjectives that have the meaning ‘pure, nothing but...’. This small group includes the adjectives boor, rian(st) and woor:

(9) Hi speid a boore gaal. [Wb. (1986) s.v. boor] ‘He spat pure gall (i.e. vented his gall)’

(10) a. Det kofe as jo at riane babelweeder. [Wb. (1986) s.v. rian(r)] ‘This coffee really is pure dishwater’

b. Bi a korektüür (wurd) ütj a öömrang staken wilems at rianster ferang. [Breipot 5,3 (1975)] ‘With the proofreading, the Öömrang pieces were sometimes turned into pure Fering’

c. Jo bedüüdet ham, dat det wel a rianer masgonst wiar, wat hi diar tjaapet. [Breipot 10, 19 (1980)] ‘They made it clear to him this really was sheer envy, what he was jabbering’

(11) At soos wiar det woore weeder. [Wb. (1986) s.v. woore] ‘The soup was pure water’

Note that adjectives of this type are always preceded by the definite article in Fering-Öömrang.

The following two set phrases might be classified under this heading as well:

(12) a. am’t lewa Bruad [Stacken 125 (Jakob Lorenz Engmann)] ‘for the bare necessities of life’

b. a riane Wiard [Stacken 64 (Simon Reinhard Bohn)] ‘the plain truth (cf. the truth and nothing but the truth)’
When the pertinent adjectives are not followed by a mass noun, as they are in the above examples, but by a count noun, they rather have the meaning 'in its purest (worst) form':

(13)  a. Sin wüf as det rian aas. [Wb. (1986) s.v. aas]
     'His wife is a real bitch'
 b. Det as jo a rianstfeberreeger. [Wb. (1986) s.v. rianste(r)]
     'He is a real criminal'
 c. Bütßen as 't jo bal de woore wonter. [Wb. (1986) s.v. wonter]
     'Outside it really is extremely cold'

In this use, they are perhaps better classified as type 3 adjectives.

1.3. Type 3: 'extreme'

The third group consists, first of all, of a motley collection of set phrases in which the adjective on -e expresses a highest degree or an extreme form. Compare the examples in (14):

(14)  a. Amsunst as a battece duad. [Nissen (1883, 138; nr. 1398)]
     'Costless is the bitter death'
 b. a follia Groth... der volle Überfluß, die volle Üppigkeit, z.B. vom Grase worin Vieh steht [Jannen (1991b, 37)]
 c. un follia Bleu [Clement (1847, 65)]
     'in full bloom'
 d. uun folle kariar (Fering) / uun foler kariir (Öömrang) [Wb. (1986) s.v. kariar]
     'at full tilt'
 e. un folle fard [Döntje 5, 15]
     'at full speed'
 f. uun a folle mandiaring (Fering) / uun a foler manduurang (Öömrang) [Wb. (1986) s.v. mandiaring]
     'in full regalia'
 g. un a gööinenge Häl [Stacken 49 (Simon Reinhard Bohn)]
     'in the glowing hell'
 h. a greene gaal [Wb. (1986) s.v. green]
     'the green gall'
 i. un 'e jonke Naacht [Peters (1925, 76)]
     troch 'e packjonke Naacht [ibid. 69]
     un 'e oonjonke Naacht [ibid. 76]
     un jü stäempjonke Naacht [ibid. 77]
uun jonker naacht  
'in through the black night'  
[Komeedin 21]

j. de Naibüür (hed) sin leewe Nuad (...), am man mätukemen.  
[Oome 5]

'the neighbor had great difficulty to keep pace'

k. a saaltta Sia  
[Stacken 132 (Christian Johansen)]

'the salt sea'

l. di stringa Baarnwinn  
[Stacken 126 (Jacob Lorenz Engmann)]

'the strong brandy'

m. a swär Naad  
[Johansen (1862, 241)]

'the great distress'

n. uun a widja Wearlt  
[Johansen (1862, 211)]

'in the wide world'

o. un a wilja Sia.  
[Stacken 114 (Karsten Paulsen)]

'on the wild sea'

p. Un dönn Iuaren, diar ‘s Alernhüss an Memmenleefdi mannst  
amgung könn, swalket dönndiar Iongen üb a widja, wilja Sia ambi.  
[Tedsen 335]

'in the years that they are most in need of a home and their mother's  
love, these boys roamed the wide, wild sea'

The adjectives widja and wilja in the last citation are provided with an interesting  
footnote (in West Frisian): "âlde bûgingsfoarmen, dy't nou tsjinje om hwet  
útkomme to litten" (old inflectional forms that are nowadays used to emphasize  
something). Here it is suggested that the ending -e serves an emphatic function. I  
will come back to this in more detail in section 2.

Furthermore, superlative adjectives may be included in this group. They  
sometimes get an ending in -e in Fering-Öömrang as well:

(15) a. Arken dai at beste(r) weder.  
[Wb. (1986) s.v. beste]

'Every day the finest weather'

b. A Wüffhöd (...) / Mutt plugi an harwi an uck noch se, / Üb Hingster  
ridj an Riaper tre / Üs a besta Kiarl.  
[Stacken 113 (Karsten Paulsen)]

'The women must plow and harrow and sow as well, ride horseback  
and twist ropes as the best man'

c. Ik san so ual an kön diar mä a beste wal ei henkem.  
[Teelen 51]

'I am so old and cannot come there with the best will'

d. uun baterste nuad  
[Peters (1925, 22)]

'in bitter need'
This need not come as surprise considering the fact that superlatives typically express a highest degree.

1.4. Type 4: 'blessed/damned'

The fourth and final group includes adjectives on -e which are purely emotive. They express affection (cf. (16)) or aversion (cf. (17)):

(16)  a. A lewe God  [Krassen 10]
    'the good Lord'
 b. man lêwe Âtj mein lieber Vater!  [Jannen (1991) s.v. lewwe]
    'my dear father'
 c. Jam lewe Lidj  [Düntjis 21]
    'you dear people'
 d. Man lewe Man  [Stacken 47 (Simon Reinhard Bohn)]
    'my dear man'
 e. Man guddle Pap  [Stacken 21]
    'my good papist'
 f. Do kaam a gudda Mederles.  [Stacken 123 (Jakob Lorenz Engmann)]
    'Then came the good haymaking season'
 g. min gude foomen!  [Wb. (1986) s.v. gude]
    'my dear girl'
 h. Gooder naacht altumaal  [Komeedin 26]
    'good night everybody'
This concludes our survey of the adjectives on -e in Fering-Öömrang. In the next section, we will discuss the semantics of these adjectives and the morphological status of the ending -e.

2. Absolutely intensifying adjectives and the emphatic marker -e in Fering-Öömrang

When we take a closer look at the four types of adjectives in section 1 that may bear the ending -e, it becomes clear that they are semantically very closely related; they all help to express the idea that the object to which the following noun refers manifests itself at its extreme, i.e. in its fullest, purest, best or worst form. They are intensifying in that they express an (extreme) degree, but other than, for example, comparatives they are absolute in the sense that they don't relate the degree they express to some previously established contextual norm. Therefore, I will henceforth call them absolutely intensifying adjectives.

Note that there is one adjective that is shared by all four types, viz. leew 'dear' (cf. (8), (12a), (14j) and (16a-d)). It would be more accurate to term them non-inherent absolutely intensifying adjectives, since they should be kept apart from inherent absolutely intensifying adjectives (elatives). This latter category consists of pseudo-prefixed adjectives like paksuart 'pitch-black', spirwitj 'white as a sheet', njokswiat 'wet through', splindernaagelt 'stark naked' and stifbesööben 'dead drunk'. Unlike non-inherent adjectives, inherent adjectives describe the referent of the noun directly and can be used predicatively (cf. Quirk e.a. (1985, 428-429)). For the sake of convenience, we will stick to the use of absolutely intensifying adjectives here as referring only to the non-inherent type. Note, by the way, that adjectives of the inherent type can occasionally be used as non-inherent absolutely intensifying adjectives (cf. (14i)).

As far as I know, absolutely intensifying adjectives have never been identified as such in the literature. Bolinger (1967, 18) distinguishes a class of "[a]djectives that identify the reference of the noun with itself", which includes our types 2 and 3 (straight whiskey, total stranger, etc.). The same two types are also covered by the emphasizers in Quirk e.a. (1985, 429-430): "Emphasizers have a general heightening effect". In addition to emphasizers they distinguish a class of amplifiers: "Amplifiers scale upwards from an assumed norm". The distinction between these two classes of adjectives doesn't become very clear to me from their description, however, all the more because according to them some amplifiers can be used as emphasizers, "conveying
The nature of absolutely intensifying adjectives can be nicely illustrated with superlatives. Normally, superlatives express that some object occupies the highest position on a scale (e.g. length) relative to one or more other objects. They can, however, be used as absolutely intensifying adjectives sometimes and in that case they lose their relative function. When someone utters a sentence like (15g), s/he is not at all interested in comparing the present manifestation of pitjepatj 'nonsense' to certain other occasions on which someone talked nonsense, s/he simply wants to state that at this moment someone is talking a lot of crap. That absolutely intensifying superlatives have lost their relative function and are only used to emphasize, is very clear in cases where a positive and a superlative occur next to each other. Compare:

(18)  a. at riæ pedreerei/at riæste pedreerei
     'sheer fraud'
 b. huug tidj/huuchste tidj
     'high time'

The examples in (18) show that the positive and the superlative of an absolutely intensifying adjective do not differ in meaning (although they may show a slight difference in emphatic force); they both express an absolute extreme degree.

It is only natural now to connect the appearance of the ending -e on the adjectives in section 1 with the absolutely intensifying nature of these adjectives. My contention will be that the ending -e on adjectives functions as an emphatic marker in Fering-Öömrang. It may formally mark the semantic class of absolutely intensifying adjectives. There are some further indications for the emphatic character of the ending -e and for its close link to absolutely intensifying adjectives and semantically related elements.

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principally emphasis rather than degree”. I find it hard to distinguish between plain nonsens, a true scholar, sheer arrogance (emphasizers) and utter folly, a complete stranger, total irresponsibility (amplifiers).
First, an adjective gets an ending \(-e\), only when it appears in its absolutely intensifying meaning. Most adjectives that can be absolutely intensifying have a 'normal' descriptive meaning as well. The adjective *hial*, for instance, can not only mean 'whole, entire', but also 'whole, undamaged'. Similarly, the adjective *riant* has, apart from its absolutely intensifying meaning 'nothing but...', a descriptive meaning 'clean, clear'. Now consider the following examples:

(19) a. Sin hiale schört wiar besmeret mä schokolaade.  
   'His whole shirt was smeared with chocolate'

b. Tji en hial(*\(e\)) schört uun! Faan detheer as en knoop uf.  
   'Put on a decent shirt! There is a button missing from this one'

(20) a. Detheer eertensop as jo at riante weeder.  
   'This pea soupe really is pure water'

b. Ham küd a stekeporen sweemen sä uun det riante weeder.  
   'One could see the sticklebacks swimming in the clear water'

The ending \(-e\) may only be attached to the adjective in its absolutely intensifying meaning (cf. the a-examples); when the adjective has its descriptive meaning, the ending \(-e\) is excluded (cf. the b-examples).

Secondly, the ending \(-e\) is not altogether limited to absolutely intensifying adjectives; it may also appear with a few other semantically related elements. Absolutely intensifying adjectives are semantically very close to (universal) quantifiers. They quantify over the noun they precede in that they restrict the reference of the noun to 'all and only' itself (also compare Bolinger's definition in note 9). It is interesting to see, now, that we find the ending \(-e\) with a few genuine quantifiers as well.

In the first place, the numeral *een* (masc.)/*ian* (non-masc.) 'one' shows up with the ending \(-e\) in a couple of idiomatic expressions:

(21) *oner eene aanj/uun iane tuur* 'constantly, all the time'
   a. onher eene Aanj [Wb. (1965)]
   b. Jo aachtet ei dö Laiden, diar onher eene Aanj deelsluch.  
      [Mamenspriik 113-114]
      'They didn't take notice of the lightning that was constantly striking'
   c. Uun ianer tuur kwaakest dü jin mi uun!  
      [Komeedin 66]
      'You are constantly chattering to me'

(22) *uun eene/fiane* N'all covered with N, completely full of N'
   a. uun eene sluut  
      'flooded' (sluat 'puddle')  
      [Wb. (1986)]
   b. uun iane njoks  
      'covered with shit'  
      [Wb. (1986)]
c. uun iane sweet  'covered in sweat, all sweaty' [Wb. (1986)]
d. uun iane damp  'full of steam'  [Wb. (1986) s.v. ian]
e. Man wat sig det Tiar ûtj, uun iane Modher wiart.
   [Mamenspriak 201]
   'But what did that animal look like, it was all covered with mud'

Obviously, een/ian functions as an absolutely intensifying element in these expressions; in (21) it is comparable to the type 1 adjectives ('whole'), in (22) to the type 2 adjectives ('nothing but...').

Furthermore, the universal quantifiers ale 'all' and arke 'every' exhibit an ending -e in Fering-Öömrang:

(23) a. Al e koonkler haa aacht bian.
    'All spiders have eight legs'

b. Arke dring daanset mä en foomen.
    'Every boy dances with a girl'

There can be no doubt that ale and arke are morphologically complex. In older Fering-Öömrang we still find a form ark 'every', without ending, occasionally:

(24) Ark Buatskapper do sin Lidj menammt.
    [Stacken 114 (Karsten Paulsen)]
    'Every skipper then takes his men along'

But also in Modern Fering-Öömrang, ark occurs without the ending -e in a few derived forms:

(25) a. arken (= ark+en) dai  'all day'\(^{10}\)

b. arköler (= ark+öler)  'each other'

The quantifier ale 'all' only occurs with the ending -e in cases in which it functions as a fusion of 'all' + the weak definite article a semantically\(^{11}\); elsewhere it appears as bare al:

\(^{10}\) Note that arken [arkən] can not be analyzed as arke + ending. In that case it should have been arkin [arkɪn]. On the incompatibility of the emphatic marker -e and inflectional endings, see below (section 4).

\(^{11}\) Historically, the quantifier ale actually derives from a contraction of all + the weak definite article a (cf. Ebert (1971, 161-162)). In this contracted form, however, a must have been substituted for the emphatic marker -e.
(26) a. al dön flenerken  'all the/those butterflies'
b. al lüüs meut  'all our trouble'

In view of their meaning, it seems natural to identify the ending -e in ale and arke with the emphatic marker -e.

We may conclude then that there is a non-trivial relationship between the ending -e and absolutely intensifying adjectives (and universal quantifiers) in Fering-Öömrang: when the ending -e shows up, it does so with absolutely intensifying adjectives. Although the ending is probably to a large extent due to Low (and High) German interference, it is by no means the case that inflected adjectives were simply copied indiscriminately from this language. The adjectival ending -e was only borrowed in Fering-Öömrang, in case it could be interpreted as an emphatic marker, i.e. only with absolutely intensifying adjectives. And as such, it could perhaps even be extended to cases in which it did not occur in the source language.12

3. The emphatic marker -e in West Frisian

Before we turn to a more detailed discussion of the development and status of the emphatic marker -e, we will first take a look at West Frisian. In West Frisian the adjectival inflectional ending -e has been retained. Yet, it can be shown that, alongside this inflectional ending -e, the language has an emphatic marker -e.13

First, consider adjectival inflection in West Frisian. Adjectives remain endingless, if they are preceded by an indefinite article, a possessive pronoun or

12. We cannot exclude the possibility that in some cases, e.g. in the set phrases in (14), the emphatic marker -e in Fering-Öömrang is a relic from an older stage of the language (compare the quote from Peters (1925) in the 'Introduction'). Note, however, that also in that case, what has been preserved would be the emphatic marker, not the inflectional ending.

13. Although we restrict our attention to Fering-Öömrang and West Frisian here, this is not to say that the emphatic marker -e does not occur in other Frisian dialects. Examples comparable to the ones presented here can be found in the other insular North Frisian dialects, Sölring (the dialect of the island of Söl/Sylt) and Halunder (the dialect of the island of Helgoland). By way of illustration, I give four examples from Halunder (where adjectival inflection is completely lacking), which represent the four types distinguished in the main text:

(i) sin hele Leven  'all his il [Krogmann (1957, 49)]
(ii) kloore Muurt  'a hell of a row (lit. pure murder)'

[Borchert, R. & N. Århammar (1987, 132)]

(iii) krochjunke Noach  'black night'  [ibid. 132]
(iv) de ferdraite Knech  'that damned guy'  [ibid. 131]

For more examples, consider the works mentioned.
no determiner at all, and followed by a neuter singular noun; elsewhere they get an ending -e (cf. Tiersma (1985, 50-51)):

(27) (in/ús) âld boek  '(an/our) old book'
    (de/in/ús) âldê hûn  '(the/an/our) old dog'
    it âldê boek  'the old book'
    (de) âldê hûnen/boeken  'the old dogs/books'

If we want to find out, whether West Frisian has an emphatic marker -e, we will have to search for e-endings in environments where they would be banned according to the rules of adjectival inflection. Let us have a look at the four types of absolutely intensifying adjectives that we have detected in Fering-Öömrang and see how they behave in West Frisian.

As I noticed above, adjectives remain uninflected in the context 'possessive pronoun ___ neuter singular noun'. Some further examples are

(28) myn wyt boesgroentsje  'my white shirt'
    jim nij hûs    'your (plur.) new house'

There is, however, a well-known 'exception' to this rule: the adjective hiel 'whole' always gets an ending -e in this context (cf. Hof (1917b), Tamminga (1963, 91)). Compare:

(29) myn hiele wurk   'my whole work'
    jim hiele lân   'your (plur.) whole country'

Hof (1918, 212) already understood that we are not dealing with a real exception to the rules of adjectival inflection here, although he is not very explicit about the precise status of the ending -e: "Mar ik hie 't oer eigenskipswirden, en in eigenskipswirld is hiel hjir ommers net. It is in soarte fan talwurd, en sa wirdt it ek ek bûgd." (But I was referring to adjectives, and, after all, hiel isn't an adjective here. It is a kind of quantifier, and it is also inflected as such.)

Hof actually comes up with the same test that we applied to Fering-Öömrang hial (cf. (19)). Just like Fering-Öömrang hial, West Friain hiel has both an absolutely intensifying meaning ('whole, entire') and a descriptive meaning ('whole, undamaged'). And only when it is used in its absolutely intensifying sense, it gets an ending -e in the context 'possessive pronoun ___ neuter singular noun'. In (30), I give Hof's examples:

(30) a. Hy hat syn hiele festje oan
     'He wears his complete waistcoat'
b. Hy hat syn hiel festje oan  
   'He wears his decent waistcoat'

Another case in which *hiel* normally gets an ending -e, whereas other adjectives remain uninflected, is when it precedes a place or country name (cf. Sytstra & Hof (1925, 97)):

   (31) a. hiele Fryslân  'the whole of Fryslân'
        (cf. grut Fryslân 'great Fryslân')
   b. hiele Ljouwert  'the whole of Ljouwert'
        (cf. lyts Ljouwert 'small Ljouwert')

The West Frisian examples in (31) are comparable to the Fering-Öömrang ones in (6).

The data in (29) and (31) shows that West Frisian has an ending -e with absolutely intensifying adjectives of type 1, that cannot be identified as adjectival inflection.

West Frisian has at least one absolutely intensifying adjective of type 2 which exhibits an unexpected ending, viz. *klear* 'clear', sometimes stacked with *baar* 'bare'.

When used in its absolutely intensifying sense, this adjective always gets an ending -e, also before neuter nouns, where adjectives normally remain uninflected:

   (32) a. klear(bare) stront  'pure shit'  (de stront)
        (cf. wiete stront 'wet shit')
   b. klear(bare) sân 'nothing but sand'  (it sân)
        (cf. wyt sân 'white sand')

Just like Fering-Öömrang rian(st), West Frisian *klear* has, next to its absolutely intensifying meaning 'nothing but...', a descriptive meaning 'clear'. Before neuter singular nouns, *klear* only gets an ending -e in its absolutely intensifying sense:

   (33) a. klear wetter  'clear water'  (it wetter)
   b. klear wetter  'nothing but water'

---

*baar* (sometimes suffixed with -lik) may also be used in an absolutely intensifying sense on its own, but must be preceded by a definite article:

   (i) a. de bare stront  'pure shit'
   b. de bare sinne  'the blazing sun'
   c. de bare/baarlike duvel  'the devil incarnate'
Genuine cases of absolutely intensifying adjectives of type 3 with an emphatic marker -e are hard to come by in West Frisian. Most of the time, they would be indistinguishable from inflected adjectives, since they are very often preceded by a definite article. Yet, I have been able to dig up at least one example in the context 'possessive pronoun ___ neuter singular noun' (cf. Tamminga (1963)):

(34) ús hege rjucht/ús heechste rjucht   (it rjucht)
    'our full right'

Here we find an ending -e that should not have been there according to the rules of adjectival inflection. Moreover, a change of the adjective from the positive to the superlative form does not entail a significant meaning change.  

When, finally, we consider absolutely intensifying adjectives of type 4 (affective adjectives) in West Frisian, we find that they may have an ending -e between a possessive pronoun and a neuter singular noun as well. In the West Frisian linguistic literature, there has been an interesting controversy about the ending -e with precisely this type of adjectives. Hof (1917) claimed, that the adjectives in examples like those in (35) should remain uninflected in correct Frisian:

(35) a. ús leve heitelân  'our beloved country'
    b. ús frije Fryslân  'our free Fryslân'

In his opinion, the ending -e in such cases should be attributed to recent Dutch

15. At first sight, superlative adjectives might seem to provide another example of absolute intensifying adjectives of type 3 with an emphatic marker -e. Superlatives represent another apparent exception to the rule that adjectives remain uninflected in the context 'possessive pronoun ___ neuter singular noun' (cf. Sytstra & Hof (1925, 96)):

(i) jim âldste bern
    'your (plur.) oldest child'

It is obvious, however, that in this case we are not dealing with an absolutely intensifying adjective: the superlative âldste 'oldest' in (i) clearly expresses a relative highest degree, not an absolute one. Therefore, final -e in attributive superlatives should probably be analysed, not as an ending in its own right, but as an integral part of the superlative suffix -ste (also compare in âldste bern 'an oldest child' with in lyts bern 'a little child').

Another question is why, historically, the ending -e has become part of the original superlative ending. Here the emphatic marker -e might come in again. Possibly, the emphatic marker with absolutely intensifying superlatives lost its emphatic function and came to be analysed as part of the superlative suffix. Subsequently, the extended suffix was generalized to all superlatives. This hypothesis gains some plausibility from the fact that a similar development can be observed in North Frisian (see section 4).
influence (note that in Dutch adjectives do get an inflectional ending -e between a possessive pronoun and a neuter singular noun).

In a reply to Hof, Postma (1918) rightly points out, however, that the use of the ending -e in these cases can be found with older writers, for example in the work of the 17th century poet Gysbert Japicx:

(36) mijn huynich-swiëcte Tuytelke
     'my honey-sweet love'

He further provides some examples of vocative noun phrases without a determiner, where the ending -e quite often occurs, especially with typically affective adjectives like earm 'poor' and leaf 'dear':

(37)  a. dou earmë sloof 'you poor woman'
     b. Swiet, oor-swiëcte Famke, Ljef, ijn-lijëave lamke [5008067-8]
     'Sweet, sweetest girl, Dear, dearest lamb'

Postma then raises the question (p. 100):

Scoe nou wol altiid dy e fen Hollânske komôf wêze? Scoe der ek net hwet oars efter sitte kinne? It jowt to tinken dit it wîrd "ljeave" der sa faek nei mânk is. De minsken, dy't ik 'er nei frege, sehen: "Us âlde hynder" is forkeard, mar "myn ljeave bern" (oanspraak) is goed. Troch dy e wîrdt it wîrd "inniger", wurdt de bitsjutting forsterke. [italics mine, J.H.]. Sa heart men, tinkt my, ek wol gau ris "hele" ynpleats fen "heel" sa as yn: "myn hele libben", "hele Fryslân", as men der de klam op lizze wol.

(Now, is this e really always of Dutch origin? Or could there be more to it? It is suggestive that the word "ljeave" ['dear'] is so often involved here. People, I asked about it, said: "Us âlde hynder" ['our old horse'] is wrong, but "myn ljeave bern" ['my dear child'] (vocative) is right. Owing to this e the word becomes "more intense", the meaning is intensified. Thus one can, I think, also often hear "hele" ['whole'] instead of "heel" as in "myn hele libben" ['my whole life'], "hele Fryslân" ['the whole of Fryslân'], if one wants to emphasize it.)

Postma gives here an intuitive, but non the less quite accurate description of the function of the ending -e in these cases: the ending -e functions as an emphatic marker with absolutely intensifying adjectives (here affective adjectives).

The absolutely intensifying nature of affective adjectives is clearly illustrated by the following example:

(38) myn leave/leafste fanke 'my dear/dearest girl'
In (38), the positive can be substituted for the superlative without changing the meaning of the adjective. Finally, note that the universal quantifier all(le) in West Frisian has an ending -e, even in cases where adjectives would remain uninflected (i.e. before neuter singular nouns).

(39) a. alle fingers 'all the fingers' (cf. kliemerige fingers 'sticky fingers')
   b. alle fleis 'all the meat' (it fleis) (cf. bret fleis 'roasted meat')

We may conclude that there is sufficient proof for the existence of an emphatic marker -e in West Frisian. In West Frisian we find an adjectival ending -e in contexts in which adjectives are not normally inflected. Moreover, this ending occurs with the same class of adjectives that may have an -e in Fering-Öömrang, viz. the absolutely intensifying ones.

4. On the development and status of the emphatic marker -e in West Germanic

In the preceding sections we reached the conclusion that there is a special semantic class of absolutely intensifying adjectives, which in some Frisian dialects, viz. Fering-Öömrang and West Frisian, can be formally marked with an emphatic suffix -e. In this section, I will try to answer some general questions that can be raised in connection with these findings: If the emphatic marker -e developed from the inflectional ending -e, how are we to understand this development? Does the emphatic marker -e occur in other West Germanic languages?

Although Fering-Öömrang and West Frisian both possess an emphatic marker -e, the development of this element must have been somewhat different in the two dialects. In Fering-Öömrang, the ending has probably been borrowed from (mainly) Low German (but see note 12), whereas in West Frisian the development of the emphatic marker -e was a language-internal matter. Note further that in Fering-Öömrang the emphatic marker can not have been adopted from Low German directly; to my knowledge, there is no direct evidence for the presence of such an element in Low German. Therefore, some process of reinterpretation, in which the Low German inflectional ending -e was understood as an emphatic suffix, must have been coupled with the borrowing.

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16. The universal quantifier elk 'every' is inflected as a regular adjective in West Frisian.
Adjectival inflection in the strongly deflected continental West Germanic languages (Frisian, Dutch and Low German) is a rather rudimentary phenomenon; the precise functional load of the few inflectional endings left is hard to define. Linguistic forms with an indistinct function or no function at all tend to be reinterpreted or, otherwise, dropped. In the former case, a new function is attributed to the pertinent forms in order to reestablish a transparent relation between meaning and form.

The adjectival ending -e has a rather vague function in Frisian, Dutch and Low German. So we might expect it to be liable to reinterpretation. I assume that this is what actually happens when the ending occurs with an absolutely intensifying adjective. In this case, there will be a tendency to associate the emphatic force inherent to the adjective with the ending. Although this tendency is probably present in all three languages, it does not necessarily lead to the development of a distinct emphatic marker -e next to the adjectival inflectional ending -e. Certain independent factors seem to come into play here.

It is generally assumed that linguistic objects with a concrete meaning are more apt to borrowing than abstract elements. Thus, content words (lexemes) are more easily taken over than, for example, syntactic structures (cf. Van Coetsem's (1988) stability gradient). By the same token, suffixes with a distinct meaning will be adopted more easily than suffixes with a vague meaning. When Fering-Öömrang borrowed the adjectival ending -e from Low German, it did not adopt the functionally opaque inflectional ending -e, but rather the ending -e that could be associated with emphatic force. This emphatic suffix could quite freely enter the language (and quite easily be identified as such), because Fering-Öömrang did not have an interfering inflectional ending -e.17

This raises the question, how the emphatic marker -e could develop in West Frisian, which did have an inflectional ending -e. Another question that comes up with respect to West Frisian is why an emphatic marker -e could be abstracted from the inflectional ending -e here, but not or nearly not in Dutch18.

17. Recall that the emphatic marker -e can not cooccur with the adjectival inflectional ending -en in Fering-Öömrang (en hialen/*hialin/*hialene dai 'a whole day').

18. There seems to be one case in which Dutch exhibits an emphatic marker -e with adjectives: in vocative phrases, affective adjectives may have an ending -e (cf. ANS 326, Opn. 1):

(i) lief/lieve kind 'dear child'

ANS probably owes this observation to Rijpma & Schuringa (195816, 178), but it does not mention the interesting remark made there: "In aansprekingen, b.v. lief kind en lieve kind [...], heet de zwakke vorm gevoelswaarde; hier is dus eigenlijk geen sprake van buiging." (In vocatives, f. ex. lief kind and lieve kind [...], the weak form has emotive value; so, actually, we are not dealing with inflection here.).

Further, the universal quantifier all(le) in Dutch behaves just like its West Frisian congener (cf. (39)).
considering the fact that the adjectival inflection of both languages only shows minor differences. Let me suggest some answers.

First, we might consider the possibility that the contrast between West Frisian and Dutch relates to a difference in the quantifier system of both languages. In Dutch, many quantifiers behave as adjectives in that they show adjectival inflection, whereas their West Frisian counterparts are not inflected; actually, some originally adjectival quantifiers have been replaced by quantifying noun phrases in West Frisian. Compare:

(40)  
  a. menig kind - menige zeeman  (Dutch)  
  b. mannich bern - mannich seeman  (West Frisian)  
     'many a child - many a sailor'

(41)  
  a. enig geld - enige hoop  (Dutch)  
  b. wat jild - wat hope  (West Frisian)  
     'some money - some hope'

(42)  
  a. veel sneeuw - vele meisjes  (Dutch)  
  b. in soad snie - in soad famkes  (West Frisian)  
     'a lot of snow - a lot of girls'

(43)  
  a. weinig zout - weinige mensen  (Dutch)  
  b. in bytsje sâlt - in bytsje minsken  (West Frisian)  
     'little salt - little people'

It might be assumed that quantifiers come in two types: quantifying adjectives and 'genuine' quantifiers. Quantifying adjectives occupy an adjective position and, consequently, they are inflected. Genuine quantifiers occupy a quantifier position - possibly the specifier position of a quantifier phrase -, where they are not inflected. Some Dutch quantifiers actually have a non-inflecting variant next to the inflecting one:

(44)  
  a. menig/menige zeeman     'many a sailor'  
  b. veel/vele meisjes  'many girls'  
  c. weinig/weinige mensen  'little people'
In West Frisian, then, there might be a relatively strong tendency to have quantifiers in the quantifier position. Also absolutely intensifying adjectives, which, as we argued above, have a quantificational meaning, might preferably occupy this position in West Frisian, whereas in Dutch they basically remain in their adjectival position. We might hypothesize now that an emphatic marker -e may only show up in a position where no inflectional ending -e may (potentially) appear. This would not only explain the difference between West Frisian and Dutch, it could also account for the following contrast between Fering-Öömrang and West Frisian:

(45)  

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<th></th>
<th>a.</th>
<th>b.</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>en hial</td>
<td>in hiel(*)</td>
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<td>taarep</td>
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<td>(at)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Fering-Öömrang)</td>
<td>(West Frisian)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>'a whole village'</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In Fering-Öömrang, an emphatic marker -e may appear after hial when the adjective is between an indefinite article and a neuter singular noun. In West Frisian, the emphatic marker is not allowed in this position. It is generally assumed that the indefinite article occupies the head position of the quantifier phrase. In that case, in (45) the absolutely intensifying adjective hial/hiel can only be in an adjectival position, not in the specifier position of the quantifier phrase. In West Frisian no emphatic marker can appear in an adjectival position, since the inflectional ending -e may show up here (e.g. in hiele bôle 'a whole loaf of bread'). In Fering-Öömrang, on the other hand, the emphatic marker is free to occupy an adjectival position, because this dialect does not have an interfering inflectional ending -e.19

All this is, of course, rather hypothetical. A more detailed analysis of the West Frisian and Dutch quantifier system would be required to see whether this explanation is on the right track. This would, however, lead us too far afield here.

On the other hand, there could be a more trivial explanation for the difference between West Frisian and Dutch. It might be the case that the 'minor differences' in the adjectival inflection of West Frisian and Dutch play a role after all. Note that quite a lot of the examples of the emphatic marker -e in West Frisian involve the syntactic context 'possessive pronoun ___ neuter singular noun' (cf. (29), (34), (35)), where West Frisian does not inflect (e.g. myn swart hynder)

19 Historically, the fact that Fering-Öömrang hial exhibits a final -e in the context 'en ___ neuter singular noun' can be attributed to the Low German provenience of the ending. In Schleswig Low German, adjectives have an inflectional ending -e in this context; the ending -e has actually spread over the whole paradigm here (cf. Lipold (1983, 1191), Bock (1933, 73-75), Meyer (1925, 9)).
'my black horse'), whereas Dutch does (e.g. *mijn zwarte paard* 'idem'). This, in fact, reduces the cases in which West Frisian and Dutch clearly differ with respect to the use of the emphatic marker to examples with *hiel/heel* 'whole' + proper name and with the type 2 adjective *kleare(bare)/klinkklaar*:

(46)  

a. hiele Fryslân  
    (West Frisian)  
    (= (33a))

b. heel Friesland  
    (Dutch)  
    'the whole of Fryslân'

(47)  

a. kleare(bare) sân  
    (West Frisian)  
    (= (34b))

b. klinkklaar zand  
    (Dutch)  
    'nothing but sand'

Also considering the fact that Dutch does not completely lack the emphatic marker -e (see note 18), one might be tempted to regard the contrasts in (46) and (47) as more or less accidental.

The different sociopolitical status of both languages might also come in here. Obviously, there is a tendency to reason away the emphatic marker -e as an illegitimate inflectional ending (cf. Hof (1917)). This tendency may have been stronger in a 'full' standard language like Dutch than in a minority language like West Frisian.

West Frisian boasts two more emphatic suffixes, which occurred in older Dutch as well, whereas they are not found in Modern Standard Dutch: the so-called adverbial -e (cf. Tiersma (1985, 93)) and the emphatic ending -en (cf. Tiersma (1985, 52)). The adverbial -e is normally attached to adverbs when they are used attributively. Compare:

(48)  

a. mâl e skoan  
    'very well'

b. rar e kel  
    'quite scared'

c. net bott e snoad  
    'not very smart'

20. On the rather complicated use of inflected and uninflected forms in this context in modern and older Dutch and its dialects, see De Rooij (1980).

21. It might be relevant here that the only trace of an emphatic marker -e with adjectives in Dutch is found in the affective domain (cf. note 18), where older phonology and morphology is often preserved.

22. A relic of the adverbial -e in Dutch can be found in cases like

(i)  

a. verrekt(e) handig  
    'very convenient'

b. verdomd(e) link  
    'very risky'

c. verhipt(e) koud  
    'very cold'
The ending only occurs with intensifying adverbs, not with descriptive adverbs. Thus the adverb *glimmend* in (49) cannot take an adverbial -e:

(49) glimmend(*e) swart

'shiny black'

The emphatic ending -en appears optionally with attributive adjectives preceded by the indefinite article *in*. Although, originally, this suffix was found with all kinds of adjectives, in present-day West Frisian it has retreated to inherently intensifying adjectives:

(50) a. sa'n *òfgryslike/òfgryslik*en toarst
    'such a terrible thirst'

b. in *ûnhjirmlike/ûnhjirmlik*en pine
    'an unbearable pain'

c. sa'n *bloedich/bloedig*en ein
    'such a bloody long way'

c. in *ferhipte/ferhipt*en wille
    'a lot of fun'

Just like the emphatic marker -e, the adverbial -e and the emphatic ending -en have developed from inflectional endings or pseudo-endings (-en originates from incorporation of the indefinite article *in* in the adjective) that were functionally opaque. And just like the emphatic marker -e, they gave a new meaning to their existence in association with intensifying adjectives.

In West Frisian, the emphatic marker -e has developed from and alongside the inflectional ending -e, whereas in Fering-Öömrang, which has lost the inflectional ending -e, the emphatic marker -e has come into the language by borrowing (but see note 12). A third logical possibility would be the case of a language that has dropped the inflectional ending -e, but retained the functionally more robust emphatic marker -e. Such a language actually exists.

In Afrikaans, most monosyllabic, simplex adjectives have become uninflected (cf. Raidt (1968)). Ponelis (1993, 365) points out, however, that some of these adjectives have 'lexically specialised inflected doublets'. Compare:

(51) 'n *heel oorlosie* 'a watch that is intact'
    die *hele wêreld* 'the whole world'

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23. On the historical development of these emphatic suffixes, see Verdenius (1939a, b) and van der Meer (1987).
By now, it will be clear that these 'doublets' are absolutely intensifying adjectives of type 1 (51), type 2 (52) and type 4 (53) with an emphatic marker -e. So, it is not the adjectival inflection that has been preserved here, to distinguish between lexical doublets, but rather the emphatic marker, that remained unaffected by the process of deflection of adjectives.

Emphatic suffixes are rather unstable elements in the languages in which they occur. They show a lot of idiosyncrasies in their use. This instability is at the same time their strength and their weakness. It is only by virtue of their abnormality that they can have emphatic function; as soon as they get settled, they inevitably lose their emphatic force.

Since the emphasis of which the emphatic marker is the formal expression is already inherent to the absolutely intensifying adjective to which it is attached, the emphatic marker -e is easily reanalysed as part of the adjectival stem, when it

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24. More examples can be found in Raidt (1968, 108-109). An absolutely intensifying adjective of type 3 with an emphatic marker -e is exemplified by (i):

(i) 'n waar storie 'a true story'
    'n ware Afrikaner 'a true Afrikaner'

Raidt also mentions the idiomatic expression dis die ene asyn, modder, etc. 'it's all vinegar, mud, etc. (lit. it's the one vinegar, mud, etc.)', which is reminiscent of the Fering-Öömrang expression in (22).

25. Ponelis (1993) goes on to show that the ending -e may be used with otherwise uninflected adjectives for purely affective reasons:

(i) haar duur rok (neutral)
    haar dure rok (affective)
    'her expensive skirt'

It seems then that in Afrikaans the emphatic marker -e is not restricted to absolutely intensifying adjectives anymore (where it may have been lexicalized), but has widened its domain of application to all (non-inflectable) adjectives.

26. For similar remarks on emphatic suffixes, see Bybee (1985, 185-186).
becomes very frequent and loses its emphatic force. This is, for example, what happened in Halunder *faimi* 'nice' and *fiksi* 'hefty' (cf. Borchert, R. & N. Århammar (1987, 134)). Further, there seems to be a tendency in Halunder and among younger speakers of Fering-Öömrang to generalize the ending -e after absolutely intensifying superlatives to all superlatives, a development that seems to have been completed in West Frisian (see note 15).

5. Conclusion

Departing from a set of Frisian data, this study has shown that from and alongside the inflectional ending -e an emphatic marker -e could develop in the strongly deflected West Germanic languages (Frisian, Afrikaans, Dutch). This emphatic suffix functions as the formal marker of a special semantic class of absolutely intensifying adjectives. Once we accept the existence of an emphatic marker -e, a number of curious 'exceptions' to the rules of adjectival inflection in the pertinent languages finds a simple explanation.

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