Inflectional tones and morpheme expression in Limburg Dutch

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Gender loss in Dutch
Some dialects still have a three-way gender distinction, e.g. on adjectives (Louvain dialect; Goemans 1897):

Covert feminine inflection
If the inflectional ending of the feminine is lost, phonological behaviour may still reveal its presence:

1. No place assimilation (Louvain; Vandenbulcke 1998):
   - klein ‘small’ (Twente; MAND)
   - een klei|j kind ‘a small child’ (n)
   - een|j|j vroua ‘a small woman’ (f)

2. Lenition (Frison; Vandenbulcke 1998):
   - goed ‘good’ (/g/+/i/)
   - een goe|j kind ‘a good child’ (n)
   - een goe|j|j vroua ‘a good woman’ (f)

3. No Final devoicing (Louvain; Vandenbulcke 1998):
   - droog ‘dry’ (/d/+/w/)
   - een droog|j koekje ‘a dry cookie’ (n)
   - een droog|j| baart ‘a dry cake’ (f)

Structure of feminine
In these cases, it looks as if the schwa has gone, but feminine is still expressed by an abstract position:

\[ \sigma \]

Faithfulness prevents the empty mora from being filled; but it also prevents the position from being deleted.

Tonal alternations
- If the stem ends in a voice consonant (or a sonorant, or a vowel) we find two patterns:
  - neuter: bumping: feminine: bumping
  - neuter: dragging: feminine: bumping
- If the stem ends in a voiceless obstruent, we find falling-falling patterns (possibly next to the other two)

Cross-dialectal statistics
In the GTR database, we find 473 potential pairs (for dialects across Limburg):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone on a noun on /</th>
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<th>Tone</th>
<th>of</th>
<th>Stems</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stems in voiceless obstruents</td>
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