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Parts of speech and dependent clauses: A typological study

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I like languages. At least that much was clear to me when I finished high school. The problem was that I didn't know yet why I liked them so much. And since there didn't seem to be any particular language that I liked better than any other, I decided to start studying my own language: Dutch. During my first classes in Dutch syntax I discovered, to my great excitement, that there was a real academic discipline devoted to my gut feeling about languages; it was called Linguistics. Moreover, I realized that the existence of Linguistics implied the existence of Linguists. Very soon I knew I wanted to belong to this group of people – that I wanted to be a linguist. I hope this book shows that I have taken an important step on my way to becoming one.

One day in August 2004, when it was pouring with rain and I was in a particularly bad mood, Kees Hengeveld called me to say that I got the job: I was going to be a PhD candidate at the Department of Theoretical Linguistics of the University of Amsterdam. Three days later my desk was waiting for me at the Herengracht 338. Some years earlier, when I was still a student, the huge, high-ceilinged, large-windowed room on the ground floor of this beautiful building had been renovated. I remember clearly that I peeped inside the room and thought: If only one of these desks could once be mine...and here it was!

The other desks in the room belonged to three wonderful persons: Rafael, Annerieke, and Gerry. They were the firsts of many more people that have made my time as a PhD candidate so thoroughly enjoyable. I wish

to express my deep gratitude to all of them.

First, I want to thank Kees, for the enthusiasm, dedication, and patience with which he helped me to structure lines of thought, improve analyses, and gain confidence as a researcher along the way. He did this not only in his role of supervisor of my MA, MPhil, and PhD theses, but also as a colleague in our various joint projects. I am very grateful for all these years of collaboration, during which I learned innumerable cool things about innumerable cool languages, as well as a few lessons about myself. Among the latter, there is one thing Kees taught me that I will always remember: that it is essential to invest energy in those things in (linguistic) life that make one's heart beat faster.

I also wish to thank Hans den Besten, Sonia Cristofaro, Jan Don, Olga Fischer, Helen de Hoop, and Andrej Malchukov for accepting the invitation to be a member of my committee. Special thanks go to Jan Don, who helped me with editing the manuscript in its final stages, and who has more generally been a wonderful colleague with whom I have collaborated intensively and with great pleasure. Another thank you goes to Andrej Malchukov, who took the time for interesting and helpful discussions during my stay at the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig.

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confirmed, time and again, my feeling that linguists are inspiring, open-minded, and great fun!

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Amsterdam, June 2009