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Parts of speech and dependent clauses: A typological study

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Publication date
2009

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Citation for published version (APA):

van Lier, E. H. (2009). *Parts of speech and dependent clauses: A typological study*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam]. LOT.

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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.

But there are many other people who have made valuable contributions to the present work: Dik Bakker, whose extensive e-mails helped me to overcome occasional fits of doubt and confusion; Elena Maslova, for her generous and crystal clear comments on the interpretation of quantitative typological data; Rob Schoonen, for his kind advice on statistical issues; Michael Cysouw, Martin Haspelmath, and Jaklin Kornfilt for inspiring discussions at the Max Planck in Leipzig; John Peterson and Nick Evans for helping me out on the fascinating languages they know so much about. I also wish to thank all the members of the parts-of-speech research group of the Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication for their sharing of expertise and spirit.

More generally, a great amount of people have spiced up my linguistic life in the past years. First, I wish to thank my fellow students of the Linguistics Research Master in Amsterdam for a very stimulating year: It's good to be among like-minded language-freaks. Also, many thanks go to all the people who contribute to the warm bath called the Linguistics Department of the University of Amsterdam. I'm going to miss you all. Finally, I feel grateful to have met so many young fellow-typologists, with whom I have spent good times in Leipzig and at conferences all-over Europe. All these people have

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

Some linguists are particularly dear to me. First, a special thank you goes to Rafael – whose jokes are even better than his looks – for sharing his Cofán with me, for asking difficult typological questions, and for helping me to believe, notwithstanding gloomy moods, that our work matters after all. Another big thank you goes to Esther and Margot, for lighting up the Bungehuis in their very own lovely ways and for all the shared lunches, dinners, ice-creams, and borrels (and their burning-up during runs along the Amstel). I also want to thank Josje Verhagen and Suzanne Dikker, for great collaboration projects during our student years, and for the many drinks and dinners over which we shared our experiences in and outside of linguistic careers, keeping each other's spirits high. A very special thank you is for Gerry Wanders, for reading the manuscript of my dissertation with so much care.

Of course, there are also many non-linguists to thank, in fact too many to list them all. Nonetheless, I want to mention Floor and Anne, for their patience with all my struggles, as well as for celebrating the good times with me. And Gijs, for never tiring of asking puzzling questions about my work. Finally, I want thank Claartje, Sanne and Annet for making this book look so pretty.

Very particularly, I want to thank my paranimf, Lotte, for adopting me after the Herengracht 388 was sold, and for being the best possible roomy, colleague, and friend ever since. I am grateful for her sharing; not just of working space and coffee, but also of classical music, intellectual frustrations and successes, panic attacks, statistical know-how, sore muscles, broken hearts, a great many laughs, and more time with me than anyone else. Lotte, you're a star!

I also want to thank my other paranimf. Joost, thank you for being my big brother, and for giving me your unconditional love and support.

I want to thank my parents. Papa, thanks for being my father in a way that makes me feel proud to be your daughter, and lucky to have your courageous embrace of life as a guiding example. Mama, thanks for making me remember you the way I do.

Finally, I want to thank Sander. My love, I doubt whether there is any other

linguist's partner who understands linguistics as well as you do. But that's just one of the countless reasons why you are – and have been for so many years – an essential part of my life.

Amsterdam, June 2009