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The syntax of Dutch gapping

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This article takes as its point of departure Neijt's (1979) claim that gapping is a rule of syntax with properties also found in *wh*-movement constructions. I will refine this proposal by concluding that gapping remnants are A'-moved into the clause-initial position (SpecCP) and/or the specifiers of functional projections such as TopP, FocP and NegP found in the middle field of the clause. I will further show that this approach sheds new light on various problems (such as the distribution of modal and polarity particles) not satisfactorily solved in earlier analyses.

Keywords: A'-movement, gapping, ellipsis, particles, negation

1. Introduction

Neijt (1979) noted a correlation between *wh*-movement and gapping and concluded from this that gapping (contrary to backward conjunction reduction) is a rule of syntax; cf. § 2. But she did not take the next logical step of assuming that *wh*-movement is actually involved in the derivation of gapping for reasons reviewed in § 3. This section will also show that these reasons do not apply when we reformulate Neijt's correlation in terms of the more general notion of A'-movement. I will hypothesize that gapping remnants are A'-moved into the clause-initial position (SpecCP) and/or the specifier positions of functional projections like TopP, FocP and NegP found in the middle field of the clause; see Broekhuis & Corver (2016: chapter 13) for an extensive discussion of these A'-movement types. Although this cannot be elaborated in this article for reasons of space, the analysis of gapping proposed here diverges from the standard analysis developed since Merchant (2001/2004) by assuming that we are not dealing with deletion of an extended projection of the verb but with spell-out of the A'-specifiers of specific functional projections; see Broekhuis & Bayer (in prep) for detailed discussion. The discussion in § 4 to § 7 will show that the A'-movement hypothesis sheds

new light on various problems not satisfactorily solved by earlier approaches to gapping, such as the obligatory elision of finite verbs and complementizers and the distribution of focus and polarity particles. Other A'-movement analyses of Dutch gapping can be found in Aelbrecht (2007) and Boone (2014) but they differ from the present proposal in that they adopt some form of “exceptional movement” in line with the by now standard theory of ellipsis developed in Merchant (2001/2004). This article focuses on Dutch gapping but I provisionally assume that gapping in other languages can also be accounted for in terms of A'-movement, albeit that it may come in different guises like English-type topicalization and heavy NP shift (which may account for the fact that gapping constructions allow for less remnants in English than, e.g., in Dutch); see Johnson (2017: § 4) for a proposal heading in that direction.

2. Gapping and *wh*-movement

Gapping is a forward reduction process that prototypically applies in clausal coordinate structures with the coordinator *en* ‘and’, *of* ‘or’ or *maar* ‘but’, which deletes non-contrastive elements in the target clause of gapping on the basis of corresponding elements in the antecedent clause; see Broekhuis & Corver (to appear) for a more detailed description. Neijt (1979) considers the two generalizations in (1) concerning the distribution of the gapping remnants. We will briefly discuss these restrictions in this section but we will postpone discussion of the fact that they differ in that only the former explicitly requires the gapping remnants to be part of the same clause to § 3.

- (1) a. **Clausemate restriction on gapping (Hankamer 1971/1973):** Remnants of gapping are major phrases of the target clause.
- b. ***Wh*-movement correlation restriction on gapping (Neijt 1979):** Remnants of gapping can undergo *wh*-movement in non-reduced clauses.

The clausemate restriction in (1a) represents the standard view at the time that Neijt wrote her study. It states that gapping remnants are clausal constituents of the target clause, as in (2), or smaller (non-clausal) verbal projections, which I will refer to as VP for convenience, as in (3).

- (2) **Clausal constituents** (= argument, predicate or adverbial modifier of the clause)
 - a. [[JAN las een BOEK] en [MARIE las een ARTIKEL]].
Jan read a book and Marie read an article

- b. [[De ROMAN is SAAI] maar [de FILM is SPANNEND]].
 the novel is boring but the movie is thrilling
- c. [[JAN leest het artikel VANDAAG] en [PETER leest het artikel
 Jan reads the article today and Peter reads the article
 MORGEN]].
 tomorrow.

(3) **Lexical verbal projections (VPs)**

- a. [[JAN heeft [_{VP} een BOEK gelezen]] en [ELS heeft [_{VP} een FILM
 Jan has a book read and Els has a movie
 bekeken]]].
 watched
 ‘Jan has read a book and Marie has watched a movie.’
- b. [[JAN wil [_{VP} een BOEK lezen]] en [ELS wil [_{VP} een FILM bekijken]]].
 Jan wants a book read and Els wants a movie watch
 ‘Jan wants to read a book and Els wants to watch a movie.’

The clausemate restriction comes close to the mark but there are also problematic cases. Example (4a) is a case in which one of the remnants functions as the PP-complement of an adjective, which is prohibited by the clausemate restriction. It is, however, in agreement with the *wh*-movement correlation restriction in (1b), as is illustrated in (4b) by showing that the PP-complement of *boos* ‘angry’ is able to undergo *wh*-movement. Note in connection with the examples in (3) that *wh*-movement includes topicalization, which is important for establishing that VPs may also undergo *wh*-movement: cf. [[*Een film bekeken*] heeft Els niet t_{VP}] ‘Els hasn’t watched a movie’.

- (4) a. [[JAN is [erg boos [op MARIE]]] en [ELS is [erg boos [op
 Jan is very angry with Marie and Els is very angry with
 PETER]]]].
 Peter
 ‘Jan is very angry of Marie and Els is very angry of Peter.’
- b. [Op wie]_i/[Op Peter]_i is Els [erg boos t_i]?
 of who/of Peter is Els very angry
 ‘Who is Els very angry with?/With Peter Els is very angry.’

That the *wh*-movement correlation restriction is superior to the clausemate restriction is also clear from the examples in (5). Example (5a) first shows that degree modifiers of adjectives cannot occur as remnants of gapping, which is in agreement with both restrictions: the degree modifier *erg* is not a clausal constituent in the sense defined in (2) and it cannot be *wh*-moved either. Example (5b), on the other hand, shows that nominal measure phrases functioning as modifiers

of an adjective can occur as gapping remnants. This is not in agreement with the clausemate restriction because such measure phrases are not clausal constituents, but it is in agreement with the *wh*-movement correlation restriction, as is clear from the fact illustrated in (5b') that such phrases can be *wh*-moved; cf. Zwarts (1978: 327), Neijt (1979) and Corver (1990).

- (5) a. *[[DEZE kuil is [VRIJ diep]] en [DIE kuil is [ERG diep]]].
 this pit is fairly deep and that pit is very deep
 a'. *[Hoe]_i is deze kuil [t_i diep]?
 how is this pit deep
 b. [[DEZE kuil is [DRIE meter diep]] en [DIE kuil is [VIER meter diep]]].
 this pit is three meter deep and that pit is four meter deep
 b'. [Hoeveel meter]_i is deze kuil [t_i diep]?
 how.many meter is this pit deep

Neijt concluded from the superiority of the *wh*-movement correlation restriction that gapping is a rule of syntax, but she did not take the next logical step of assuming that *wh*-movement is actually involved in the *derivation* of gapping for reasons that will be reviewed in § 3.

3. Gapping and A'-movement

The discussion in § 2 has side-stepped one important problem for the *wh*-movement correlation restriction, namely the fact that clausal constituents can be *wh*-moved from finite embedded clauses. For what follows, it is important to realize that such *wh*-extraction does not apply in one fell swoop but proceeds via an intermediate position in the left-periphery of the embedded clause (SpecCP), which can function as an escape hatch in so-called “bridge” contexts. This is indicated by means of the intermediate trace t'_i in the primeless examples in (6). That *wh*-extraction crucially relies on the availability of the escape hatch is normally motivated by the fact that it cannot apply from embedded *wh*-questions: because the escape hatch in the primed examples in (6) is already filled by the *wh*-pronoun *wie* ‘who’, their unacceptability under the intended interpretation shows that extracting the object/adverbial phrase from the embedded clause in one fell swoop is not allowed. Note that “Ø” indicates the phonetically empty complementizer normally found in embedded *wh*-questions.

- (6) a. Wat_i denk je [_{CP} t'_i dat [_{TP} Jan t_i wil kopen]]?
 what think you that Jan wants buy
 ‘What do you think that Jan will buy?’

- a'. *Wat_j vraagt Jan [_{CP} wie_i Ø [_{TP} t_i t_j wil kopen]]?
 what asks Jan who wants buy
- b. Wanneer_i denk je [_{CP} t'_i dat [_{TP} Jan zal t_i komen]]?
 when think you that Jan will come
 'When do you think that Jan will come?'
- b'. *Wanneer_j vraagt Jan [_{CP} wie_i Ø [_{TP} t_i t_j wil komen]]?
 when asks Jan who wants come

Because *wh*-extraction in (6a&b) is possible, the *wh*-movement correlation restriction predicts that the restriction that gapping remnants are clausemates does not hold in bridge contexts. This seems to be incorrect, however, as examples such as given in (7) are normally ranked as degraded; cf. Neijt (1979: 143). I use a percentage sign here (and not an asterisk) for reasons that will become clear shortly.

- (7) a. %[[ELS denkt [_{CP} dat je een BOEK zal kopen]] en [MARIE ~~denkt~~
 Els thinks that you a book will buy and Marie thinks
 [_{CP} dat je een CD zal kopen]]].
 that you a CD will buy
- b. %[[ELS denkt [_{CP} dat je VANDAAG zal komen]] en [MARIE ~~denkt~~
 Els thinks that you today will come and Marie thinks
 [_{CP} dat je MORGEN zal komen]]].
 that you tomorrow will come

Neijt (1979: 141–5) explains the acceptability contrast between the *wh*-examples in (6a&b) and the corresponding gapping examples in (7) by claiming that the escape hatch in the left periphery of the embedded clause is relevant for movement only, but this raises the question as to why gapping exhibits the properties of *wh*-movement discussed by her. I propose that the answer to this question is that the relevant properties of gapping are not typical for *wh*-movement constructions only but for a wider class of A'-movement constructions including A'-scrambling constructions derived by topic, focus and negation movement, which were not yet identified at the time that Neijt wrote her study. I therefore replace the *wh*-movement correlation restriction in (1b) by the A'-movement correlation restriction in (8).

- (8) **A'-movement correlation restriction on gapping:** Remnants of gapping can undergo A'-movement (*wh*-movement and/or A' scrambling) in non-reduced clauses.

Assume for the moment that gapping remnants undergo focus/topic-movement in the prototypical case, which can of course be independently motivated by the fact that they are normally contrastively accented. This assumption explains the acceptability contrast between the *wh*-examples in (6) and the corresponding

gapping examples in (7), as the examples in (9) show that extracting a contrastive focus/topic phrase from its clause normally gives rise to a marked result: focus/topic movement apparently differs from *wh*-movement in that it cannot proceed via the escape hatch (SpecCP).

- (9) a. %Ik had [in de *TUIN*]_i gedacht [dat het feest *t*_i zou zijn].
 I had in the garden thought that the party would be
 'I had thought that the party would be in the *GARDEN*.'
 b. %Ik had [een *BOEK*]_i gedacht [dat Jan *t*_i zou kopen].
 I had a book thought that Jan would buy
 'I had thought that Jan would buy a *BOOK*'

However, the results in bridge contexts (e.g. with a bridge verb such as *denken* 'to think') are better than in non-bridge contexts (e.g. with factive verbs such as *betreuren* 'to regret'). The contrast between the examples in (9) and (10) therefore shows that focus/topic movement out of an embedded clause is at least marginally possible in bridge contexts: see Zwart (1993: 200), Barbiers (2002), and Broekhuis & Corver (2016: § 13.3.2) for more discussion.

- (10) a. *Ik had [in de *TUIN*]_i betreurd [dat het feest *t*_i zou zijn].
 I had in the garden regretted that the party would be
 b. *Ik had [een *BOEK*]_i betreurd [dat Jan *t*_i zou kopen].
 I had a book regretted that Jan would buy

If gapping remnants undergo focus/topic movement in the prototypical case, we predict a similar contrast in the case of gapping. This can be tested by comparing the gapping examples in (7) to those in (11), which show that a similar contrast can indeed be found: the examples in (7) are less marked and easier to interpret in the intended sense than those in (11).

- (11) a. *[[*ELS* betreurt [_{CP} dat je een *BOEK* hebt gekocht]] en [*MARIE*
 Els regrets that you a book have bought and Marie
~~betreurt~~ [_{CP} dat je een *CD* ~~hebt gekocht~~]].
 regrets that you a CD have bought
 b. *[[*ELS* betreurt [_{CP} dat je *VANDAAG* komt]] en [*MARIE* ~~betreurt~~
 Els regrets that you today come and Marie regrets
 [_{CP} dat je *MORGEN* ~~komt~~]].
 that you tomorrow come

If the judgments given above are correct, it would support the claim that there is not only a correlation between focus/topic movement and gapping but that these movements are actually involved in the derivation of gapping. This leads to the hypothesis in (12).

4. Verbal-head restriction on gapping

A nice result of the A' -movement hypothesis is that it immediately explains one of the core properties of gapping, embodied in the finite verb restriction on gapping in (15), namely that the finite verb *must* be elided: A' -movement is restricted to phrases and thus cannot target the finite verb of the clause, which is not a phrase but a head.

- (15) **Finite-verb restriction on gapping:** Gapping elides the finite verb of its target clause.

The finding that the obligatory elision of the finite verb follows from the A' -movement hypothesis in (12) is significant as it entails that gapping may in principle also apply in the absence of a finite verb, as long as there are designated A' -positions available. This accounts for the fact that gapping can also occur in infinitival clauses, that is, clauses without a finite verb. This is illustrated by means of example (16) adapted from Haeseryn et al. (1997: 1597), in which the infinitival clauses function as adverbial phrases indicating goals.

- (16) Jan ging weg [[om bij de BAKKER BROOD te halen] en [~~om~~ bij de
Jan went away COMP at the bakery bread to fetch and COMP at the
APOTHEKER ASPIRINES ~~te halen~~]].
apothecary aspirins to fetch
'Jan left to buy bread at the bakery and aspirins at the pharmacy.'

The A' -movement hypothesis also provides an explanation for the fact illustrated in (17) that gapping targeting embedded clauses must elide the complementizer; cf. De Vries (1992: chapter 3). This follows in the same way as the obligatory elision of the finite verb: A' -movement is restricted to phrases and thus cannot target the complementizer of the clause, because complementizers are not phrases but heads.

- (17) a. Jan vertelde [[dat ELS ZIEK is] en [dat/*dat MARIE AFWEZIG is]].
Jan told that Els ill is and that/that Marie absent is
'Jan said that Els is ill and Marie absent.'
b. Jan heeft beloofd [[om NU de DEUR te verven] en [~~om~~/*om
Jan has promised COMP now the door to paint and COMP/COMP
MORGEN de VLOER ~~te verven~~]].
tomorrow the floor to paint
'Jan has promised to paint the door now and the floor tomorrow.'

We may therefore conclude that the A' -movement hypothesis is supported by the fact that it simplifies the linguistic description by making the postulation of restrictions of the type in (15) and (18) superfluous.

- (18) **Verbal-head restriction on gapping;** Gapping elides all functional and lexical heads with verbal features (C, T and V_{finite}) of its target clause.

5. Interrogative, topicalized and negative phrases

The A'-movement hypothesis predicts that elements occupying a designated A'-position can occur as gapping remnants. The examples in (19) show that this correctly predicts that *wh*-phrases, which prototypically occupy the clause-initial position, can occur as gapping remnants.

- (19) a. [[WIE las het BOEK] en [WIE las het ARTIKEL]]?
 who read the book and who read the article
 b. [[WAT las JAN] en [WAT las ELS]]?
 what read Jan and what read Els
 ‘What did Jan read and what Els?’

The A'-movement hypothesis also correctly predicts that topicalized phrases can survive gapping; cf. (20). This also solves the problem for earlier proposals that the order of the gapping remnants and their correlates can be reversed in this construction, as in (20b); cf. Van Oirsouw (1987: 262) and Cremers (1993: 102–3). That similar non-parallel cases are not easy to construct for interrogatives has two reasons: (i) coordinated *wh*-clauses such as (19a&b) always have a parallel word order because *wh*-movement of interrogative phrases is obligatory; (ii) examples such as ^{*}*Marie heeft Jan vandaag ontmoet en wanneer Els?* (lit.: Marie met Jan today and when Peter?) are marked because declarative and interrogative clauses cannot easily be coordinated anyway.

- (20) a. [[VANDAAG heb ik JAN ontmoet] en [GISTEREN heb ik ELS ontmoet]].
 today have I Jan met and yesterday have I Els met
 ‘Today I met Jan and yesterday Els.’
 b. [[VANDAAG heb ik JAN ontmoet] en [ELS heb ik GISTEREN ontmoet]].
 today have I Jan met and Els have I yesterday met
 ‘Today I met Jan and Els yesterday.’
 c. [[Ik heb VANDAAG JAN ontmoet] en [GISTEREN heb ik ELS ontmoet]].
 I have today Jan met and yesterday have I Els met
 ‘I met Jan earlier today and yesterday Els.’

The examples in (21) show that we also correctly predict that negative phrases expressing clausal negation may occur as remnants, as Haegeman (1995) and Broekhuis & Klooster (2010) have shown that they obligatorily occupy the

specifier of NegP in Dutch. More can be said about negation, but this will be done in § 6 and § 7.

- (21) a. [[Jan kreeg *alles* wat hij *wou*] en/maar [Marie ~~kreeg~~ niets]].
 Jan got everything which he wanted and/but Marie got nothing
 ‘Jan got everything he wanted, and/but Marie got nothing.’
 b. [[Jan gaat vaak op vakantie] en/maar [Marie ~~gaat~~ nooit ~~op vakantie~~]].
 Jan goes often on holiday and/but Marie goes never on holiday
 ‘Jan goes on holiday often, and/but Marie never.’

6. Focus particles

Although the remnants of gapping should normally have a correlate in the antecedent clause, there are two notable exceptions to this general rule. The examples in (22) show that focus particles such as *ook* ‘also’ and the adverb *niet* ‘not’ functioning as constituent negation can occur in the target clause without having a(n overt) correlate in the antecedent clause; cf., e.g., Van der Heijden & Klein (1995: 33).

- (22) a. [[JAN houdt van MARIE] en [MARIE ~~houdt~~ ook van JAN]].
 Jan loves of Marie but Marie loves also of Jan
 ‘Jan loves Marie and Marie loves Jan too.’
 b. [[JAN houdt van MARIE] maar [MARIE ~~houdt~~ niet van JAN]].
 Jan loves of Marie but Marie loves not of Jan
 ‘Jan loves Marie but Marie doesn’t love Jan.’

The examples in (23) show that focus particles such as *ook* ‘also’ are obligatorily located in the designated focus position: the particle *ook* can occupy this position together with its contrastively accented associate *op HEM* but it may also occupy this position alone, with its associate stranded in its base position. Crucially, what is impossible is having the particle in the base position of its associate; see Broekhuis & Corver (2016: § 13.3.2) for a more detailed discussion.

- (23) a. dat Jan <ook op HEM> boos <*ook op HEM> is.
 that Jan also at him angry is
 ‘that Jan is also angry with him.’
 b. dat Jan ook boos op HEM is.
 that Jan also angry at him is

Because focus particles such as *ook* ‘also’ obligatorily occupy a designated focus position, the A’-movement hypothesis from § 3 now predicts that gapping examples such as (22a) with the particle *ook* ‘also’ are also acceptable; the particle occupies a designated A’-position, and hence survives elision. The fact illustrated

in (22b) that the negative adverb *niet* ‘not’ may also be present is in accordance with the finding in Broekhuis & Corver (2016: § 13.3.2, sub I) that this adverb functions as a focus particle when it is used to express constituent negation.

I conclude this subsection by noting that the distribution of focus particles supports Neijt’s (1979) claim that so-called split coordination is derived by means of a gapping-like operation (also known as stripping), as (24a&b) show that focus particles may occur in such examples; see also Kraak & Klooster (1972: § 11.2).

- (24) a. [[JAN heeft met Marie gepraat] en [ELS heeft ook met Marie gepraat]].
 Jan has with Marie talked and Els has also with Marie talked
 ‘Jan has talked with Marie, and Els has too.’
- b. [[Jan heeft met MARIE gepraat] en [Jan heeft ook MET PETER gepraat]].
 Jan has with Marie talked and Jan has also with Peter talked
 ‘Jan has talked with Marie, and with Peter too.’

This suggests that the distribution of focus particles can be used as a heuristic tool for finding a wider set of ellipsis constructions that can be subsumed under the A’-movement hypothesis in (12). One potentially relevant case would be the specifying coordination construction with the contrastive affirmative marker *wel* illustrated in (25), which is denied an elision analysis in Van der Heijden & Klein (1995: 33). Such an analysis would, however, be rather straightforward under the plausible assumption that *wel* is a discourse particle which can be located in clause-initial position: cf. [[*Ik zie je niet meer*], maar [*wel zal ik je schrijven*]] ‘I won’t see you anymore but I will write to you.’ I will not digress on this issue here, but leave it for future research.

- (25) [[Jan gaf Els iets] en [wel gaf Jan Els een BOEK]].
 Jan gave Els something and AFF gave Jan Els a book
 ‘Jan gave Els something, namely, a book.’

7. Elision of the negative marker *niet* ‘not’ is impossible

The A’-movement hypothesis entails that elements that *must* occupy a designated A’-position survive gapping; they do not even delete when they have an identical correlate in the antecedent clause. That this is indeed what we find can be illustrated by the negative clauses in (26), adapted from Van der Heijden & Klein (1995: 33): see also, e.g., Neijt (1979: 66) and De Vries (1992: § 3.9). While the traditional view that gapping deletes material in the target clause under identity with material in the antecedent clause wrongly predicts (26b) to be acceptable with the intended reading, the alternative proposal that material occupying a designated A’-position

survives deletion correctly predicts that the negative particle *niet* ‘not’ must be overtly realized, as indicated in (26c).

- (26) a. [[Jan heeft Els niet gezien] en [Peter heeft Marie niet gezien]].
 Jan has Els not seen and Peter has Marie not seen
 ‘Jan hasn’t seen Els and Peter hasn’t seen Marie.’
- b. *[[JAN heeft ELS niet gezien] en [PETER heeft MARIE niet gezien]].
 Jan has Els not seen and Peter has Marie not seen
- c. [[JAN heeft ELS niet gezien] en [PETER heeft MARIE niet gezien]].
 Jan has Els not seen and Peter has Marie not seen

A quirk that should perhaps be mentioned is that the affirmative particle *wel* differs from the negative particle *niet* in that at least some speakers allow omission of the affirmative marker in gapping constructions such as (27a) with the adversative coordinator *maar* (but not with the simple conjunction *en* ‘and’); cf. Van der Heijden & Klein (1995: 37). The relative acceptability of examples of this kind does not seem to be related to gapping as such, however, but to the fact that the affirmative marker also has a zero form, which is the default in non-contrastive contexts but can also be used (at least marginally) in contrastive contexts; in this respect, the gapping construction in (27a) behaves just like its non-reduced counterpart in (27b).

- (27) a. [[JAN heeft ELS niet gezien] maar [PETER heeft MARIE ^{%(wel)} gezien]].
 Jan has Els not seen but Peter has Marie AFF seen
 ‘Jan has not seen Els but Peter has seen Marie.’
- b. [[Jan heeft Els niet gezien] maar [Peter heeft Marie ^{%(wel)} gezien]].
 Jan has Els not seen but Peter has Marie AFF seen
 ‘Jan hasn’t seen Els but Peter has seen Marie.’

Note further that the examples with and without the overt affirmative marker *wel* may exhibit a subtle difference in meaning: the examples without *wel* seem to replace the false proposition *Jan heeft Els gezien* by the alternative true proposition *Peter heeft Marie gezien*, while the examples with *wel* seem to evaluate the truth values of two independent propositions. Observe, finally, that negation must be used in contrastive constructions such as (28), which is of course expected because the negative form does not have a zero counterpart; this example also lacks the proposition-substitution reading.

- (28) [[JAN heeft ELS wel gezien] maar [PETER heeft MARIE ^{*(niet)} gezien]].
 Jan has Els AFF seen but Peter has Marie not seen
 ‘Jan HAS seen Els, but Peter did not see Marie.’

8. Concluding remarks

The A'-movement hypothesis of gapping in (12) seems promising in that it accounts without further ado for the fact that gapping always targets clauses and must minimally elide the finite verb and the complementizer of the target clause (if present). It also accounts for the well-known properties of the remnants of gapping that they must be able to undergo A'-movement in non-reduced clauses and be contrastively accented. A further argument in favor of the A'-movement hypothesis is that it sheds new light on the fact that focus markers such as *ook* 'also' may occur as gapping remnants without there being a correlate in the antecedent clause as well as on the fact that the polarity marker *niet* 'not' cannot be elided, not even when *niet* is present in the antecedent clause. The A'-movement analysis of Dutch gapping proposed in this article differs from earlier A'-movement approaches such as found in Aelbrecht (2007) and Boone (2014) in that the remnants of gapping are located in independently motivated A'-positions and that it is not needed to postulate any form of "exceptional movement". The A'-movement analysis proposed in this article is not compatible with the standard view on ellipsis developed in the seminal work in Merchant (2001) that ellipsis targets some extended verbal projection that is evacuated by the remnants; the conclusion of this article suggests that the proper question to be asked is not *what part of the structure is deleted?* but *what part of the structure is spelled out phonetically?* My proposal here suggests that spell-out targets a selection of designated A'-specifiers, which simplifies the standard theory of ellipsis by making "exceptional movement" superfluous; see Broekhuis & Bayer (in prep) for more detailed discussion.

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