1. Introduction

In 1668, Johannes Leusden (1624-1699), professor of oriental languages at Utrecht University, published his Korte Hebreuse Grammatica, a concise Hebrew grammar in Dutch, together with a Hebrew-Latin-Dutch dictionary, both meant for those not acquainted with Latin. In particular, Leusden deemed his works to be of use for the “many young ladies”, in the Netherlands who were studying French, Spanish and English “just for the fun of it”, thus spurning the word of the Lord. To Leusden’s think they were better off following the example of women who study the Holy Tongue and who put to shame or rather, who make envious many an idle fellow, particularly the students of theology, who scarcely study this language, either from laziness or from sheer carelessness.

As Irene Zwiep pointed out in a recent article from which I gratefully take these particulars, the most prominent among these women was the famous Anna Maria Schuurman (1607-1678). It was this exceptionally learned Dutch woman who persuaded her fellow townsman, Johannes Leusden, to compose a Hebrew Manuale in Dutch. It is undisputed that her linguistic talents were extraordinary: ‘Schuurmanna’ was in contact with many distinguished scholars of her time, and she appears to have had “miraculous skills” in modern and classical languages. Moreover, she was proficient in Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew, Chaldean, Syriac, Arabic, Persian and Ethiopian (Zwiep 1993: 47-48). However, it was not by composing grammatical works herself that Anna Maria Schuurman earned her reputation as the “Minerva of Utrecht”.

Obviously, many years later, the situation had changed somewhat. Not only did women occupy themselves, as usual, with learning various languages, but it was also feasible for them to publish their own contributions to the field of language study. At least, in 1740 the Amsterdam Johanna Corleva (1698-1752) sought to contact her fellow townsman, the influential grammarian Balthazar Huydecoper (1695-1778), to ask his permission to dedicate to him a dictionary that she had written herself. Admittedly, she was not as gifted and celebrated as Anna Maria Schuurman. However, as the first Dutch woman grammarian and lexicographer she deserves our attention. Johanna Corleva did not compose any “grammaire des dames”: the readership she was aiming at was a larger public eager to learn the subtleties of Dutch. It is evident that she cared for the cultivation of language, and in doing so she followed a long-standing tradition.

From the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, grammarians of Dutch were actively engaged in creating a Dutch standard language. Seventeenth-century grammarians were mainly interested in spelling and prescriptive grammar, the Latin grammatical tradition playing a major role in their considerations. The eighteenth century, too, was to a large extent dominated by discussions concerning spelling and language norms. The grammars that were published were generally set up after the classic ‘partes’ model. For almost a century the most influential grammar of Dutch was the Nederduitsche Spraakkunst (1706, 1751) by Arnold Moonen (1644-1711).

Alongside the continuation of this traditional prescriptive trend in linguistics, the eighteenth century saw the emergence of a historical approach towards linguistics, in which the works of Lambert ten Kate (1674-1731), often considered a forerunner of Jacob Grimm (1785-1863), take pride of place. Works in the field of general grammar are conspicuously absent. The first half of the eighteenth century witnessed a “Blüte der Allgemeingrammatik in Deutschland” (Weiß 1992: 28). In the...
Netherlands, however, such an “Aufschwung der Universalgrammatik” did not take place. Only the case of Johanna Corleva provides us with a clear case of direct French influence in this field. In 1740 Corleva published her *Algemeene en geredeneerde spraakkonst*; one year later she published a Dutch-French dictionary.

Although recently various scholars have occupied themselves with eighteenth-century linguistics in Holland (cf. de Bonth & Noordegraaf 1995), it is abundantly clear that particularly in comparison with the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries this era has remained relatively unexplored. Consequently, studies on Johanna Corleva and her linguistic context are rare. Therefore, I will first present an overview of what is known about her life and works. Subsequently, her published works will be discussed. Then, I will go into the merits of her approach against the background of contemporary Dutch linguistics.

2. The life and times of Johanna Corleva

To put it mildly, we are not particularly well-informed about the life and times of Miss Corleva. The biographical data are so few that nearly all of them can be put in just a few lines. Johanna Corleva was baptised on 8 October 1698 in the Zuider Kerk (‘South Church’) in Amsterdam. At the age of fifty-four, on 16 November 1752, she was buried in the Amsterdam Nieuwe Kerk (‘New Church’) as “bejaarde dochter”, which means that she had remained single all of her life. An eighteen-year-old orphan “from Cologne”, Johanna’s mother, Anna Catrina Tessemaker, had been married to Lourens Corleva in the same Nieuwe Kerk on 12 January 1698. Lourens, who was born in the city of Delft in 1670, earned his living as an embroiderer. In 1700 they had a second child, a son whom they called Joannes. Note that the name ‘Corleva’ is rather exceptional in Holland; therefore, as the few other Corlevas dwelling in Amsterdam at the time had come “from Antwerp”, it is plausible that Johanna’s ancestors, too, came from the Southern part of the Low Countries, i.e. Belgium.

Some hundred years ago, the polyhistor Taco H. de Beer (1838-1923), one of the first to take notice of Corleva’s work in the field of lexicography, hazarded the guess that “Miss Corleva was definitely not an unknown person, since she dedicated her book *De Schat der Nederduitsche Wortel-woorden* (1741) to Balthazar Huydecoper, an alderman of the City of Amsterdam” (de Beer 1892: 418). A well-known grammarian in his days, Huydecoper was influential as an advocate of prescriptive grammar. Corleva had been inspired by the critical remarks concerning contemporary linguistic usage put forward by Huydecoper in the introduction to one of his plays, *Achilles* (1719). The Huydecopers were a well-known Dutch patrician family, and its eighteenth-century members held distinguished positions in Dutch society. It is doubtful whether the embroiderer’s daughter was moving in the same social circles as the Amsterdam patrician, so, as concrete data are lacking, we can only speculate as to when and how they came in touch. Did she, for instance, send him a copy of her 1740 grammar to pave the way? In a letter dated 19 November 1740 she mentioned Huydecoper’s “affabilité et humanité avec la quelle vous m’avez été accessible toute petite que je suis, toute inconnue que je vous aie été” (emphasis added).

From the two letters by Corleva that have come down to us (see the appendix) it can be deducted that at some moment in 1740 she had paid a visit to Huydecoper and had asked him to have a look at the dictionary, asking him at the same time for his permission to dedicate the work to him. As Huydecoper had not yet sent his critical comments in early November 1740, Corleva urged him in a...
most polite manner to reply, switching from Dutch in her first letter to French in the second. We do not know whether she was invited to see him again. However, when her book was published in 1741, it included a dedication to the Amsterdam alderman (cf. de Bonth 1998: 63).

In *De Schat der Nederduitsche Wortel-woorden* the bookseller added a note to the reader in which he informed his customers that he had in print several other books by the same author “regarding the perfection of the Languages”. They included a *Schat der Fransche Wortel-Woorden* (‘Treasure of French Root Words’), a *Fransche Letter-konst* (‘French Grammar’), based on the works of the “most celebrated authors”, as well as a *Nieuwe Nederduitsche Spraakkonst* (‘New Dutch grammar’); the last-mentioned works were both written with reference to the principles of the general grammar already published. Furthermore, the bookseller listed a Dutch rhyming dictionary and the “Complete Philosophy” of the Frenchman Pierre Bayle (1647-1706; he lived in Rotterdam from 1681 onwards), which by then had already been translated in full by Corleva from French and Latin into Dutch. As far as we know, the books announced never appeared in print, and to the present day none of Corleva’s manuscripts has ever been traced down. Be this as it may, it seems that in the 1730’s Johanna Corleva had been quite active in the field of grammar, lexicography and philosophy, and that she was well-grounded in French, Latin, and also in Greek, as will become clear.

3. Corleva and Port-Royal

In 1740, Corleva published her *Algemeene en geredeneerde spraakkonst*, a Dutch translation of the *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* (henceforth GGR) written by Arnauld and Lancelot and published in 1660 (cf. Noordegraaf 1978). As the title page informs us, this book of 220 pages was “printed for the translator” and could be obtained in Amsterdam at Jacobus Loveringh’s. The sole copy I am aware of is to be found at the University Library in Leiden.

By translating the *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* Corleva linked up with linguistic activities that had gone before, viz. in the 1670’s. In 1669, the Amsterdam Society Nil Volentibus Arduum was founded, whose aim was to study both science and literature. Its members are known to have been highly interested in grammar, too. In 1671, one of Nil’s most distinguished members, Dr Lodewijk Meijer (1629-1681), a Cartesian philosopher and a friend of Benedictus de Spinoza’s (1632-1677), was commissioned to write a “Grammatica Generalis”. Although Meijer was reading from chapters of this *Algemeene Spraakkonst* as late as 1677, the book never appeared in print. In 1671, other members of the Society also started working on a *Nederduitsche Grammatica* (‘Dutch Grammar’), which was modelled after the “Grammatica Generalis”. This Dutch grammar was actually finished, but only the first three chapters of its first part were published in 1728 under the title *Verhandelingen Van der Letteren Affinitas of Verwantschap* (‘Treatises on the Letters’ Affinity’). In 1738, Huydecoper still had the opportunity to consult the full manuscript of the “unpublished Dutch Grammar”. In 1763, Adriaan Kluit (1735-1807), later to become professor of Dutch History at Leiden University, noted that he had actually seen the grammar, which was kept in the library of one of his friends. And as late as 1773, the classical scholar Herman Tollius (1742-1822), expressed the hope that the full grammar

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5 As the Dutch translation is very rare, I venture to mention the title in full: *Algemeene en geredeneerde spraakkonst, behelzende De Grondregelen van de Konst van wel te spreken, op een klaare en natuurlijke wyze uitgelegt: de redenen van ’t geen aan alle Taalen gemeen is: de redenen der voornaamste verscheidenheden die zig daar omtrent opdoen: en veel nieuwe Aanmerkingen over de Fransche Taal. Door de Heeren van Port-Royal in ’t Fransch geschreven: En in ’t Nederduitsch vertaald door Johanna Corleva*. For that matter, Corleva’s book is not mentioned in the study by Maria Tsiapera & Garon Wheeler, *The Port-Royal Grammar. Sources and Influences* (Münster: Nodus Publikationen, 1993).

6 This copy has the *ex libris* (“A.Th.”) of the leading Roman Catholic man of letters, J.A. Alberdingk Thijm (1820-1889). It was sold by auction in 1890, and acquired by the Leiden University Library in 1895, as Dr André Bouwman (Leiden) was kind enough to inform me. In the late 1970’s, an index card in the Dutch ‘Centrale Catalogus’ at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in The Hague referred to another copy at the University Library of Amsterdam. As it appeared, this copy was formally catalogued in 1886, being included, however, in a special collection ‘Stadschouwburg’ which was kept outside the Amsterdam library buildings. When the Stadschouwburg burned down in 1890, the copy got lost (personal communication by the late mr. Amse, University Library Amsterdam, in 1978).

would be published by the then owner of the manuscript (Dongelmans 1982: 17-18). This was the last time it the actual manuscript was mentioned in contemporary writings.⁸

In 1672, Meijer’s *Italiaansche Spraakkonst* (‘Italian Grammar’) appeared anonymously. This grammar was based on the same principles as the *Nederduitsche Grammatica*. In his introduction Meijer made it clear that the Italian grammar should be considered a derivative of the general grammar. As to “the special rules concerning the Italian Tongue” Meijer consulted among other things Claude Lancelot’s (1616-1695) *Nouvelle Méthode pour apprendre la Langue Italienne* (1660). As it appears, Meijer sought to write a general grammar as a basis for grammars of other languages.⁹ Corleva took up the same approach, and it is possible that she, like Huydecoper, was informed about the attempts which had been made without too many tangible results by her fellow townsmen in the 1670’s.

The various editions of the *GGR* which appeared after 1660 slightly differ from each other (cf. Brekle 1975). In 1703, an edition appeared in Amsterdam. It was published by the “Marchand Libraire” Estienne Roger, who was born at Caen in 1664 or 1665, and died in Amsterdam in 1722. As has been pointed out in the literature, the 1703 edition has an addition to the chapter on tense. It was Roger himself, a native speaker of French, who wrote a personal note on this addition in his own edition: Le Libraire qui a fait faire cette édition demande pardon à l’Autheur & au public d’avoir osé faire une petite Addition au chapitre 15. de la seconde partie de cette Grammaire, qui traite de divers temps du verbe. Il avoue que sa remarque ets inutile à un François qui sçait sa langue, mais comme il demeure dans un pays où la langue Française n’est pas la langue régnante il a cru la devoir faire en faveur des Etrangers (Arnauld & Lancelot 1703: 160).

The apocryphical passage, printed on page 108 of this book, can also be found in the Dutch translation, viz. on page 138-139. Thus, it seems safe to conclude that Corleva used the 1703 Amsterdam edition as ‘Vorlage’ of her own translation.¹⁰

As far as I can judge, the translation into Dutch is not impeccable. Without going into details here, I would like to point out that Corleva seems to have stuck rather closely to the French original, which caused Gallicisms sometimes or unclear phrases in the Dutch version. In other passages phrases have been left out or words have been translated incorrectly. For example, “venir de” has several times been rendered as “komen te”, which means exactly the opposite of what it says in the French text. All in all, the Dutch translation is deformed by quite a number of (minor) inaccuracies.

As to her position in the Dutch grammatical gamut it is interesting to see what grammatical terminology was used. From the sixteenth century onwards, due to puristic trends it had become more and more common to use Dutch equivalents of Latin terminology, the terms as such not yet being fixed. In Corleva we only find Dutch terms. As I said before, the most influential Dutch grammar at Corleva’s time was the *Nederduitsche Spraekkunst* (1706¹, 1719², 1740³) by Arnold Moonen. A comparison of Corleva’s grammatical terms with those in Moonen 1706 shows us that a number of these terms can indeed be found in Moonen’s grammar, but not all of them. For instance, for the conjunction Corleva uses the term ‘koppelwoord’, where Moonen has ‘voegwoord’; for ‘article’ we find in Moonen’s grammar ‘geslachtwoord’, whereas Corleva has the term ‘ledeken’, in vogue with seventeenth and eighteenth-century Dutch grammarians such as Allard L. Kók (1616-1653), a half-brother of the grammarian Lodewijk Meijer mentioned above, and author of an *Ont-werp der Nederduitsche letterkonst* (‘Outline of Dutch grammar’) in 1649. It goes without saying that the terms just mentioned and other ones need not have been taken directly from Kók’s work. As evidence suggests, Corleva was rather an eclectic and did not borrow her terminology from one single Dutch grammar.

Note that Corleva did not always remain consistent in her terminology. For instance, for ‘nom’ in the second part of the book is mostly translated as ‘naam’ up to a certain point in the Dutch version; then Corleva starts to alternate with ‘naamwoord’, and she ends up by preferring the latter. Strikingly, the reverse pattern is found for the Dutch equivalent for ‘pronom’. Up to a certain moment ‘pronom’ is...

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⁸ It is probable that some thirty years later the full manuscript was destroyed as a result of the notorious gun powder boat explosion at Leiden on 12 January 1807, an explosion which caused the destruction of many houses and many other valuable manuscripts (cf. Dibbets 1991: 11).

⁹ On Meijer as a linguist see the interesting studies by Minne de Boer (cf. de Boer 1996, 2004).

rendered as ‘voornaamwoord’; subsequently, both ‘voornaamwoord’ and ‘voornaam’ are used, while in the end she appears to have a preference for ‘voornaam’. One can only speculate as to the reasons why she did not remove such terminological inconsistencies.

As has already been pointed out, the _Algemeene en geredeneerde spraakkunst_ was “printed for the translator”. This means that Johanna Corleva herself paid for the printing of this work; this might indicate a certain prosperity. She found the Amsterdam bookseller Jacobus Loveringh willing to distribute it. My guess is that Corleva’s book had a rather limited circulation, for traces of its reception in eighteenth-century Dutch linguistics are rather hard to find.\(^\text{11}\)

4. Corleva and lexicography

In 1741, another work by Corleva appeared in print: _De Schat der Nederduitsche Wort-woorden_. The full title is: _De Schat der Nederduitsche Wort-woorden, Nevens der zelver afkomstigen, Waar in alle de Oorspronkelyke Woorden van de gantsche Taal nauwkeurig Onderscheiden zyn, en de Spruit- en te Zamengestelde Woorden tot haar oorsprong overgebracht worden. Alles volgens ’t A.B.C. geschikt._

_Met de Fansche [sic] Taal. It also carried the French title Le Trésor des Mots Originaux, de la Langue Flamande, Avec Leurs Derivés. Dans lequel tous les mots Originaux de cette Language, sont exactement Distingués & les Dérivés & Composés reduits à leurs Racines. Le tout selon l’ordre de l’Alphabet_ (cf. Claes & Bakema 1995: 35, no. 463). This bilingual dictionary, published by the Amsterdam bookseller Dirk Jemans, consists of two parts: after the six page dedication to Balthazar Huydecoper and an introduction of equal length, pages 1-736 contain the dictionary proper, including ‘root words’, derivations and compounds; pages 736-797 present the approximately 3500 primitives once more in a separate section entitled “a collection of all Dutch root words all other words flow from, both derivatives and compounds” (Corleva 1741: 737). Apparently, Corleva’s lexicographical work did not earn a great reputation. A hundred years ago, Taco de Beer (1892: 418) was forced to conclude that her dictionary was “not so generally known”.

In the “Voorreden” (‘introduction’) the author claimed that her book was most useful both for Dutchmen seeking to learn French and for Frenchmen seeking to learn Dutch. Young people and those who were acquainted with the Dutch language would find it easy to use. Although, as other common dictionaries, the _Schat_ had its words arranged in alphabetical order, the dictionary distinguished itself from others insofar as it only briefly mentioned the various meanings of each Dutch word in French, leaving out the “abundant and almost superfluous number” (1741: *5r0) of phrases and expressions other contemporary dictionaries typically gave. Furthermore, in this dictionary all primitives or root words were marked by capitals, and brought together in a separate section at the end of the book. This was something completely novel, Corleva felt. Struck by the regularity and productivity of word formation in Dutch she was of the opinion that it was feasible to get to know the Dutch language in full by learning only a limited number of words, without being obliged to...

\(^{11}\) A copy of the grammar was in the library of Everwinus Wassenbergh (1742-1826), graecist and follower of the Schola Hemsterhuisiana (cf. _Bibliotheca Wassenberghiana_, Franeker 1828, p. 177). One of the few references to the book can be found in the bibliography added to the _Nederduitsche Spraakkunst_ (‘Dutch Grammar’, 1781) by the “maître de pension” Ernst Zeydelaar (1742-1820), a prolific writer and compiler. Zeydelaar was also the author of a _Grammaire générale raisonnée françoise et hollandoise_ (1768), and in 1781 he published a _Grammaire raisonnée hollandoise_ as well (cf. Riems 1919: 233). His grammar of 1768, for instance, was presented in the form of a question-and-answer dialogue, which from the sixteenth century on was the traditional form in which schoolbooks for the teaching of foreign languages were presented, and Zeydelaar’s book does not greatly differ from what was customary in those days. Behind Zeydelaar’s 1781 grammar a traditional textbook for Frenchmen “de distinction”, “qui veulent apprendre cette langue” is hidden. Whatever French influences may have played a role in the case of Zeydelaar, they did not express themselves prominently enough to label Zeydelaar as a follower of the French _grammaire générale_.

\(^{12}\) In the lectures on Dutch language and literature given by Everwinus Wassenbergh at the University of Franeker in the first decades of the nineteenth century Corleva’s _Schat_ is mentioned amongst four useful eighteenth-century Dutch dictionaries. As a spot check in a number of auction catalogues revealed, not only Wassenbergh owned a copy of this book, but also scholars such as Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831) and Jan Jakob Schultens (1716-1778). Thys (1821: 57) quotes “Madame Joanna Corleva” rather extensively and in a positive way. Moquette (1915: 45) mentions Corleva as an exception to the rule that in the eighteenth century “de studëin der vrouwen” (‘the studies by women’) did not bear much fruit. Van der Sijts (2004: 414) considers her to be the sole Dutch woman to publish on matters linguistic before the twentieth century.
go “outside the Dutch language” (1741: *6 r²), that is, without having to resort to foreign languages.

Claiming that this approach was new for a Dutch dictionary, Corleva acknowledged that in this she had followed the method applied by Schrevelius in his Lexicon Manuake Graeco-Latinum et Latino-Graecum (Leiden 1654). The Dutch philologist Cornelius Schrevelius (1608-1664) was a ‘medicinæ doctor’ who had received his doctoral degree in Paris. Having applied himself to the study of classical languages he had been appointed headmaster of the Latin School at Leiden in 1642. His Lexicon saw many reprints, also abroad; for instance, an ‘editio americana’ appeared in 1825. Another name mentioned in Corleva’s introduction was that of Scapula, whose Lexicon Graeco-Latinum appeared for the first time in 1579. The German Johannes Scapula (fl. 1580), “fur litterarius” (cf. Gerretzen 1940: 326), had been the assistant of the famous Greek scholar Henri Estienne (Henricus Stephanus, 1531-1598), of whose voluminous four-volume Thesaurus Graecæ Linguae of 1572 he had given “einen Auszug in einem Foliobande” (Drerup 1930-32: 191), ordering the words alphabetically according to their roots, one of the few lexicons to do so. Scapula had followed a similar method to the one Schrevelius used, but to Corleva’s mind the former’s book was less accessible for young students because “the common alphabet was lacking” (1741: *5v³). It is true that Scapula treated the various roots in alphabetical order, but the words based on these roots are discussed within the same entry, whereas in Schrevelius all these words could be found directly in their regular alphabetical place in the dictionary, a “quod vide” often referring the reader back to the basic word. It is clear that for beginners, who had not yet mastered the complexities of Greek morphology, the latter work was to be preferred. The experienced Leiden headmaster Schrevelius who for that matter praised Scapula’s work in his foreword, had indeed sought to serve “commodis & usui quotidiano & extemporaneo studiosorum”, his dictionary, a “quod vide” often referring the reader back to the basic word. It is clear that for beginners, who had not yet mastered the complexities of Greek morphology, the latter work was to be preferred.

The experienced Leiden headmaster Schrevelius who for that matter praised Scapula’s work in his foreword, had indeed sought to serve “commodis & usui quotidiano & extemporaneo studiosorum”, arranging difficult conjugated and inflected forms and many irregular forms in an alphabetical order. Within the circle of the renowned eighteen-century Dutch Graecists, the Schola Hemsterhusiana, however, it was Scapula’s book that was the basis of Johannes Daniel van Lennep’s (1724-1771) Elymologicum Linguae Graecae, published posthumously in 1790.13

Corleva’s introduction includes several basic morphological insights, but definitely not something we would call an explicit morphological theory. The Schat lists root words, derived words and compounded words. In the wake of Schrevelius the root words are presented in capitals; they can be divided into two categories. The ones that are printed in large capitals are the principal root words, which cannot be reduced to other words and which form the basis of a “multitude” of other words by means of derivation or composition; they are summed up in a separate list at the end of the book. The words that are printed in small capitals constitute a second class of root words that have a certain relationship with the first category, but which can generate various other words. For example, AALBES ('Groseille, sorte de fruit') is a root word on the basis of which words such as aalbessenbier ('Bierre de groseilles, sorte de biere forte, que l'on prepare avec des groseilles brisées') and Aalbessenboom ('Groseiler') etc. can be formed. However, AALOUD ('très-ancien') is a root word of the second class, related to aal and oud, but also the basis of the word aaloudheid ('L’antiquité la plus réléue'). All other words are “derived or compounded ones”, marked by a cross, while at the end of each lemma one finds a reference to the root of these words. Words of minor importance are not marked. For reasons of space I will not go into the way Corleva dealt with more complex Dutch word formations nor the correctness of her analyses.

As far as the dictionary proper is concerned, like many other lexicographers Corleva was much indebted to her predecessors. Two important contemporary dictionaries should be mentioned here, those of Halma and Marin, for as Riemens (1919: 217) put it: “Au XVIIIe [siècle] ce sont le dictionnaires de Halma et de Marin qui ralisent”. The bookseller François Halma (1653-1722) and his former employee Pierre Marin (1677/78-1718), of French origin, were engaged in a fierce competition for the favours of a mainly French oriented Dutch readership (cf. Riemens 1919: 267-269). In 1729, the second, revised edition of Halma’s Woordenboek der Nederduitsche en Fransche taalen, Uit het Gebruik der beste Schryveren, met huif van voornaame Taalkundigen, opgestelt [...]. Dictionnaire Flamand et Franfois. Titre d’Usage & des bons Auteurs [...] appeared (1710). One year later, Marin published the second, much enlarged edition of his Groot Nederduitsch en Fransch Woordenboek [...]. Grand Dictionnaire Hollandais & François [...]. (1701). Undoubtedly, these books were among the dictionaries censured by Corleva in her introduction because they provided an “abundant and almost superfluous number” of phrases and expressions. My hypothesis is that in preparing her Schat in the

1730’s Johanna Corleva based herself mainly (but not exclusively) on Halma 1729 rather than on Marin. When one compares a number of entries in both works it becomes immediately clear what the main work was that Corleva had to do: classifying and marking the various words as I have sketched above, and deleting, for the sake of conciseness, among other things, the “superfluous” series of phrases and expressions. Whatever her merits may be in the description of the eighteenth-century Dutch vocabulary (de Beer 1892 seems to be rather satisfied), she can hardly be characterized as a pioneer in this field.

5. “The Lightness of this Method”

For the method applied in her dictionary Corleva referred to the seventeenth-century books by Scapula and Schrevelius, works in the field of Greek which had kept their reputation in Corleva’s days and were to keep it for many decades. Note that Schrevelius’s method had been followed in another field of language study in Holland many years earlier, viz. that of Hebrew. In 1687, Johannes Leusden, the professor linguarum orientalium mentioned above, had published “apud Franciscum Halma” a Hebrew-Latin dictionary entitled Lexicon novum Hebraeo-Latinum, Ad modum Lexici Schreveliani Graeci compositum. As Zwiep (1993: 49) has pointed out, the structure of this lexicon immediately reveals that the book was written to facilitate and quicken the grammatical analysis of Hebrew texts.

In the dedication to Huydecoper Corleva wrote that she had been inspired by his remarks to engage herself in practising the mother tongue, which was “a rival of the Greek tongue because of its abundant riches [of words]” (1741: *3r0). What she had been aiming at was the reduction of the “very great abundance of our tongue, consisting of so many thousands of words [...] to a very small number, called Basic or Root Words”. A few comments may be useful here. That the Dutch language could readily rival Greek is something like a topos. For example, in 1635 Petrus Montanus (Peter Berch, 1594/95-1638) published his Bericht van een nieuwe konst, genaemt de spreeckkonst (‘Instruction in a new art, called the art of pronunciation/speech’). In this highly original book on phonetics Montanus deemed it most attractive that on the basis of a limited corpus of primitive words so many new words could be formed. The stock of Dutch words could be enlarged “more than ten thousand times”; making compounds yielded a “surprising number of words” (Hulsker 1992: 92). To Montanus’s mind, potential compounding is a yardstick as to the quality of a language. Seen from this angle, Roman languages are notoriously “poor” languages. Only the Greek tongue deserves some praise in this respect. However, German languages, in particular Dutch, are superior to Greek as the process of compounding in Dutch allows the formation of more complex words.

In these matters Montanus had been influenced by Simon Stevin (1548-1620), that versatile engineer and famous mathematician of Maurice’s, Prince of Orange. In his works that deal with language Stevin stressed two structural qualities of Dutch: it had a number of monosyllables, which easily allow compounding, making it fit for scholarly work, “especially for teaching the arts and sciences on the one hand, and the ability to express emotions and to convince people on the other. Of all languages, according to Stevin, the Dutch language fits most excellently to these ideals and in this respect even surpasses Greek, Latin and Hebrew, the three honoured and divine languages” (van der Wal 1995: 149-150). Stevin’s late sixteenth-century works had a long-lasting impact. Not only the eighteenth-century grammarian Willem Séwel (1653-1720) referred to Stevin in his 1712 grammar of Dutch, but the German Schottelius (1612-16760) also used Stevin’s ideas in his 1663 Ausführliche Arbeit von der Teutschen Hauptsprache (cf. Klijnsmit 1993).

Given the well-known parallel between Dutch and Greek it does not surprise that Corleva sought to apply Schrevelius’s insights to the study of Dutch. In the wake of Schrevelius, Corleva exploited the long-standing ideas on the structure of Dutch vocabulary and its rich morphological potentials for didactical purposes. The Dutch language had a core of some 3500 root words which could be listed in sixty-odd pages. Whoever knew how to apply the rules of derivation and compounding could master the Dutch tongue in a rather easy manner. This was what she saw as the heart of her method, “the reason of the lightness of the method we would like to advance” (1741: *r6r): the fact that one could learn Dutch by means of a small number of words, “without going outside this language”, i.e. without using loan-words. What strikes the modern reader, then, is that she did not discuss concepts such as

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14 In Dutch: “Grond- of Wortel-Woorden”. In seventeenth-century Dutch grammar “grondwoord” is the common Dutch equivalent of “primitivum” (cf. Ruijsendaal 1989 s.v.). “Wortelwoort” is found in Moonen 1706 as the translation of “Vox Radicalis, Primitiva, Thema”. In fact, Moonen used this term for verbs only; “Gront-woort” is rarely used by him.
analogy or morphological productivity nor did she explain the rules that govern the processes of compounding and derivation in Dutch. Although the book was intended, among others, for Frenchmen seeking to learn Dutch she did not present any word formation rule nor did she go into the semantic particulars of compounds and derivations. Was it something she had meant to use for a section in the *Nieuwe Nederduitsche Spraakkunst* (‘New Dutch Grammar’) she had already finished, but that never got into print? At any rate, she did not refer to other grammars such as Moonen 1706 either, in which these matters are explicitly treated in a concise but clear manner.\(^{15}\)

The same division of labour between grammar and lexicon should be assumed in the case of two other books Corleva finished in 1741, a French dictionary, the ‘ Treasure of French Root Words’, and a *Fransche Letter-Konst* (‘French Grammar’). The title of the French dictionary, *De Schat der Fransche Wortel-Woorden, nevens derzelver afkomstigen met de Nederduitsche Taal*, parallels that of Corleva’s Dutch dictionary, so that we may assume that she had sought to apply the same method in labelling the elements of the French vocabulary. Moreover, both her Dutch and her French grammar were modelled after the general grammar of 1740, as the bookseller informed his customers in the note at the end of the book.

This approach clearly shows that Corleva was well aware of the problems in (foreign) language learning. The method of learning was a pedagogical problem, and the method should serve to shorten the job of learning, to relieve the burden of memory. Hence her outspoken claim of “the lightness” of her own method. What she had in mind was the idea that whoever had learned the rules laid down in the general grammar, could master in an efficient way the grammar of a particular language; whoever had learned the root words of a language could form rather quickly all other words of that same language. It is this underlying rationalistic idea that is the link between Corleva’s grammatical and lexicographical works. One could argue, then, that in Corleva’s work the morphological principle of analogy which reigned in the lexicon and which generated an endless number of new words had received a much broader scope and had been extended to the domain of grammar. Thus, as a generative principle active in several domains, it covered both areas. If this assumption is correct, i.e. if the underlying principle of analogy in Corleva applied to much more than just morphology, it could be that her conception of it comes close to the cartesian doctrine of innate ideas.\(^{16}\) However, as our author did not leave us any theoretical contemplations I must leave it at these tentative remarks on what seems to be an interesting theoretical perspective.

At any rate, compatriots and Frenchmen, Corleva warned, should not believe anybody who assured to have a thorough knowledge of Dutch, but did not follow the way of studying the root words according to the method given by the present author. However, she did not want to elaborate on this subject “because of our modesty”, she added (1741: *6v*). She herself seemed rather convinced of the superiority of her own approach.

From the dedication to Huydecoper it becomes clear that Corleva was much concerned about proper language usage. She felt that it was most audacious to write in a language without being thoroughly acquainted with its principles. Following Huydecoper, who had done so at the end of his play *Achilles* (1719), she referred to some well-known lines in Nicolas Boileau’s (1636-1711) *Art Poetique* of 1674 (I, 55 sqq.), which read in Huydecoper (1719: 28)

> Sur tout qu’en vos Ecrits la Langue révérée,  
> Dans vos plus grands excès, vous soit toûjours sacrée.  
> (...)  
> Sans la Langue, en un mot, l’Auteur le plus divin  
> Est toûjours, quoiqu’il fasse, un mechant Ecrivain.

Seeking to emphasize “the necessity of having a thorough knowledge of the language which one

\(^{15}\) Note that in the preface to the second edition of his 1655 *Nouvelle Méthode pour apprendre facilement la langue greque* of 1658 Lancelot referred to another recently published book of his, the *Jardin des Racines Greques* (1657), which, as he acknowledged, was mainly based on the works of Estienne and Scapula (cf. Donzé 1971: 182). Is there some distant parallel with Corleva?

\(^{16}\) Cf. the standpoint of Corleva’s contemporary, the famous Graecist Tiberius Hemsterhuis (1685-1766): “Infimixum est scilicet hominibus a summo rerum auctore Deo principium aliquod tanquam forma analogica [...] Hoc principium analogiae internum omnibus est infimix; sine eo principio nil quod gratiam habet agimus, nil dicimus” (Gerretzen 1940: 116-117). For Hemsterhuis’s conception of ‘analogia’ as the creative quality of the human mind, cf. Gerretzen 1940: 131, 180.
ventures to employ” Corleva (1741: *6v0 - *7r0) extensively quoted Huydecoper’s 1719 lamentation on the deplorable language usage of his days, which preceded his Boileau quotation. Finally, after having remarked in a phrase of conventional modesty that her work was only a rough outline, she expressed the wish that “More Ingenious Minds and Scholars of Greater Literacy were to publish something better as to the perfection of our Mother Tongue” (1741: *7r0). This must suffice to show for what purpose Johanna Corleva had engaged in the study of language. She sought to improve contemporary language usage by opening up new roads, i.e. by facilitating the learning of “our fair and glorious mother tongue” as her venerated Huydecoper had put it.

6. Corleva and eighteenth-century linguistics

To a certain extent Johanna Corleva can be seen as a follower of Huydecoper, who was characterized by later generations of Dutch scholars as a “taaldespoot uit de pruiketijd”, ‘a language despot from the Regency period’ (lit. ‘wig era’), and who as such had a bad reputation among linguists around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century. His reflections on language were seen as the consequences of ‘grammaire raisonnée’, the prescriptive type of grammar which seeks to regulate the language according to, for example, the usage of ‘respectable authors’.

As I have pointed out above, the linguistic scene in eighteenth-century Holland was to a large extent dominated by discussions concerning spelling and language norms. Note that the first decades of the eighteenth century saw the publication of numerous influential works concerning the study of Dutch, among which several grammatical works, which were reprinted several times. Why engage in a competition with all these learned (male) authors? Yet, Corleva deemed it necessary to write a grammar of her own because she believed that her learning method was superior. The same can be said about her dictionary: the question whether she surpassed Halma as a lexicographer is less crucial than the fact that she thought she easily surpassed his work in respect of learnability. To what extent Corleva was a follower of the ‘grammaire raisonnée’ with a view to language prescription is hard to say, as concrete data are lacking. Be this as it may, her adherence to the ‘general’ aspects of Port Royal in matters grammatical did not attract any followers. It was the prescriptive grammar trend that continued to have the upper hand.

A second factor may have played a role, to which I have drawn attention at an earlier occasion (cf. Noordegraaf 1994). As early as the second part of the seventeenth century, Dutch scientists felt attracted to experimental research. The experimental method, “insbesondere in der strenge methodischen Durchbearbeitung die Newtons Grundgedanken bei den holländischen Denkern und Naturforschern gefunden hatten” (Cassirer 1932: 79), resulted in empiricism, which was propagated by Dutch physicists such as Hermannus Boerhaave (1668-1738) and Willem Jacob ’s-Gravesande (1688-1742). The ideas of these Dutch scholars were not only influential abroad, but also went beyond the confines of their own field of research. In particular, they had a fundamental influence upon the French Enlightenment. In Dutch linguistics the influence of this empirical trend can be found in the works of the so-called Schola Hemsterhusiana, a group of Dutch classical scholars consisting of Tiberius Hemsterhuis (1685-1776) and some of his pupils who shared a number of ideas and methods regarding the study of Greek. The basic views of this school took shape under the direct influence of the basic views prevalent in philosophy and natural philosophy at that time. It is interesting to see that the Hemsterhusian Everard Scheidius (1742-1794) pointed at the link with other areas of language study, too, remarking: “veras etymologiae rationes, hoc ipso demum ineunte saeculo, in Graecis repe rift T. Hemsterhusius, in Orientalibus A. Schultensius, in Batavis L. ten Kate” (Gerretzen 1940: 112). As is well-known, Corleva’s fellow-townsman Lambert ten Kate (1674-1731), the historical linguist, was praised by nineteenth-century Dutch linguistic scholars because of his strict adherence to empirical principles in linguistics.

Thus, in eighteenth-century Holland a certain tradition of empiricism can be discerned in several areas of language study, which may provide a partial explanation of the fact that Corleva’s translation of the ‘Cartesian’ Port-Royal grammar failed to have any impact. Why her dictionary of 1741 had so little success is something we can only guess at. Obviously, it went under in a fierce competition with other already more or less established dictionaries such as Halma’s and Marin’s, which saw reprint after reprint.17

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17 This lack of success could be the reason why the other works by Corleva which were ready for the press in 1741 eventually did not appear in print.
7. Concluding remarks

Johanna Corleva was a translator of grammatical and philosophical works. In the 1730’s she translated, among other things, the *Grammaire générale et raisonnée*, and wrote a Dutch and a French grammar which were both based on this work. In this respect she could have found some inspiration in the efforts made a number of decades earlier by the grammarians of the Amsterdam society Nil Volentibus Arduum, whose general grammar was published in part for the first time in the late 1720’s. Furthermore, she composed two dictionaries which were closely linked up with the grammars she wrote. Given the division between grammar and lexicon the underlying idea connecting her works in both fields was that of the ratio as a means of shortening the job of learning the rules of grammar and the vocabulary of a language.

The one dictionary that has come down to us shows that as far as the actual lexicon is concerned she drew heavily on contemporary lexicographical work, viz. that of François Halma. Her originality lies in the fact that she applied the method found in Schrevelius’s Greek dictionary to material provided by Halma. It is not clear whether she was acquainted with the fact that a similar move had been made in the seventeenth-century study of Hebrew. At any rate, her merits must mainly be seen in a didactic perspective. It is interesting to see how she conceived of analogy as a generative principle active in more domains than in morphology only.

Corleva did not write for an audience of women only. Her target group consisted of those who sought to master the Dutch language or to perfect their knowledge of it. Her contacts with the Dutch grammarian Huydecoper show us that she was very concerned with language cultivation, which seems to have been the ultimate motive for her grammatical and lexicographical work, as it had been for many a Dutch linguist before her. On the one hand I must conclude that, for me, she has remained a rather enigmatic figure, but on the other hand I feel that each discipline should honour its mysterious “dames”, even the history of linguistics.
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Weledelen Achtbaaren Heer

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hebbe UE.Ed. het Schrift int Nederduitsch door myn Boekverkoper aan UE.Ed. toegezonden & denke het van mijn pligt is, nochmaals bij UE.Ed. te komen om van UE.Ed. te verstaan of er iets moet in verandert of uitgelaten worden volgens hetgeen UE.Ed. zal behagen. Myn voornemen scheint my van een zoo groot belang, naamlijk om mij in UE.Ed. goede gunst te bevestigen waarvan UE.Ed. mij reeds eenige grond van hope toe gegeven heeft, dat niet twyffelen of UE.Ed. zal my het generoeuslyk toestaan dat ’k UE.Ed. doorluchtige Naam Aan ’t hoofd van mijn werk plaatze. de voorzorge die ’k neem om UE.Ed. deze wyinig regelen te schryven, is alleen dat door mijn verzuim niet vreeze d’eer van UE.Ed. toestemming te bekoomen.

Ondertusschen Ed. achtbaaren Heer laat mij toe dat ik mij met de grootste achting & eerbiedigheid noeme,

Edelen Achtbaaren Heer

UEd zeer onderdanige
& Ootmoedige dinaresse

Johanna Corleva

Amsterdam 8 November 1740

verhoope van UE.Ed. goedheit my te stellen een tydt of uur wanneer UE.Ed. gelegenheit zoude hebben dat ik koome om UE.Ed. beveelen en orders te ontfangen.

[Translation:

Your Honour

My Lord

I have sent the publication in the Dutch language to Your Honour through my bookseller, and I deem it to be my duty to visit Your Honour again in order to hear from Your Honour whether anything has to be changed or deleted in accordance with what will please Your Honour. My intention seems to me of such a great importance, namely to find myself in Your Honour’s good graces whereof Your Honour has already given me some grounds for hope, so that I do not doubt that Your Honour will magnanimously allow me that I shall put Your Honour’s illustrious name at the beginning of my work. The precaution which I take by writing these few lines to Your Honour, is only for this reason that through my neglect I do not have to dread not receiving the honour of Your Honour’s permission. Meanwhile, Your Honour, allow me that I name myself with the greatest esteem and reverence,

Your Honour

Your Honour’s most obedient and humble servant

Johanna Corleva

Amsterdam 8 November 1740

I do hope Your Honour would be so kind as to tell me a time or an hour that Your Honour would have the opportunity for me to come along so that I can receive Your Honour’s commands and orders]
Monseigneur

je prends encore la liberté de vous demender très humblement pour ce petit écrit respectueux que vous aies la bonté de m'assigner un moment de votre commodité lorsqu’il vous plairoit auquel je puisse achever de remplir mon devoir envers votre généreuse et excessive bonté. J’admire heureux et surprenant effet que l’amour des belles lettres produit en vous. Monseigneur, j’entends parler de cette affabilité et humanité avec laquelle vous m’avez été accessible toute petite que je suis, toute inconnue que je vous aie été. Voilà dis-je Monseigneur l’effet heureux de l’amour que vous avez pour les sciences et pour les belles lettres, qu’on appelle par leurs doux effet Lettres humaines et humanités. Je cesse pourtant d’admirer le bonheur, qu’il a eu de me trouver sous l’honneur inestimable de votre protection, lorsque je considère (ce qui vous est très connu) que des Esclaves même autrefois ont été des affranchis illustres par la prerogative de leur Esprit, le peu que Dieu m’en a donné m’a attiré de la part de votre générosité l’encouragement où je suis pour faire des plus grands progrès, et pas un effet de mon jugement je ne laisserai pourtant de rester toujours non obstant le grand addoucissement de votre dignité & de votre venerable rang avec le respect le plus scrupuleux & le plus profond de votre venerable et digne personne

Monseigneur

Amsterdam 19 November
1740

La très humble très obligée
et très reconnaissante servante

Johanna Corleva

Monseigneur, prenez je vous prie vôtre commodité en lisant la philosophie de Bayle, car il est question à présent d’achever le dictionnaire Etymologique de la langue française, que j’ai déjà traduit en partie.