



Acta Linguistica Hafniensia

International Journal of Linguistics

ISSN: 0374-0463 (Print) 1949-0763 (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/salh20>

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To cite this article: Maaïke Beliën (2017) Auxiliary choice with particle verbs of motion in Dutch, Acta Linguistica Hafniensia, 49:2, 212-231, DOI: [10.1080/03740463.2017.1352438](https://doi.org/10.1080/03740463.2017.1352438)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03740463.2017.1352438>



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Published online: 16 Oct 2017.



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Auxiliary choice with particle verbs of motion in Dutch

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ABSTRACT

There is a long tradition of analyzing the use of the Dutch perfect auxiliaries *hebben* “have” and *zijn* “be” in semantic terms, which has centered around two notions: “change in the subject referent” and “telicity”. The present study argues that “change in the subject referent” is the most viable generalization, in light of attested examples with three particle verbs of motion: *omdraaien* “turn around”, *weglopen* “walk/run away” and *af dalen* “descend (off)”. While (telic) particle verbs are commonly said to take only *zijn* “be” as their perfect auxiliary, the three particle verbs studied here are shown to occur with *hebben* as well as *zijn*, in contexts that do not differ in terms of telicity. These data can be accounted for if the traditional notion of “change in the subject referent” is considered against the background of the cognitive-grammar notion of construal. In particular, the present study argues that *zijn* is used with these particle verbs when the motion event is construed as a (telic or atelic) change of state on the part of the subject referent, while *hebben* is used when it is construed as a subject’s executing or engaging in a (telic or atelic) type of act.

KEYWORDS Dutch perfect auxiliaries; particle verbs of motion; construal; attested data; telicity; change of state; type of act

1. Introduction

Verbal particles have been observed to have an effect on perfect auxiliary choice in Dutch. Van Hout (1996; 2004), for example, lists several one-argument verbs that “switch” from *hebben* “have” to *zijn* “be” when a “goal” particle is added. Her examples include manner of motion verbs, such as *lopen* “walk” in (1), taking *hebben* in (1a), yet *zijn* in (1b), where it is combined with the “goal” particle *weg* “away”. Other examples are *wegzwemmen* “swim away”, *omdraaien* “turn around”, and *uitvaren* “sail out” (van Hout 1996, 56; for descriptions and more

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examples of the same effect, see Booij 1990, 53–54; Zaenen 1993, 137; Lieber and Baayen 1997, 819–821; and Broekhuis 2013, 135).¹

- (1) a. *John heeft de hele nacht gelopen* (van Hout 1996, 332)
 John has the whole night walked
 ‘John walked all night.’
 b. *John is weggelopen* (van Hout 1996, 332)
 John is away.walked
 ‘John walked away.’

There is a long tradition of analyzing the use of the Dutch perfect auxiliaries, *hebben* “have” and *zijn* “be”, in semantic terms. This tradition can be said to have centered around two notions: “change in the subject referent” and “telicity”. Van Hout (1996; 2004) is a strong advocate of “telicity” as the relevant explanatory principle (see also Zaenen 1988, 1993; Sorace 2000): *zijn* is used with telic intransitive predicates (i.e., those with a “moment of temporal transition”, van Hout 1996, 108), while *hebben* is used with atelic ones. Van Hout uses temporal adverbials to diagnose telicity (cf. Dowty 1979): by itself, a manner of motion verb describes an “atelic Process” (van Hout 2008, 421) and is therefore compatible with a durative (atelic) adverbial such as *de hele nacht* “all night”, cf. (1a). When a manner of motion verb is combined with a particle (1b) or a prepositional phrase (2) specifying the goal of the motion event, they together describe a “telic Transition”, that is, a “Transition from a P[rocess ...] to a resultative S[tate]” (van Hout 2008, 421). In such cases, the predicate is compatible with a frame (or telic) adverbial, such as *in 5 minuten* “in five minutes”:

- (2) *John is in 5 minuten naar de bus gelopen.* (van Hout 1996, 332)
 John is in 5 minutes to the bus walked
 ‘John walked to the bus within 5 minutes.’

While the generalization in terms of telicity can account for many particle verbs, there are some that show deviant behavior, especially when examples gathered from the Internet are taken into account. The present study shows that the particle verbs *omdraaien* “turn around”, *weglopen* “walk/run away” and *afdalén* “descend (off)” occur with *hebben* as well as *zijn*, in contexts that do not differ in terms of telicity. That is, *omdraaien* and *weglopen* are telic in that they involve a moment of temporal transition, namely when the subject referent is “facing the other way” (*omdraaien*) or “away” (*weglopen*). *Afdalen* is aspectually more varied, in that it can be telic or atelic, depending on the context (similar to “degree achievements”, cf. Hay, Kennedy, and Levin 1999,

¹The effect is not restricted to motion verbs: van Hout (2004), for example, lists other types of one-argument verbs too, including *drogen* “dry”/ *opdrogen* “dry up”, *reizen* “travel”/ *afreizen* “set off to travel”, and *groeien* “grow”/ *opgroeien* “grow up” (2004, 74).

and Section 5 below). All three particle verbs, however, combine with both *zijn* and *hebben* in ways that cross-cut the telic-atelic distinction.

Rather than seeing such examples as exceptions, the present paper argues that they provide evidence for an alternative analysis of Dutch auxiliary choice with motion verbs. This alternative relies on the notion of “change in the subject referent”, which has a long history in the literature on auxiliary choice in Dutch (cf. te Winkel 1837; Kern 1912; de Vooy 1947; Honselaar 1987; Shannon 1990, 1995; Lieber and Baayen 1997). At first sight, this may not seem a viable explanatory principle either, because each of the three particle verbs describes a motion event in which the subject referent undergoes a change (be it telic or atelic). The present study argues, however, that the traditional notion suffices when seen against the background of the cognitive-grammar notion of construal: our cognitive ability to conceptualize an event (or entity or property) in different ways (e.g., Langacker 1987, 138). In that sense, the present study is an extension of the analysis of motion verbs presented in Beliën (2012, 2014): it argues that *zijn* is used when the motion event is construed as a (telic or atelic) change of state (on the part of the subject referent), while *hebben* is used when it is construed as a subject’s executing or engaging in a (telic or atelic) type of act.

This proposal is described in Section 2 in the context of existing literature, focusing especially on types of examples that have been little studied so far: the use of *hebben* in the case of motion events with a specified endpoint, and the use of *zijn* with motion events that are atelic. Then, the three particle verbs are analyzed in terms of it: *omdraaien* “turn around” in Section 3, *weglopen* “walk away” in Section 4, and *af dalen* “descend (off)” in Section 5.

2. A revival of the notion of “change in the subject referent”

In recent work, I have argued that the use of *hebben* and *zijn* with motion verbs can be accounted for in terms of a (telic or atelic) “type of act” vs. a (telic or atelic) “change of state” (Beliën 2008, 2012, 2014).² This is inspired by Honselaar (1987), who proposes that auxiliary choice in Dutch can be accounted for in terms of “change in subject” (*zijn*) and “no change in subject” (*hebben*). This distinction has a long history in the literature on Dutch auxiliary choice (see e.g., te Winkel 1837; Kern 1912; de Vooy 1947; Shannon 1995; Lieber and Baayen 1997). Honselaar (1987) stands out, however, because he applies it to a wider range of examples than any other study that I am aware of.

The present section focuses on telic examples of motion verbs with *hebben*, and atelic ones with *zijn*, because they have received little attention in the literature so far (and some linguists have simply considered them to be ungrammatical). The examples can be explained, however, in terms of the notions “type

²I used the term “change of location” in Beliën (2008, 2012), but broadened the notion in Beliën (2014) to “change of state” to include other types of change in the subject referent.

of act” and “change of state” if also the idea of “construal” is taken into account, cf. e.g., Langacker (1987, 138):

The full conceptual or semantic value of a conceived situation is a function of not only its content [...], but also how we structure this content with respect to such matters as attention, selection, figure/ground organization, viewpoint, and level of schematicity.

In particular, a motion event with a clear endpoint may allow two types of construal. One involves “simply” that of a subject referent undergoing a telic change of state, which can be conveyed by means of *zijn*. In some special contexts, and perhaps not for all speakers, the same motion event can be construed as a “type of act”, something special that the subject referent does.³ And similarly, an atelic motion event can in certain circumstances also be construed in two ways. These special cases are considered in more detail below.

Some studies have indeed observed that explicitly mentioning the endpoint of the motion does not always exclude the use of *hebben* (Ebeling 2006, 406–407). Most accounts, however, consider this to be only possible with atelic interpretations, which would be in line with an analysis in terms of telicity: *hebben* with atelic examples, and *zijn* with telic ones. One such atelic interpretation involves iterative examples, such as (3) from Honselaar (1987, 57; cf. also Ebeling 2006, 406; Broekhuis, Corver, and Vos 2015, 210).⁴

- (3) *ik heb mijn hele leven naar Den Haag gelopen,*
 I have my whole life to The Hague walked,
en zal dat nu ook doen
 and shall that now also do
 ‘I have walked to The Hague all my life, and will do so now too.’

Honselaar (1987) characterizes (3) as conveying an act (“handeling”) that is repeated in the course of the subject’s life. While *zijn* could have been used to refer to each of these acts separately, the use of *hebben* expresses the idea of “een onveranderlijke reeks veranderingshandelingen[; h]et subject wordt dus, op een hoger plan dan dat van de concrete handeling, voorgesteld als onveranderlijk” [“an unchanging series of acts that themselves do involve change; so, the subject is portrayed as unchanging at a higher level than that of the concrete act”] (1987, 58).

³At this stage, I do not know whether the notion “type of act” necessarily involves such notions as “agentivity”, “control” or “volition”. As I have focused mainly on motion verbs with human or animal subjects, those aspects are part of the interpretation of the constructions with *hebben* (but note van Hout’s (1993) example in (9) below). This is therefore an issue for further research.

⁴Note that Ebeling (2006, 407) also gives the possibility of using *zijn* here:

- (i) *Ik ben/heb mijn hele schooltijd dagelijks naar Almelo gefietst*
 I am/have my whole school.time daily to Almelo cycled
 ‘All through my schooldays, I cycled to Almelo every day’

Another type of atelic interpretation, but one that I find hard to get, is described in Hoekstra (1984, 246, 248). The examples in (4) include the paraphrases that Hoekstra provides to characterize the difference in interpretation between *zijn* in (4a) and *hebben* in (4b).

- (4) a. *dat Jan naar Groningen gewandeld is*
 that John to Groningen walked is
 ‘[that] John ended up being in Groningen by walking there’
 b. *dat Jan naar Groningen gewandeld heeft*
 that John to Groningen walked has
 ‘[that] John was walking while on his way to Groningen’

Hoekstra states that with *hebben* in (4b) “it is asserted that John is engaged in a certain activity”, whereas (4a), with *zijn*, “specifies a change of position of John ..., which happens to result from the process of walking” (1984, 246). It seems, in other words, that Hoekstra’s interpretations of (4a) and (4b) are in keeping with an account of auxiliary choice in terms of telicity: *zijn* is used when the motion event is telic, while *hebben* is used when it is not.

Zubizarreta and Oh (2007) make this supposed difference in telicity explicit by adding telic modifiers to Hoekstra’s examples.⁵ As they consider the case with *hebben* to be atelic, they are unsurprised by the asterisk they provide in example (5b): “[a]s expected, given the unbounded nature of the VP, it cannot be modified by a telic temporal phrase, as shown in [5b]” (2007, 132).

- (5) a. *dat Jan in twee uur naar Groningen gewandeld is*
 that Jan in two hour to Groningen walked is
 b. **dat Jan in twee uur naar Groningen gewandeld heeft*
 that Jan in two hour to Groningen walked has

For me, however, (4b) is as telic as (4a), and the use of the telic temporal phrase in (5b) not impossible. This is not something that has often been recognized, but Ebeling (2006, 407) gives the example in (6), which describes a single, telic motion event (and is possible, according to Ebeling, for a subset of the speakers of Dutch; cf. also Honselaar 1987, 58 for a similar example with *dalen* “descend”).

- (6) *Ik heb een keer in één ruk van Amsterdam naar Almelo gefietst.*
 I have one time in one go from Amsterdam to Almelo cycled
 ‘I once cycled from Amsterdam to Almelo in one go.’

Evidence for the use of such telic examples with *hebben* is provided in Beliën (2012), which presents data gathered from the Internet that consist of Dutch manner of motion verbs and prepositional phrases. (7), for instance, features

⁵They suggest that while (4a) “implies that Jan walked all the way to Groningen, there is no such implication in [4b] (he could have walked only part of the way)” (2007, 132). This interpretation sounds very artificial to me, and difficult if not impossible to get.

the telic temporal phrase *in vier maanden tijd* “in four months’ time” (counter to Zubizarreta and Oh’s expectation, cf. 5b above). The telicity of (8) is apparent from the momentaneous nature of the motion event: “flying through the sound barrier”.⁶

- (7) *Onze kameel Ned blijkt een kameel die ...*
 our camel Ned turns.out a camel that
in vier maanden tijd van het midden
 in four months time from the middle
van Australië (Alice Springs) naar Broome gelopen heeft.
 of Australia (Alice Springs) to Broome walked has
 ‘Our camel Ned turns out to be a camel that ... walked from the middle of Australia (Alice Springs) to Broome ... in four months’ time.’
- (8) *Miles Hilton Barber [...] is de eerste blinde man*
 Miles Hilton Barber is the first blind man
die [...] door de geluidsbarrière heeft gevlogen.
 who through the sound.barrier has flown
Die prestatie leverde hij afgelopen zondag 30 maart ...
 that achievement delivered he last Sunday 30 March ...
 ‘Miles Hilton Barber is the first blind man to have flown through the sound barrier. He performed this feat last Sunday, March 30, ...’

While examples similar to (7) and (8) occur more frequently with *zijn* than with *hebben* (see Beliën 2012 for the details), these data show that at least for some speakers and in certain contexts, *hebben* is a possibility too. Note that (6)–(8) each describes some remarkable achievement, or feat: cycling or walking a long distance in (6) and (7), and a blind pilot flying through the sound barrier in (8) (cf. the use of *die prestatie* “that achievement/feat” right after *heeft gevlogen* “has flown”).

The explanation for this use of *hebben* is that it portrays the subject referent not so much as undergoing a change, but rather as executing a “type of act” (Beliën 2012). As the type of act involved in (6), (7) or (8) consists in a motion event with some well-defined endpoint, it is telic. It is important to stress that the notion of “type of act” is meant to be unspecified for telicity or atelicity. In this way, it applies to the relatively infrequent telic examples in (6)–(8), as well as to run-of-the-mill examples such as (1a) above (*John heeft de hele nacht gelopen* “John walked all night”), in which the subject executes the atelic act of “walking”.

⁶Both (7) and (8) are from Beliën (2012, 11).

Another set of examples that have generally received little attention are atelic ones with *zijn*. Lieber and Baayen (1997), for instance, give the example of *dalen* “descend, fall”, which they argue need not necessarily be telic, yet still takes *zijn* as its perfect auxiliary (1997, 800; cf. also Kern 1912, 162). Van Hout (2004), who analyzes auxiliary choice in terms of telicity, is aware of this issue too, when she says that “verbs of inherently directed motion such as *rise*, *descend*, and *fall* ... take the typical atelicity[-]indicating temporal modifiers such as *for hours* – but still select the BE auxiliary” (van Hout 2004, 75: fn. 12).⁷ We actually find both options in (9), which Sorace (2000, 866) quotes from van Hout (1993, 7): the directed motion verb *stijgen* “rise, ascend” is considered to be possible with both *zijn* and *hebben* in this atelic example (note the durative modifier *3 uur lang* “for three hours”).

- (9) *De temperatuur is/heeft 3 uur[]lang gestegen, maar is*
 The temperature is/has 3 hours risen, but is
toen weer gezakt
 then again dropped
 ‘The temperature rose for three hours but then dropped again.’

Attested data that support the intuitions reflected in (9) can be found in Beliën (2014), on auxiliary choice with directed motion verbs. Both (10) and (11), for example, feature the durative modifier *een tijdje* “for a while”, yet *zijn* is used in (10) and *hebben* in (11). Similar atelic examples can be found in Beliën (2012), involving manner of motion verbs that combine with prepositional phrases, such as *naar boven lopen* “walk up” and *door Boston wandelen* “walk/stroll through Boston”.

- (10) *De werkloosheid is vervolgens nog een tijdje*
 the unemployment is subsequently still a little.while
gestegen tot er weer een moment van
 risen until there again a moment of
stabilisatie aanbrak
 stabilization started
 ‘After that, unemployment rose for yet another while, until there came a moment of stabilization.’

⁷While Lieber and Baayen (1997) and van Hout (2004) consider atelic cases that involve a single unbounded process, Zaenen (1988, 333) makes a similar observation about an example that is atelic because it is iterative (involving multiple instances of *vertrekken* “leave” and *aankomen* “arrive”), which she considers to be acceptable only with *zijn*, despite the atelic interpretation.

- (11) *Zaterdag gingen [we] mountainbiken. Eerst gingen we stijgen. Voor sommigen was dit erg vermoeiend, maar uiteindelijk zijn we allemaal boven gekomen. Vanzelfsprekend moesten wij ook weer dalen. Dit was ook niet altijd even makkelijk, maar duidelijk veel leuker dan het stijgen. Daarna hadden we nog een tijdje gestegen*
 [after-that had we still a little.while ascended]
 ‘Saturday we went mountainbiking. First we climbed. For some, this was exhausting, but ultimately we all made it to the top. Of course then we had to descend. This was not always easy either, but definitely much more fun than climbing. After that we climbed again for a while.’

Directed motion verbs such as *stijgen* “climb, ascend, rise” and *dalen* “descend, fall” imply a certain direction, and therefore a change in the subject referent, namely a change in elevation (or metaphorical height, in the case of prices, temperatures, or figures), whether the motion event is telic or atelic. This change in the subject referent thus motivates the use of *zijn*. Another perspective on such events is that the subject referent is engaged in some type of act, for example, because it is especially strenuous, or it is contrasted with some other type of act. Both these factors play a role in (11): a group of boy scouts are engaged in climbing, descending, and then some more climbing; with *hebben*, the speaker focuses more on executing a strenuous type of act than on the subject referent’s change in elevation.

The attested data involving particle verbs presented below show the same dual construal possibility as the examples discussed in this section. *Omdraaien* “turn around” (Section 3) and *weglopen* “walk/run away” (Section 4) describe telic events which may be construed as a type of act in some particular contexts (and then take *hebben*). *Afdalen* “descend (off)” (Section 5) has telic and atelic interpretations, each potentially construable as a type of act (*hebben*) or as a change of state (*zijn*).

3. *Omdraaien* “turn around” in the context of *The Voice of Holland*

The first particle verb to be discussed here is *omdraaien* “turn around” as used in a very specific context: the talent show *The Voice of Holland*. On this TV show (cf. also Beliën 2014), candidates sing in front of a jury who cannot see the candidate. This is because the jury members, called “coaches”, are sitting in chairs facing away from the stage. If coaches like what they hear, they press a button which makes them turn around, so that they can then see the candidate. For candidates, this is a big moment, because only if one or more coaches turn around for them, can they go on to the next round. This turning is therefore much commented on in reactions to the show on the Internet.

The auxiliary choice in these comments on the show fits in nicely with the construal analysis presented above, as has already been argued for the “simple” verb *draaien* “turn” in Beliën (2014). For the present study, comments featuring the particle verb *omdraaien* were gathered by means of Google, by searching for highly specific strings of words.⁸ This yielded 12 relevant examples with *zijn* (cf. 12) and 8 with *hebben* (cf. 13):

- (12) a. *Ze heeft geluk dat alle drie de coaches voor haar zijn omgedraaid*⁹
 she has luck that all three the coaches for her are around.turned
 ‘She’s lucky that all three coaches have turned around for her.’
- b. *ik vind dit ook niet mooi maar van Velzen is omgedraaid*¹⁰
 I find this also not beautiful but van Velzen is around.turned
 ‘I don’t like this either but van Velzen has turned around.’
- (13) a. *ik kan niet geloven dat Angela heeft omgedraaid*¹¹
 I can not believe that Angela has around.turned
 ‘I cannot believe that Angela has turned around.’
- b. *Ze was heel blij dat alle coaches hadden omgedraaid*¹²
 she was very happy that all coaches had around.turned
 ‘She was very happy that all coaches had turned around.’
- c. *vette auditie!! onbegrijpelijk dat niemand heeft omgedraaid*¹³
 cool audition incomprehensible that no.one has around.turned
 ‘Cool audition! Unbelievable that nobody has turned around.’

Note that these examples describe identical events, whatever auxiliary is chosen: the subject referent makes a 180-degree turn, from facing away to facing toward the candidate. This telic motion event constitutes a change of state (i.e., orientation) on the part of the subject referent, which motivates the use of *zijn* in (12). At the same time, however, this motion event entails more than that in the particular context of this show: by turning around, a jury member signals that this candidate can go on to the next round. In other words, this telic turn is the type of act that a jury member needs to “execute” to signal that this candidate can go on to the next round, which motivates the use of *hebben* in (13).

⁸The following strings were googled: *voice“simon/velzen/angela/coaches/niemand *omgedraaid*”, which yielded 75 hits in total. From these, repeated and irrelevant examples were removed, including passive, transitive, and reflexive constructions, as well as telegram-style examples without a perfect auxiliary. This resulted in the 8 relevant examples with *hebben* and the 12 with *zijn* mentioned above.

⁹<http://dutchcharts.nl/showitem.asp?interpret=Chlo%EB+Groen&titel=I+Don%27t+Believe+You&cat=s>, accessed February 22, 2013.

¹⁰<http://www.babybrabbel.nl/forums/showbizz-tv/voice-deel-7>, accessed February 22, 2013.

¹¹<http://www.thevoicekids.nl/video/daantje-vlieg-met-me-mee/>, accessed February 22, 2013.

¹²http://www.deweekkrant.nl/artikel/2013/februari/12/anne_keizer_en_the_voice_kids, accessed February 22, 2013.

¹³https://www.youtube.com/all_comments?threaded=1&v=8AAc4mo58kY, accessed February 22, 2013.

4. Counterfactual cases of *weggelopen* “walk away”

The second particle verb to be discussed here is *weggelopen* “walk away”, which is usually considered to take *zijn* rather than *hebben*, cf. (1b) above. Interestingly, however, quite a few examples can be found on the Internet of *weggelopen* with past tense “had”, although examples with “was” are more frequent: Googling “was *weggelopen*” yielded 163 relevant, unique hits, as opposed to 26 for “had *weggelopen*”.¹⁴

The contexts in which *weggelopen* appears with *was* or *had* are quite different. Virtually all examples with *zijn* are descriptions of what actually happened (or what someone thinks has happened, or what appears to have happened), cf. (14).¹⁵

- (14) a. *Het meisje was weggelopen. uit een psychiatrische instelling*¹⁶
 the girl was away.walked from a psychiatric institution
 ‘The girl had run away from a psychiatric hospital.’
- b. *De bestelauto kwam [...] in de berm terecht*
 the van ended in the shoulder up
*en de bestuurder was weggelopen.*¹⁷
 and the driver was away.walked
 ‘The van ended up on the shoulder and the driver had left the scene (had walked away).’

The examples with *hebben*, on the other hand, are practically all counterfactual: the speaker is aware that the subject referent had not actually

¹⁴These searches were conducted on October 31, 2016. “Was *weggelopen*” produced 189 hits in total, versus 80 hits for “had *weggelopen*”. Both sets of hits included repeated examples as well as (dodgy) automatic translations/dictionary entries, which were removed. In addition, the results for “had *weggelopen*” included irrelevant ones such as transitives and cases in which *had* and *weggelopen* did not belong together – they were also removed. The search was limited to these two phrases, so as to obtain a data-set of a size that could be studied in detail. It would be interesting to broaden the data-set by allowing different word orders and other forms of the auxiliaries, that is, plurals and present tense forms.

¹⁵The 163 unique results for “was *weggelopen*” included two counterfactual cases:

- (i) *Als Bazoer was weggelopen, zou KNVB alle begrip hebben*
 if Bazoer was away.walked would KNVB all understanding have
 ‘If Bazoer had walked away, KNVB [Dutch football federation] would have fully understood.’
<https://www.ed.nl/algemeen/sport/voetbal/als-bazoer-was-weggelopen-zou-knvb-alle-begrip-hebben-1.5635021>, accessed October 31, 2016.
- (ii) *Als de kat niet was weggelopen met de teen hadden we deze nog kunnen aannaaien*
 if the cat not was away.walked with the toe had we this.one sill be.able.to on.sew
 ‘If the cat had not run off with the toe, we could have sewn it back on.’
<https://www.chaima.nl/2087364-post554.html?langid=1>, accessed October 31, 2016.

¹⁶<http://www.metronieuws.nl/nieuws/amsterdam/2016/07/meisje-krijgt-geen-hulp-wordt-op-youtube-beziet>, accessed October 31, 2016.

¹⁷<https://www.politie.nl/nieuws/2014/maart/21/09-bebloede-man-weggelopen-na-aanrijding.html>, accessed October 31, 2016.

walked or run away (or had actually walked away in the case of a negative construction).^{18,19}

The comment in (15a), for example, follows a long list of disgusted reactions to a TV interview with swimming champion Ranomi Kromowidjojo: she is felt not to have been treated with respect by the interviewer. The writer of the comment in (15a) agrees and conveys what she would have done in Kromowidjojo's stead: walk away. The dog owner in (15b) prefers the factual situation of her pet Dulce having feasted on a chick to the counterfactual situation of Dulce having run away. In (15c), finally, the writer sketches an alternative (counterfactual) scenario to someone's story about being tricked into buying a horse.

- (15) a. *Ja echt erg. Ik had weggelopen Totaal geen fatsoen.*²⁰
 yes really awful I had away.walked totally no decency
 'Yes, really awful. I would have walked away. No decency at all.'
- b. *maar eerlijk, liever een kippetje minder dan dat*
 but honestly rather a chick less than that
*Dulce had weggelopen*²¹
 Dulce had away.walked
 'but honestly, I rather lose a chick than [find] that Dulce had run away.'

¹⁸There was one exception: (i) is not a counterfactual example, but a durative or iterative one. The subject referent pictures herself having had to run away from something continuously or repeatedly, which she now has to face.

- (i) *Daar waar ik mijn hele leven voor had weggelopen, was nu zo vlakbij.*
 there where I my whole life for had away.walked was now so close
 'The thing I had been running away from my whole life, was now so close by.'

<http://www.chaima.nl/2087364-post554.html?langid=1>, accessed October 31, 2016.

¹⁹In fact, the other two particle verbs discussed here can be found with *hebben* in counterfactual contexts too:

- (i) *Bizar dat ze in de kliniek hebben gezegd dat je er al zwanger uit zag.*
 absurd that they in the clinic have said that you there already pregnant out saw
Ik had omgedraaid en weg gelopen.
 I had around.turned and away walked
 'How absurd that they told you in the clinic that you already looked pregnant. I would have turned around and walked away.'

http://forum.viva.nl/forum/zwanger/ervaring-abortuspil/list_messages/260375, accessed March 8, 2017.

- (ii) *Als het volgende keer mooi weer is kom ik wel zeker terug,*
 if it next time nice weather is come I positively certainly back
de streek is veel te mooi om weg te blijven
 the region is far too beautiful to away to stay
PS: ik had wel graag eens afgedaald in de steengroeve,
 PS I had positively eagerly once off.descended in the quarry
enig idee waarom men dit niet doet? (of toelaat).
 any idea why one this not does or allows
 'If the weather is nice next time, I will definitely be back, the region is far too beautiful to stay away. PS: I would definitely love/have loved to descend (off) in the quarry some time, any idea why people do not do (or allow) this?'

<https://forum.mountainbike.be/viewtopic.php?f=2&t=126474&start=20>, accessed March 8, 2017.

²⁰<https://statuscope.nl/Lieve-mensen-bedankt-voor-jullie-support-%f0%9f%92%9e%f0%9f%99%8f%f0%9f%8f%bc-Vier-jaar-geleden?id=6002417d>, accessed October 31, 2016.

²¹<https://lovingrescuedanimals.weebly.com/2014-en-vroeger.html>, accessed October 31, 2016.

- c. *als jij je had omgedraaid en had weggelopen en*
 if you yourself had around.turned and had away.walked and
had gelachen en gezegd had bij [] wijze
 had laughed and said had by way
*van, dan had hij je niets kunnen maken*²²
 of than had he you nothing be.able.to make
 ‘If you had turned around and had walked away and had laughed
 and said ‘in a manner of speaking’, then he wouldn’t have had any-
 thing on you.’

While these counterfactual examples may be felt to be unacceptable by quite a few speakers of Dutch, they do fit into wider observations that counterfactual contexts are “favorable” to the use of *hebben* with verbs that usually take *zijn*. The Dutch reference grammar *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst* (Haeseryn et al. 1997, 75) provides the examples in (16), about which they add that such examples are found almost exclusively in spoken language and that few language users consider them part of the standard language (cf. also Honselaar 1987, 65; Ebeling 2006, 409).²³ This is, in other words, in accordance with examples of “had weggelopen” showing up on the Internet, particularly in reactions to posts (cf. 15a) and on forums (cf. 15c), which have a more informal, spoken-language style.

- (16) a. *Hadden we maar eerder weggegaan, dan hadden we niet*
 had we but earlier away.gone then had we not
te laat gekomen.
 too late come
 ‘Had we only left earlier, then we would not have arrived late.’
- b. *Met mij erbij had dat zeker niet gebeurd.*
 with me there.by had that definitely not happened
 ‘With me present, that definitely would not have happened.’

Shannon (1995) refers to this favorability of counterfactual contexts to the use of HAVE as the “irrealis effect”, based on data from Middle Dutch and Middle Low German observed in Kern (1912, cf. also Coussé 2014) and Magnussen (1939), respectively. In fact, Kern (1912) spends a considerable part of his book-length treatise of Dutch auxiliary choice since medieval times on the use of *hebben* in counterfactual contexts. This effect is found in other West-Germanic languages too (cf. e.g., Hoekstra 2016 on Frisian unaccusative verbs and McFadden and Alexiadou 2010 on Middle English *come*), as well as in Romance (cf. Stolova 2006 on intransitive verbs in Old Spanish, as well as references there to studies on older stages of French, Neapolitan and Sicilian).

²²<https://www.bokt.nl/forums/viewtopic.php?f=192&t=1120342>, accessed October 31, 2016.

²³The Corpus of Contemporary Dutch (CHN), which is a written-language corpus (newspapers, magazines, legal documents, and television news scripts), features no hits for “had weggelopen” at all, as opposed to 126 hits for “was weggelopen”.

I would like to suggest that the notion of a “type of act” can also account for the counterfactual cases. As Ebeling (2006, 409) puts it, *hebben* is eminently suitable for presenting a situation as counterfactual, “omdat het als hulpwerkwoord overal de aandacht concentreert op het gebeuren zelf, en dat wat er het gevolg van is naar de achtergrond dringt” [“because it focuses the attention on what actually takes place in all its uses, and pushes the effect of the action into the background”]. In other words, the focus is not so much on the subject referent changing place in the examples in (15), but rather on the subject referent hypothetically engaging in a particular type of act.²⁴ Both writers in (15a) and (15c) would have done something else, would have acted differently, than Kromowidjojo and the person tricked into buying a horse. In (15b), the dog owner expresses her relief that Dulce has engaged in one type of act rather than another one.

5. Auxiliary choice with *af dalen* “descend (off)”

The verb *af dalen*, finally, appears to be extremely flexible with respect to telicity and auxiliary choice. While the “simple” verb *dalen* roughly means to go from a higher to a lower position, *af dalen* also includes the idea of a reference object with respect to which the subject referent moves downward.²⁵ So, while the temperature can *dalen* “fall, go down”, it cannot *af dalen* “descend (off)”.

The particle variant *af dalen* “descend (off)” has both telic and atelic uses, even though the particle *af* “off” often has a telicizing effect in other verb-particle combinations. It shows the same “aspectual duality” (Hay, Kennedy, and Levin 1999, 139) that has been observed for English verbs of directed motion, such as *ascend*, *descend*, *rise* and *fall* (cf. also Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995, 172–173). Hay, Kennedy, and Levin (1999) observe that these verbs share this property with “degree achievements”, such as *cool* or *widen*, which “introduce a measure of the amount to which an argument of the verb changes with respect to the gradable property introduced by the adjectival base” which they refer to as the “difference value” (1999, 130).

As Hay, Kennedy, and Levin (1999, 140) put it, verbs of directed motion “describe a change along a projected scale: the path of movement of the affected argument”; “[t]heir telicity ... depend[s] on the boundedness of the difference value” (1999, 140). As shown in (17), from Hay, Kennedy, and Levin (1999, 140), the verb *descend* can be telic (17a), when a “maximal value of change (a descent to the ground)” is available, which, in their words, “give[s] rise to a telicity implicature” (1999, 140). It can also be atelic (17b), when there is no

²⁴Note that the “type of act” characterization is argued here to account for verbs of motion; it is to be seen to what extent it also applies to *gebeuren* “happen” or *zijn* “be” (cf. also fn. 3 above).

²⁵This reference object can also be made explicit, cf. (20) below. A possible analysis is therefore that *af dalen* is a transitive verb whose direct object can be left unexpressed. This does not make it any less interesting with respect to the issue of auxiliary choice: while most transitive verbs take *hebben*, also when their direct object is not expressed, *af dalen* occurs with both *hebben* and *zijn*.

such implicature. (17c) shows that the “difference value” can be made explicit by means of a “measure phrase”:

- (17) a. The plane descended in 20 minutes.
 b. The plane descended for 20 minutes.
 c. The plane descended 1000 meters.

The data presented below show that *af dalen* too has telic and atelic uses, can combine with a measure phrase, and is found with *hebben* and *zijn* in all these uses. The observations here are based on Googling “afgedaald te zijn” and “afgedaald te hebben” (“descended to be/have”) on March 21, 2014, which yielded 147 and 50 hits, respectively. Many of these were part of a (non-finite) clause headed by *na* “after”, which were considered in more detail: 106 unique examples with *zijn* and 46 with *hebben*. Since the subject referent changes state (i.e., position/elevation) in all these cases, the use of *zijn* is motivated, even in atelic cases. The constructions with *hebben*, telic or atelic, highlight the type of act that the subject referent is involved in.

Let us first take a look at examples with durative modifiers, such as *even* “for a little while” in (18a) and *heel die tijd* “all that time” in (18b). Three of the examples with *zijn* featured such a durative modifier, as opposed to nine with *hebben*. In these particular cases, those with *zijn* appear to indicate where something else can be found: after descending for a while, you get to a certain location. With *hebben*, on the other hand, the type of act involved is foregrounded: (18b), for instance, contrasts the act of descending with that of climbing, as well as focuses on the effect that descending has had on the speaker’s body.

- (18) a. *na even afgedaald te zijn in het smalle*
 after for.a.little.while off.descended to be in the narrow
straatje, [...] kom je aan de voet van de
 street come you at the foot of the
*Yivli Minaret*²⁶
 Yivli Minaret
 ‘After having descended (off) for a little while in the narrow street, you
 get to the foot of the Yivli Minaret.’

²⁶<http://zienenweten.blogspot.nl/2013/05/lycie-rondreis-antalya-deel-14b.html>, accessed March 21, 2014.

b. *na heel die tijd afgedaald te hebben,*
 after all that time off.descended to have

*voelt het even goed aan de beentjes om wat te klimmen*²⁷
 feels it briefly good on the legs to a-little to climb
 ‘After having descended (off) for all that time, it is nice for the legs to
 be climbing a little.’

The data-set includes quite a few examples with “measure phrases”, which appear to combine equally easily with *zijn* and *hebben*. The examples in (19) feature phrases which explicitly measure a distance in meters or kilometers: there were 7 such examples with *zijn* (cf. 19a), and 9 with *hebben* (cf. 19b). Note that (19a) with *zijn* comments on the state of the speaker’s body after the descent, just as (18b) with *hebben* does,²⁸ which might make the analysis proposed here, in terms of construing an event in two different ways, seem rather elusive. Another perspective on this, however, is that language users are extremely flexible in the way that they construct and convey interpretations. The “change of state” and “type of act” construals may not be determined by certain (linguistic) contexts, but they can be seen to be allowed by, or compatible with them.

- (19) a. *Na 2 kilometer zo afgedaald te zijn waren*
 after 2 kilometer like.this off.descended to be were
*mijn handen bevroren*²⁹
 my hands frozen
 ‘After having descended 2 kilometers like this, my hands were freezing.’
- b. *Na duizend meter afgedaald te hebben*
 after thousand meter off.descended to have
wordt de sneeuw op vierduizend meter
 becomes the snow at four.thousand meter
*hoogte weer wat minder.*³⁰
 height again a.bit less
 ‘After having descended a thousand meters, the snow gets to be a bit
 less again at four thousand meters.’

Other examples explicitly mention the reference object with respect to which the subject referent descends. These objects too provide a measure of the difference value, such as some variant of *de berg* “the mountain” (3 with *zijn*, 3 with *hebben*), a phrase involving *treden* “steps (of a flight of stairs)” (4 with *zijn*, 1 with *hebben*), or some variant of *de trap* “the stairs” (9 examples with *zijn*, 7 with *hebben*), as in (20).

²⁷<http://forum.allesamerika.com/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=40493&start=40>, accessed March 21, 2014.

²⁸And conversely, (20b) with *hebben* could be argued to be similar to (18a) with *zijn*.

²⁹<https://www.twcdevoorsprong.nl/mv.htm>, accessed March 21, 2014.

³⁰<https://www.ralphtuijn.nl/wmview.php?ArtID=229>, accessed March 21, 2014.

- (20) a. *Na een flink aantal trappen afgedaald te zijn*
 after a good number stairs off-descended to be,
kwamen we aan bij het gebied The Rocks
 came we on at the area The Rocks
*en de haven*³¹
 and the harbor
 ‘After having descended down a great number of stairs, we arrived
 at the area The Rocks and the harbor.’
- b. *Na een paar trappen afgedaald te hebben,*
 after a few flights.of.stairs off.descended to have
kwamen we in het hart van de Maersk Kimi: de
 came we in the heart of the Maersk Kimi the
*reusachtige machinekamer*³²
 enormous engine.room
 ‘After having descended down a few stairs, we entered the heart of
 the Maersk Kimi: the gigantic engine room.’

As a final set of examples, let us consider cases with prepositional phrases conveying the endpoint or starting point of the event, cf. (21):

- (21) a. *Na weer afgedaald te zijn naar Bédoin*
 after again off.descended to be to Bédoin
*startte ik direct met de vierde beklimming.*³³
 started I directly with the fourth climb
 ‘After having descended down to Bédoin, I immediately took on the
 fourth climb.’
- b. *Na eerst afgedaald te hebben naar Valkenburg*
 after first off.descended to have to Valkenburg
*kon de Heldentocht beginnen.*³⁴
 could the Hero.ride start
 ‘After having descended down to Valkenburg, the heroic ride started.’

The set with *zijn* included almost 20 of such prepositional phrases (cf. *naar Bédoin* in 21a), while there were only two examples with *hebben*: one with *naar* (cf. 21b) and one with *tot* ‘to, until’. Examples with *zijn* also included prepositional phrases with *van* ‘from’ and *vanuit* ‘from, out of’. These specifications of the starting point or end point may well make the change of state aspect of these motion events so prominent, that the use of *zijn* is preferred in these cases.

³¹<https://www.maritiem-officier.nl/2011/05/excursie-op-de-maersk-kimi/>, accessed March 21, 2014.

³²<https://vlasjes.blogspot.nl/>, accessed March 21, 2014.

³³https://montventouxvirus.blogspot.nl/2011_06_01_archive.html, accessed March 21, 2014.

³⁴<https://stevensbart.blogspot.nl/>, accessed March 21, 2014.

6. Conclusion

This paper has provided evidence for the viability of the traditional notion of “change in the subject referent” as an explanatory principle for Dutch auxiliary choice, focusing on particle verbs of motion. It is often assumed that these verbs automatically “trigger” the use of *zijn*. While this quite plausibly applies to a great many of these verbs, this paper has zoomed in on attested examples of three verbs that exhibit more flexible behavior: *omdraaien* “turn around”, *weglopen* “walk away”, and *afdalén* “descend (off)”.

These three verbs were shown to occur with both *hebben* and *zijn* in constructions that involve roughly similar motion events. All the examples involved a subject changing state: change of orientation with *omdraaien*, change of location with *weglopen*, and change of elevation with *afdalén*. The examples with *omdraaien* and *weglopen* were telic, yet occurred with both *hebben* and *zijn*. In the case of *afdalén*, atelic as well as telic examples were found with both perfect auxiliaries. The paper has argued that auxiliary choice with motion verbs can be accounted for in terms of different construals of a motion event: as a (telic or atelic) change of state (*zijn*) or a (telic or atelic) type of act (*hebben*).

The Internet data here involve examples that not all speakers may consider to be part of the standard language, perhaps especially the counterfactual cases with *weglopen*. They were discussed because they represent the “irrealis shift”: the susceptibility of intransitive change-of-state verbs in counterfactual contexts to take *hebben* (or its cognates in other languages). To me, the data presented here sound quite natural, and they occurred in contexts that were highly informal at times, but did not strike me as particularly regional, for example.³⁵ Further study should examine to what extent the data discussed here represent a language change and/or regional, social or stylistic variation. In any case, while the attested data presented here might appear to complicate the picture of auxiliary choice in Dutch somewhat, it seems to me that they provide a richer empirical basis, which can only lead to more adequate generalizations.

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend a warm word of thanks to the two anonymous reviewers, as well as to Ronny Boogaart, Wim Honselaar, Ton van der Wouden, and Joost Zwarts, for their comments on an earlier version of this paper. I would also very much like to thank the organizers and participants of the symposium on “Perfect auxiliaries in the languages of Europe” (Copenhagen, June 9–10, 2016) for their questions and encouragement.

³⁵That there are regional (dialectal) differences in the use of *hebben* and *zijn* is shown, for example, in de Rooij (1988).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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