

Special GLOW memories

A tribute to Henk van Riemsdijk

GLOW 46, Vienna 2023



LE CABERLOT



1982

About this tribute

- ❖ This tribute contains commendations, appreciations, testimonials, and memories that have been informally provided to me by people who have worked with or know Henk. I have organized them in different groups (some comments were split in parts), and I corrected typos.
- ❖ The list is somewhat accidental and should not be seen as exhaustive in any way. If you would like to add to this tribute, simply add a comment on this feed on the GLOW website.
- ❖ Thanks to everyone who contributed!

Susi Wurmbrand

Contributors

- ❖ David Adger
- ❖ Artemis Alexiadou
- ❖ Elena Anagnostopoulou
- ❖ Sjef Barbiers
- ❖ Josef Bayer
- ❖ Adriana Belletti & Luigi Rizzi
- ❖ Jonathan Bobaljik
- ❖ Hans Broekhuis
- ❖ Anna Cardinaletti
- ❖ Guglielmo Cinque & Iliyana Krapova
- ❖ Norbert Corver
- ❖ Jeroen van Craenenbroeck
- ❖ Mojmír Dočekal
- ❖ Martin Everaert
- ❖ Liliane Haegeman & Hedwig De Pauw
- ❖ Anders Holmberg
- ❖ Riny Huijbregts
- ❖ Harry van der Hulst
- ❖ Winfried Lechner
- ❖ Anikó Lipták
- ❖ Pino Longobardi
- ❖ Gillian Ramchand
- ❖ Ian Roberts
- ❖ Bożena Rozwadowska
- ❖ Tobias Scheer
- ❖ Viola Schmitt
- ❖ Tim Stowell
- ❖ Craig Thiersch
- ❖ Lída Veselovská
- ❖ Edwin Williams
- ❖ Susi Wurmbrand
- ❖ Sarah Zobel

What people say about Henk

- ❖ graciousness
- ❖ passion and support for theoretical linguistics
- ❖ life-long support
- ❖ support (~20 times)
- ❖ a silent but formidable force for good
- ❖ extremely loyal
- ❖ also a nice person
- ❖ wonderful sense of humor and friendliness
- ❖ decisiveness, quick and firm solution to problems
- ❖ saw more in me than I did myself
- ❖ central and lasting role in the careers of past and current generative syntacticians
- ❖ friendship
- ❖ ambassador for our field
- ❖ very good in bringing the field together
- ❖ most loyal colleague imaginable
- ❖ pleasure to work and talk with
- ❖ scientific/linguistic entrepreneur
- ❖ initiative, and foresight, and know-how
- ❖ really made a difference
- ❖ untiringly promoted our field

And then there are also lots of these comments

- ❖ I associate GLOW mainly with fine dining
- ❖ made sure that no food and specifically wine would go to waste, accordingly, I was a drunk audience member at several GLOW afternoon sessions (probably not the only one)
- ❖ The fact that you could deal with a long day deliberating on the selection of the talks, because at the end of the day, there would be proper food and drinks
- ❖ lots of wine and good food
- ❖ excellent lunches and dinners
- ❖ invited ... to various events (and dinners!)
- ❖ made a point of going to every talk (despite the wine at lunch)
- ❖ I also remember a GLOW conference at Lund university ... brought several bottles of Dutch “jenever” to the conference to celebrate...

Henk as a teacher and mentor

David Adger

I first met Henk when I was visiting the Netherlands, and I went to Tilburg to give a talk in, I think, 1996, which was very half-formed, but he was his usual gracious self to a young researcher, and pointed out some very relevant facts from German and Dutch about (adpositional allomorphy) that were germane to the approach I was trying to develop to VSO orders (the approach collapsed, but the facts very much remain, as always!).

I learned that same graciousness was such a part of Henk's way of being when I was on the GLOW board years later, and we all benefitted hugely from his advice.

Elena Anagnostopoulou

Henk gave me the opportunity to pursue a career in linguistics at a time where this was most needed. At very early stages, when I was learning how to think and write, he taught me that I need to learn how to trust the opinion of others and to start believing in myself. I deeply admire Henk for the opportunities he gave to many talented linguists, even when they had personalities that obscured their talents, for the interest he showed to interesting linguists, regardless of whether they were successful by common standards or not, for the passion and support he has always shown to theoretical linguistics, for his insights and his deep and detailed empirical and theoretical work. I will always remember Grammatikamodellen and Henk's group as my first home in linguistics.

Sjef Barbiers

He is the doctor father, doctor grandfather or doctor uncle of many syntacticians in The Netherlands. He must have written countless letters of recommendation for people who needed jobs or funding. I am one of them, and I am very grateful for that.

Norbert Corver

Henk promoted my career in several ways. He was my syntax teacher during my undergraduate studies at Tilburg university, my boss when I was his student assistant, my PhD supervisor at Tilburg University. Furthermore, he gave me my first job (again Tilburg university). And he has always supported me throughout my career. In short, life-long support.

Contributions to teaching / education: (i) The successful Van Riemsdijk & Williams MIT Press book 'Introduction to the theory of grammar;' (ii) he was the Doktor-Vater of many, many PhD students. Many of them occupy important chairs in linguistics in various places in the world; (iii) Henk co-organized or helped with the organization of several summerschools.

Jeroen van Craenenbroeck

Even though Henk was never officially involved in any of the projects I worked on or jobs I had, I always felt I had his support: one of the first invited talks I gave was for Henk's group in Tilburg; the talk led to a jointly organized conference on "Alternatives to cartography"; the conference led to a Mouton book on the same topic.

I've had the pleasure of attending and presenting at one of the famous workshops at Villa Salmi, of serving on the GLOW-board for eight years, and of taking part in setting up and serving on the board of the Van Riemsdijk Foundation. Over the past 20+ years, Henk has consistently felt like a supportive presence in the background, a silent but formidable force for good.

Martin Everaert

Henk was the one who helped me get a grant from the Niels Stensen Foundation. And that helped me a lot.

When I applied for a Royal Academy scholarship, not for Tilburg (where I worked at that time), but for Utrecht, he didn't hold that against me.

Henk is extremely loyal to the persons he worked with.

Winfried Lechner

There are few people who teach syntax like Henk. In class, I vividly remember Henk working as an architect who laid foundations, designed a complex structure, showed us how all the parts are in connection and made us see explanations and theories that resembled cathedrals in their beauty.

Bożena Rozwadowska

I owe a lot to Henk in my professional development. I met Henk in Amherst at UMass in the late 80s during my PhD studies there. Henk was a visiting professor there for a few months. When I returned home to Europe, Henk introduced me to the generative linguists of the Old World. I remember my first GLOW conference in Budapest back in 1988. I was a novice in those circles at that time and Henk helped me move around and meet famous linguists during the unforgettable conference party on the boat. Henk also kindly agreed to visit the University of Wrocław at those times, which was a true privilege for us. Then we ran into each other on several linguistic occasions. Those numerous encounters were very inspiring linguistically and enjoyable socially. Henk's wonderful sense of humor and friendliness made all these events real treats.

Viola Schmitt

Henk basically introduced me to GLOW. This also meant that I usually had excellent lunches and dinners — it was part of Henk's taking care of younger people to invite them to very good restaurants. (I therefore associate GLOW mainly with fine dining.)

Henk also always made sure that no food and specifically wine would go to waste, accordingly, I was a drunk audience member at several GLOW afternoon sessions (probably not the only one).

Tim Stowell

As a teacher and mentor, Henk put the Netherlands on the map as one of the best places in the world to study and conduct research in generative grammar. Probably every Dutch generative linguist can trace their educational pedigree back to Henk, either directly or recursively—as a student of Henk’s, or as a student of a student of Henk’s, or as a student of a student of a student of his. When Henk was in Amsterdam, it was the place to go; when he moved to Tilburg, it became the new Dutch Linguistics mecca. He was also the co-author of one of the first syntax textbooks devoted primarily to government-binding theory, which many of us used in mid- and late 1980s wherever syntactic theory was taught.



Tim Stowell cont'd

On a more personal note, I owe a huge debt to Henk for role he played in my own career as a young linguist, as a graduate student at MIT and later as a junior faculty member at UCLA. Henk was a role model for me on how to function as a professional scholar. He continually encouraged me, helping me to build confidence in my work, and often assisted me with suggestions and ideas, and with invitations to participate in various workshops, conferences, and summer schools that he organized. I also admire and appreciate Henk for his sense of humor, his love of life, his generosity, and his friendship.

Craig Thiersch

One of his admirable characteristics has always been his decisiveness, to implement a quick and firm solution to problems. At the beginning of my tenure at Tilburg University, I was working with the late Hans-Peter (Hap) Kolb to write a sample parsing program illustrating the Principles and Parameters approach (a “GB parser”), along with members of other department who were also dealing with natural language processing. This was in the days long before internet and general digital awareness, so the University hemmed and hawed about providing the means of working on the project (we were allowed some limited access to a central computer), so finally Henk just went out and bought 10 PCs for the staff with his own money and sent the bill to University. The Director of the Computer said (in Dutch), that he was “astounded by this turn of events!” If I recall correctly the University finally paid up, and we completed our “X-bar parser” in various versions. (I still have one of the original 10 PCs upstairs as a memento.)

Lída Veselovská

Henk certainly made my professional life easier and helped me in my career. In the 90s, when I decided I have to go to spend a year in Venice, to finish my PhD dissertation and attend some interesting courses, I applied for ERASMUS funding. I I was told I got the money, but a week before my departure I learned that they gave me the money for one month only. I left anyway, hoping that something will happen. What happened was that I met Henk and talking about it, he proposed that I could do some some data collection and formating for the SYNCOM project.



Lída Veselovská cont'd

He said I could get 4000 Dutch guildens for it - which would allow me to survive in Venice for a semester - before I manage to arrange another grant. Thinking about it from time to time now - I certainly did the job for the money, but without Henk I would not get it and I would not be able to stay in Venice and finish my dissertation in time, which would make my life more difficult. In fact, I do not recall any official signing of any contract, so I do not know how he arranged it. He just gave me an envelope with 4 large banknotes. I have never seen such banknotes in my life and neither have the Italian bank officers - they were checking the print and colors in a huge catalogue before they decided they can change it for Italian money.

Susi Wurmbrand

Henk supported me and my research throughout my career.

It all began here in Vienna. He and Martin Prinzhorn were (and still are) my mentors in Vienna who got me into grad school.

Henk always saw more in me than I did myself, and I am very happy to have followed his leads—everything I did in connection with Henk turned out to be a success.

Henk promoted my book, invited me to Tilburg, the verb cluster work group, to Villa Salmi (and allowed Leo to tag along), got me involved with the JCGL, and now GLOW. Thank you!

Henk as a promoter for generative linguistics

Artemis Alexiadou

Henk nominated me in 99 for the GLOW newsletter editor position and then I climbed the GLOW ladder to become its chairperson in 2005 :-)

Please extend my best wishes to Henk for his support of GLOW as an advisory member for such a long time and for the influence he has had in our field following especially the creation of GLOW, I believe it was crucial at the time GLOW was founded to support a particular development within generative grammar, and am sure more senior people will have tons to say about that.

Sjef Barbiers

I think Henk has played a central and lasting role in the careers of past and current generative syntacticians in The Netherlands and beyond. He was the one who made generative grammar a prominent and respected research field in The Netherlands.

Without him, GLOW would have not, or no longer existed, and I recall from my time as the chair of the GLOW board that he offered annually to step back as the advisor of the board, an offer that we always gently but determinedly refused, as we were very much aware that his role and wisdom are vital to GLOW.



Sjef Barbiers cont'd

He is also very good in bringing the field together in other ways, e.g., as the motor of the Syntax Companion. In all of this he keeps up the highest scientific standards, one of the most important things.

So, I would like to thank Henk for all this great work from which the field and we all have benefited so much! Last but not least, I would like to add that Henk is a nice person. It is always a pleasure to work and talk with him.

Adriana Belletti & Luigi Rizzi

We are very grateful for all you did for GLOW and, more generally, for generative linguistics in Europe and elsewhere over the years. I (Luigi) have very distinct memories of the Green Ideas Blown Up workshop in Amsterdam (1976), the immediate antecedent of GLOW. This was my first international conference, where a whole world opened up to me and I sensed for the first time the existence of a growing European community of generative linguists.



Adriana Belletti & Luigi Rizzi cont'd

And then we (Adriana and Luigi) will never forget the time of the Pisa GLOW conference in 1979, and the Pisa Lectures, which Chomsky delivered at the Scuola Normale Superiore immediately after the conference. That was a magic moment in our intellectual lives and for the field. We will always keep vivid memories, among many other occasions in that period, of the time we shared with you and Pieter Muysken, when you guys came all the way from the Netherlands to help us with abstract selection. A visit which culminated with an unforgettable trip to Chianti, and other equally memorable dinners at Sergio, Pisa's best restaurant, where you invited us most of the times. Then, a few weeks later, Noam's lectures, as well as his interactions with a quickly growing community of generative grammarians in Europe, changed the field forever. A community which you have done so much to establish and consolidate over almost 50 years, through GLOW and many other initiatives.

Jonathan Bobaljik

For me, Henk and GLOW have been strongly associated for 30+ years now, with deep discussions in fantastic venues - GLOW of course, in that it has long been the only regular conference with long enough talk slots to get into topics in some detail, but Henk more specifically, and more personally, in the many one-off events he has participated in organizing that I've been fortunate to be a part of. I was especially honored to have been invited by Henk (and colleagues) to various events (and dinners!) as I was just starting out - it was quite a thrill to be recognized and to travel to interesting places and to have stimulating interactions with colleagues who were previously just (big) names on papers.



Jonathan Bobaljik cont'd

Even though I wasn't the most obvious choice for the Dutch-Hungarian study group meetings on Verb Clusters in Öttevény and Budapest, Henk and colleagues were kind enough to have me tag along and to earn my keep as a discussant with an outsider's perspective on the talks (even if my attempt, at the end of the multi-day event, to provide a summary of what seemed to me to be interesting open questions, was met with one linguist opening the question period by saying his theory had answered all of them already). Meetings of this sort have been among my favourite gatherings: a small group all focussed around a narrow topic with enough common ground to be able to go deep into the topics in discussions in wonderful settings long into the night. This kind of thing has been for me a highlight that I associate strongly with invitations from Henk, and which I have always looked forward to.

Henk in Budapest



Josef Bayer

I met Henk back in the mid-1980s, when he gained a fulminant influence on linguistics in the Netherlands. For me, he opened the door to international generative linguistics more than anyone else. Henk knew everyone, and everyone knew Henk. Important contacts developed through him almost automatically. Without Henk's support, without GLOW and without The Linguistic Review, my 1984 article "Comp in Bavarian Syntax", would never have gained a foothold in the discussion so quickly. A tremendous boost in my beginning career.



Josef Bayer cont'd

Henk's own work on Swiss German and the comparative view he advocated set standards that proved extremely fruitful for me. I was invited by him time and again to workshops, and I even managed to land a couple of GLOW-talks over the years. Henk was always a selfless mediator and supporter. The friendship with him that developed and intensified over the years was supported by an important convergence of our musical interests. Henk's extraordinary musicality, refined taste, and especially his love of opera established relationships from which I still draw to this day.

Running into Henk at the right time was one of the luckiest circumstances in my life as a linguistic novice. I cannot thank him enough for that.

Hans Broekhuis

Dear Henk,

On this occasion, your international importance for Generative Linguistics and Germanic Linguistics is highlighted: in addition to the defining role you played within GLOW, everyone knows of your role in founding, for example, the Wiley Blackwell companions and the Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics.



Hans Broekhuis cont'd

Less well known is your national significance for the Netherlands. Your department at Tilburg University has been a breeding ground for great talents who are still shaping the face of generative linguistics in the Netherlands (and elsewhere). I myself would not be who I am today without you and the Tilburg Modal of Grammar Group; I am grateful that you dared to entrust me with the Syntax of Dutch project initiated by you and Anneke Neijt; I am also grateful for your continued support of the project to this day. I hope that the second edition of this work, to be published in early 2026, will come even closer to the vision you had for this syntax in the early 1990s.

Anna Cardinaletti

I heartily thank Henk for his long-standing support during my first GLOW conferences, the GLOW summer school in Salzburg, the EuroTyp project, and many many other occasions.

Generative linguistics in Europe and in Italy would have been very different without Henk.

Guglielmo Cinque & Iliyana Krapova

Dear Henk,

a grateful and heartfelt thank you for all you have done to establish a flourishing European generative community of linguists, your warm friendship, and your generous financial support for many scientific activities, with particular regard to Eastern Europe (and without which the meetings of the Formal Approaches to South Slavic and Balkan Languages would not have been possible).

Norbert Corver

At the level of research: many important contributions, including his work on PPs, free relative clauses, Case assignment, split topicalization, etc.

At the level of scientific infrastructure: (i) GLOW, (ii) The Syntax Companion Series, (iii) the Comprehensive Grammar Resources series (Amsterdam University Press), (iv) The Linguistic Review, (iv) The journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics, etc.



Norbert Corver cont'd

As a young assistant professor, Henk invited Chomsky to give a lecture at the University of Amsterdam. In short: a 'scientific/linguistic entrepreneur' at a young age!

Henk's 'entrepreneur-ship' is also clear from the title of the book Henk edited together with Riny Huijbregts: *The Generative enterprise*. Henk coined this phrase!

Let's not forget the Villa Salmi workshops at his home in Stoppe d'Arca!

And last but not least: The Van Riemsdijk Foundation, which he founded.

Jeroen van Craenenbroeck

What has Henk done for generative linguistics?

I can only interpret this as a rhetorical question :-) Henk has put generative linguistics on the map in the Netherlands, and Europe more broadly. He has always demanded the highest academic standards both from himself and from others, thus ensuring that generative linguistics earned its place as a respected scientific discipline. Henk also always had an eye for young talented newcomers in the field, who he actively supported and promoted.

Martin Everaert

I hope my recollection is correct that he [Henk] approached my supervisor Henk Schultink (before he was my supervisor) about his GLOW ideas (I think, Henk didn't even have his PhD yet). [...] He was looking for support because at that time Schultink was the only professor who supported generative grammar in the Netherlands. Henk told me that he kindly turned him down ("first get your PhD", or something like that), but that didn't hold him back, of course.

Anders Holmberg

When I was a PhD student and in the early years of my career as a linguist there weren't that many conferences in generative linguistics, but there was *GLOW*, the undisputed, shining highlight of the year, with Henk van Riemsdijk as the initiator and leader. I'm amazed, now as much as ever, at the initiative, and foresight, and know-how of the young Henk van Riemsdijk (together with his colleagues) to establish the organisation GLOW, with the great annual colloquium as its main event, in that period of time when generative grammar was only just beginning to find its feet in Europe, in a few spots.



Anders Holmberg cont'd

Then, a couple of years later, came the Pisa Lectures and LGB, and the ball started rolling, with GLOW becoming the main annual event in generative linguistic research in the world.

You really have made a difference, Henk! Of course, you have done many other things than starting and leading GLOW. As a rule, if Henk is involved, we know it's going to be something excellent and something that will promote collaboration and progress in generative linguistics, like the great Blackwell Companion to Syntax, and the Eurotyp clitics project, and more recently, the Van Riemsdijk Foundation. This is not to mention the contribution all your articles and books have made to our understanding of language and the human mind.

Riny Huijbregts

I've known Henk from the early days since he traded Paris and Richie Kayne for Amsterdam and Simon Dik to continue his linguistics studies in the Netherlands. Clearly, Henk has never let himself be constrained by conceptual or geographical boundaries. I'm glad he made the change. Soon we met and he became a warm friend almost instantaneously, and later he was the most loyal colleague imaginable. In no time he was naturally seen as the generative enterprise incarnate. Holland became the birthplace of GLOW. Henk was GLOW and conversely. But Henk was much more than GLOW. I am most grateful he introduced me to Noam in the mid 70s, made sure I was invited to the Pisa lectures in 1979 and gave me a hard time by "volunteering" me for a presentation in the afternoon program of Noam's Pisa Lectures. That was not without consequences. Later that year, I stayed with him in Cambridge, got an office in Building 20, worked with him and afterwards we became close colleagues in Tilburg until he decided to move on to Villa Salmi in Arezzo, Italy. Tilburg became well-known and at times even enjoyable because Henk invited the most wonderful figures in the field, Ken Hale, Jean-Roger Vergnaud and Maria-Luisa Zubizarreta, and Joe Emonds .



Riny Huijbregts cont'd

He has been an active ambassador for our field. GLOW was an important project but he also made early exploratory linguistic expeditions to Seoul and Harbin and many other places to expand GLOW when this was not at all common. Much, much later I had the pleasure of making a quite adventurous trip with him. We were to attend some Batumi summer school on language, logic and computation. I don't know why. This was under the Shevardnadze presidency around 2000 and not all of Georgia was quite a safe place. We arrived at Tbilisi airport in the middle of the night. In those days there were no ATMs in Georgia and credit cards were useless most of the time so that we were forced to carry our cash money all over us. Two sitting ducks for everyone to spot. It was the only time I saw Henk not in his usual calm. We were in a hurry to reach Batumi some 400 km further to the west. So we had to grab a taxi, found a guy we didn't know we could trust or not, negotiated some price, had to buy diesel fuel up front, and decided to take the risk. The talk was supposed to be about a typologically relevant syntactic representation of paths in terms of direction and location. After a 7- or 8-hour drive, not at all comfortable and sick from diesel fumes, we finally arrived at our location in full accordance with the path predicted from our theory only to learn that some Amsterdam mathematicians travelling by regular bus to the same conference had been ambushed and robbed a couple of days before. Those were the days.

Harry van der Hulst

I met Henk in the 70s when we were both taking a two-week course in Finnish (in Amsterdam). He had long hair, to his shoulders. We've always had a nice relationship and met often during the EuroTyp project (1990-1995). He and Jan trusted me with TLR that they had started (and which I'm still doing after 30+ years).



Harry van der Hulst cont'd

A specific example of his impact on the field was that in the seventies, Teun and I would go to Amsterdam, where in the linguistics department there was this metal filing cabinet with off prints (often mimeograph, in purple) of papers that Henk brought with him from MIT, or that he got through his contacts.

We would find stuff and photocopy it.

I have a very nice memory of participating in a workshop a few years ago in his 'mansion', which was a great mix of hard work and 'the good life' (with lots of wine and good food). Speaking of living the dream...he created a space in Italy to do exactly what he wants to do, and with that he continues to have a significant influence on the field.

Anikó Lipták

I would like to thank Henk for everything he has been doing for GLOW and generative linguistics at large. His support (as a scientist, but also financially) has been so important for us for so many decades. I truly wish he was always around whenever generative scholars meet. I always miss him at conferences where he is not present.

Pino Longobardi

I have had reminiscences about GLOW and about Henk's capital engagement in it since the 1978 edition, and probably I met him there for the first time, although my first real contact with him was during the organization of the one in Pisa early in 1979 (that of the Pisa lectures), when I was a graduate student, and then from a visit to MIT by both of us at the same time in the Fall 1979. Henk at that time was 'generative linguistics' in Europe, or I should probably say that 'generative linguistics in Europe' was Henk. Even with all the developments over the past 45 years it seems to me that without Henk there would be so much less of generative grammar in Europe now, so that we should all regard him as an alter conditor, a 'second founder' of the discipline no less than Richie Kayne was for all of us Europeans.

Gillian Ramchand

As Chair of GLOW between 2017 and 2022, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Henk and all he has done for our linguistic scientific community. He has led by example in pursuing and supporting curiosity driven research on the human faculty of language for over fifty years. GLOW would not exist without him, but his influence on the field and to the younger generations coming up goes way beyond that. What I love most about Henk as a syntactician and a mentor is his tenacious desire for Figuring Hard Things Out, while maintaining his ability to see the big picture. Thank you Henk!

Ian Roberts

I think it could be argued that Henk has done more to promote generative linguistics in Europe than anyone other than Richie Kayne and Luigi Rizzi. It's very hard these days, with the means of communication and dissemination of papers and talks that we now have available, to realise how important the GLOW meetings and the GLOW Newsletters were back in the 80s.



Ian Roberts cont'd

I remember this particularly as a grad student in the States in the early 80s: the only way to get in touch with and get to know what was happening in Europe, other than through personal contacts, was through GLOW. For example, my first contact with Henk, Luigi, Richie, Teun Hoekstra, Hubert Haider and others was at the GLOW Summer School in Salzburg in 1982. I'm sure that my experience is typical for people of my generation, but from then until now, Henk has untiringly promoted our field in a way that I really don't think anyone else has.

Bożena Rozwadowska

On Henk's recommendation I was elected GLOW board member representing Eastern Europe for three terms (2001-2007), which again gave me an opportunity to attend GLOW conferences and board meetings quite often and to remain a member of the small world of generative linguists. My GLOW experience culminated in the 33rd GLOW conference organized by the University of Wrocław in 2010, which itself was a memorable and adventurous experience for everybody (because of the Smolensk air disaster just before the conference and the cancellation of flights after the conference due to the eruption of the volcano in Iceland). Henk could not come to Wrocław at that time and fortunately avoided these dramatic unexpected circumstances.



Bożena Rozwadowska cont'd

I have known Henk for almost 40 years and this long friendship has been very important not only for me but also for my family. Also, one of my first MA students Krzysztof Migdalski ended up in the PhD program at Tilburg University and worked with Henk and his colleagues, which strengthened the links between Tilburg and Wrocław.

Tobias Scheer

At some Glow, maybe Budapest, not last time but the time before, I remember ranting to Henk against generativism being full of ivory tower people who believe they are the crown of linguistics since mankind came on earth, and therefore don't need to bother with the world outside of the generative bubble. He said that's a mistake because they will eat us up, slowly. This was when generative grammar was still ruling everywhere and especially in the US, i.e. before anti-Chomskyan voices were given weight and institutional power, like “cognitive” linguistics. Henk said we must all go to the general media and explain, show that we are not crazy math people, ungrounded in real language(s).

Tim Stowell

As an organizer and institution builder, he played a critical foundational role in the creation of GLOW in the 1970s and in turning it into the best Linguistics conference in the world in the 1980s and beyond. Henk's influence can be seen in GLOW's tradition of thematic parasections, and the search for parallels between syntax and phonology in analytical strategies and theoretical proposals. Also in the development of the GLOW summer schools in the 1990s and beyond, Henk played a key role as an organizer and a teacher.

It's hard to imagine GLOW without him playing a leading role either out in front or behind the scenes as an eminence grise.



Tim Stowell cont'd

As a researcher, he has made lots of seminal theoretical contributions on topics such as the structure of prepositional phrases, free relatives, adjective phrases, and syntactic amalgams; on several aspects of the theory of syntactic movement (especially the role of what used to be called NP movement) and the theory of syntactic distinctive features in relation to cross linguistic variation in syntactic case. (It seems arbitrary to mention just these topics.)

It is not widely known that, long before the development of his theory of distinctive features for cross-linguistic variation in nominal case systems, Henk worked out a distinctive feature theory for variation in the expression of facial hair on the human male. This was accompanied by original hand-drawn illustrations (a picture of this seminal contribution may follow). If I remember correctly the facial hair theory was supposed to use features to distinguish full beards, goatees, rabbinical beards, and fu manchus from each other, maybe also different moustaches from each other...

Henk at GLOW & special (GLOW) memories

Norbert Corver

- ❖ 1985: The first GLOW conference I attended: Brussels. It was in the last year of my undergraduate studies; Henk told me: “You should go there!”
- ❖ 1998: The GLOW conference at Tilburg university. The general topic: Features. You can imagine who suggested this topic: Henk, of course! He loves features! (Morris Halle was one of the invited speakers)
- ❖ I also remember a GLOW conference at Lund university. Henk brought several bottles of Dutch “jenever” to the conference; this was for celebrating the appearance of the Syntax of Dutch volumes.
- ❖ GLOW 1994: my first GLOW talk. And it was a truly wonderful event. In VIENNA!

Jeroen van Craenenbroeck

My very first GLOW: GLOW 25 in 2002 in Amsterdam. I gave a joint talk with Marjo van Koppen. We were both second-year PhD-students and nervous as hell, and I can still picture the front row of the audience, as it was occupied by all the Big Names I had been reading papers and books from over the last two years: Kayne, Cardinaletti, Poletto, Pollock, Cinque, etc.

What made an even bigger impression on me, though, was Henk's talk in the evening—there was a linguistic evening program, can you imagine :-)—in which he urged all of us to take our linguistics more seriously (I'm paraphrasing of course): in the early days, debates were fought and then they were settled. If I could show that your analysis violated the rules of the Barriers-framework, well then, sorry, but your analysis was wrong. “Nowadays,” I can still hear Henk say “people write things like: ‘In this paper I adopt the LCA.’, whereas in their next one, they use rightward movement.” The whole talk made a lasting impression on me: we should be consistent in our thinking, and make a genuine effort at furthering the theory and understanding linguistic phenomena at a deep level, and not be concerned with scoring quick publication points left and right.

Martin Everaert

Favorite GLOW meeting Paris, 1982: I was on the reserve list, and the first time I dared to ask a question (in a packed room).

Special GLOW memories: The fact that you could deal with a long day deliberating on the selection of the talks, because at the end of the day, there would be proper food and drinks, because all the organizers knew that that was something that was a must, having Henk in the committee.

Liliane Haegeman & Hedwig De Pauw

There are many memories, all of them good, many linguistic but also many non linguistic, but somehow the one that Hedwig and I picked up on first was the three of us in Apicius in Ghent... it is a long time ago, but it showed that for Henk 'life is more than linguistics', and it is that which made him a great linguist, a great human being and a wonderful friend.

Viola Schmitt

Henk made a point of going to every talk (despite the wine at lunch).

It is very entertaining to sit next to Henk during talks. He has two reactions to not-so-great talks: growling (not very loudly), basically like a bear (bad talk), looking like a a disoriented cat (very bad talk).

Craig Thiersch

One of his admirable characteristics has always been his decisiveness, to implement a quick and firm solution to problems.

On a lighter note, illustrating the same decisiveness: we were at a restaurant in Nijmegen after a day at one of the GLOW conferences. Tim Stowell and David Pesetsky had been arguing loudly (much to the distress of the restaurant owner, who came over to our table to shush them). But the arguing continued, this time over nothing more than who should finish a carafe of wine. As the argument grew more heated (much wine had already been consumed), Henk looked annoyed, grabbed the carafe, downed the wine, and said “Problem solved!”.

Ian Roberts

Special GLOW memories—Salzburg 82.

In fact I didn't actually attend the Summer School because I didn't have any money. I only went to the informal Tagung at the end of it, where I gave my first-ever talk (I hitch-hiked there from England).

Greetings

Josef Bayer “Henk will find out”

Handwritten musical score for piano and voice. The score is written on two systems of staves. The first system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for the piano accompaniment. The second system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a grand staff for the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Thanks, dear heart! ha - - be Dank." The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *ff*. There are also handwritten annotations in pencil, including "453", "2 1", "5 4 3 2 1", "ff", "p", "fis", and "8".

Thanks, dear heart!
ha - - be Dank.

Greetings

- ❖ Henk, I hope we will keep seeing you at generative events. — **Sjef Barbiers**
- ❖ Thank you, dear Henk! – **Josef Bayer**
- ❖ With our very best wishes for whatever plans will attract you in the future — **Adriana Belletti & Luigi Rizzi**
- ❖ Vielen Dank, Henk! — **Jonathan Bobaljik**
- ❖ With love and deep admiration — **Hans Broekhuis**
- ❖ Please send to Henk my best wishes! — **Anna Cardinaletti**
- ❖ Henk, heel veel dank voor alles wat je gedaan hebt voor GLOW en voor de generatieve taalkunde. En natuurlijk ook voor mij persoonlijk gedurende al die jaren! DANK en lieve groeten!! — **Norbert Corver**

Greetings

- ❖ Many greetings from Brno — **Mojmír Dočekal**
- ❖ We can't thank you enough, Henk! — **Anders Holmberg**
- ❖ All my very best wishes and also my deep gratitude in recognition of all that Henk has done. Best (and sorry I can't be there) — **Ian Roberts**
- ❖ Give him my warm greetings — **Tobias Scheer**
- ❖ Congratulations and best wishes — **Tim Stowell**
- ❖ Dear Henk, it was great meeting you at the different GLOW events! I wish you all the best! — **Sarah Zobel**

Greetings

Beste Henk,

Ik wil je bij dit afscheid van de GLOW-board enerzijds het allerbeste toewensen, en anderzijds ook de gelegenheid nemen om je te bedanken voor de steun en het vertrouwen die ik de afgelopen jaren van jou heb mogen ontvangen. Je bent nooit officieel betrokken geweest bij een project waar ik deel van uitmaakte of een baan die ik had, maar toch leek je altijd aanwezig in de achtergrond, als een supporter aan de zijlijn. Henk has my back, realiseerde ik me vaak, en dat was een erg geruststellende gedachte. Je afscheid bij GLOW is uiteraard geen afscheid tussen ons, want als board member van de Van Riemsdijk Foundation hoop ik enerzijds dat we elkaar nog regelmatig tegen het lijf zullen lopen, maar anderzijds wil ik ook graag je werk, je visie, en je passie verderzetten en delen met toekomstige generaties taalkundigen. From here on out, I have your back.

Hartelijke groet

Jeroen

Bożena Rozwadowska

Many thanks, dear Henk for your friendship and for introducing me and my students to the wonderful world of generative linguistics in Europe! Below I attach a picture from Tilburg with Henk and me at the party after Krzysztof Migdalski's PhD defence.



Edwin Williams

I recall two weeks one summer in the early 1980s in Amherst, when Henk and I hammered out the final draft of Introduction to the Theory of Grammar. For 8 hours a day Henk sat at the dining room table, and I lay on the floor with a slow healing back. By unlucky coincidence it was the same two weeks that the person I had hired to scrape and paint the house got around to the job, so for 8 hours a day it was Henk saying "Ok, now what about Chapter 10, section 2, what do we need to do there", with the ceaseless scrape scrape scrape in the background, and me on my back flipping through pages trying to keep up. No computers, just paper.



Edwin Williams cont'd

In the evening we made pasta. We were both just then exploring the possibilities of pasta, nothing fancy, no fresh pasta, no truffles--that came years later, and is a different story--but still, a new world of food so engaging and diverting that in the end we had no choice and dedicated the book to pasta. Henk tried to get me to eat a "warm scallop salad", where "warm" meant "not really cooked", and I couldn't bring myself to do it (again, years later I did). If there was some way to bring it off, I would rent that house back from its present owner for 2 weeks, rehire that painter, re-injure my back, and try to talk Henk into doing the whole thing over again. **I love this guy!**

We all do!
Thank you, Henk!