All-clefts and NPI-licensing in Dutch
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All-clefts are syntactically a type of pseudo-cleft that involve the word *all*, and semantically have a meaning component that is similar to exclusive *only*:

(1)  All John ate was a pizza.  ≈ John only ate a pizza.

All-clefts have received some attention from descriptive and historic perspectives (Collins 1991:32–34; Bonnelli 1992; Kay 2002; Traugott 2008), but have not been subject to a formal semantic analysis. The current paper is a first attempt at such a formalization.

The semantic relation between all-clefts and *only* is correct as a first approximation, but there are some important differences between the two. For example, for *only*, focus-marking can indicate a smaller scope, as in (2a). This is not the case for all-clefts, as shown in (2b).

(2)  a. I read all kinds of magazines, but I only read [French]$_F$ books.

   b. I read all kinds of magazines, but all I read is [French]$_F$ books.

Both clefts and *only* carry inferences of exhaustivity at some level of their meaning. In recent work, it-clefts and exclusive particles have been given a parallel analysis in terms of min and max components (Velleman et al. 2012, Coppock and Beaver 2011). I claim that in the case of all-clefts the source of the exhaustivity inference is *only* – and it can be given a semantics like that – as tests show that just as for *only*, exhaustivity is at-issue (as opposed to it-clefts).

The study of all-clefts has cross-linguistic relevance: for example Dutch has an NPI modal verb *hoeven* ‘must’ that is licensed in all-clefts, but not in the scope of universal quantifiers in other positions. Descriptive Dutch literature (e.g. Hoeksema 2008) has not made the link with all-clefts, but has observed that *hoeven* is licensed with a universal quantifier when it has a “low quantity reading”. In work on *only* in English, this type of reading has been called the ‘mirative’ function of *only* (Beaver and Clark 2008, Zeevat 2009).

(3)  a. This is all you have to do.  ⇒ the amount you have to do is lower than expected

   b. You only have to do this.  ⇒ the amount you have to do is lower than expected

Recent literature has confused the difference between the scale that min and max supply (that accounts for scalar readings of *only*), and the mirative information ordering. The Dutch case shows clearly how these are separate: Dutch all-clefts only have a reading of non-scalar *only*, yet do have a mirativity effect. I claim that *hoeven* is licensed in the scope of exclusives, and the mirative function is preserved in all-clefts. This resolves the puzzle why *hoeven* is only licensed with certain universal quantifiers, and not others. Simultaneously, it clarifies the function of the two types of scales in the semantics of exclusive particles.