

A DUTCH BIGRAM NETWORK

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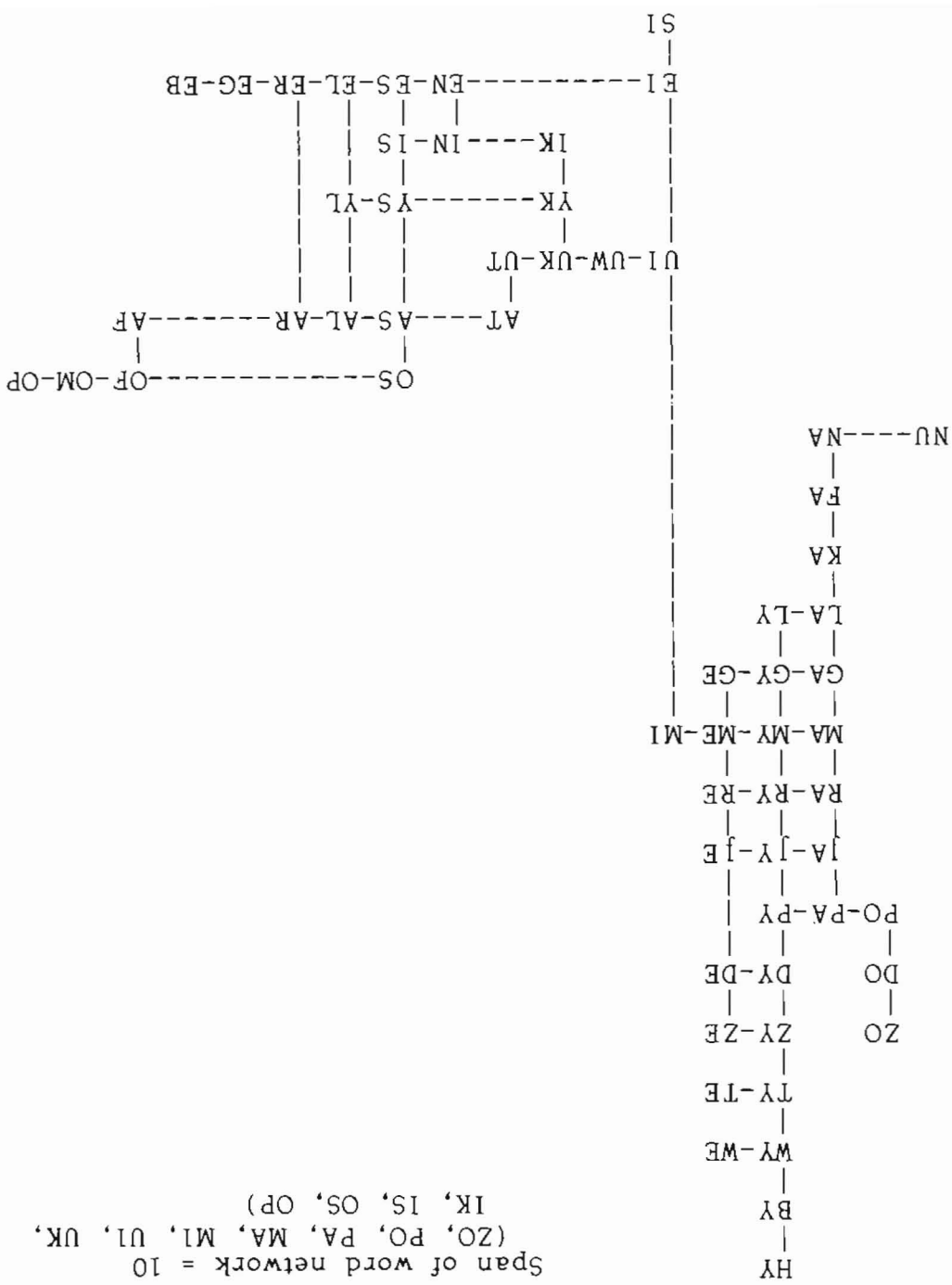
Onze Taal (Our Language) is the monthly publication of Onze Taal, a Dutch association dedicated to the correct use of the language. In the article "Het netwerk van Nederlandse bigrammen" (The network of Dutch bigrams) in the July/August 1985 issue, W. Dierick constructs a 61-word network of Dutch two-letter words. His inspiration for this bit of wordplay was the corresponding 38-word network of English two-letter words given in A. Ross Eckler's Word Recreations (Dover, 1979). However, he takes the author to task for including initialisms such as TV and TB.

Dierick states that he confines himself to common Dutch words, avoiding several that would be unfamiliar to the general reader (AM wet nurse, IJP elm, IJM beekeeper, IJF taxus tree). All his words are, in fact, found in Dutch dictionaries, and should be understandable without dictionary look-up to the average child finishing grammar school.

There is considerable controversy as to whether the Dutch IJ is a vowel or a vowel followed by a consonant. For obvious reasons, Dierick prefers to regard it as a vowel, counting it as a single letter. To emphasize this choice, the letter is transliterated as Y in the word network on the next page. (In Dutch dictionaries Y is used only in foreign words assimilated into Dutch.)

Brief definitions of the words in the network are given below (starred words are names for the notes of the scale):

AF ready	ES ash tree	MI mi*	TE at
AL already	FA fa*	MY me	TY tide
AR sleigh	GA go	NA after	UI onion
AS axle	GE thou	NU now	UK child
AT ate	GY thou	OF or	UT ut*
BY at	HY he	OM around	UW yours
DE the	IK I	OP up	WE we
DO do*	IN in	OS ox	WY we
DY thigh	IS is	PA pop	JA yes
EB ebb	YK calibra-	PO potty	JE you
EG harrow	tion	chair	JY you
EI egg	KA old hag	PY monk coat	YL thin
EL measure	LA drawer	RA yardarm	YS ice
of length	LY lee	RE re*	ZE she
EN and	MA mom	RY row	ZO so*
ER there	ME me	SI ti*	ZY she



Span of word network = 10
 (Z0, PO, PA, MA, M1, U1, UK,
 IK, IS, OS, OP)