Expressing possession with *have* and *be*: affected possession structures in Flemish[1][2]

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Contents

1. Introduction: The Nominative-Dative Alternation in Possessive *Have* and *Be*

1.1. Latin

➢ The nominative-dative alternation in possessive *have* and *be* has long been observed:
Belvin & Den Dikken (1997), in the line of Benveniste (1966) and others (e.g. Freeze 1992), observe that for a.o. Latin:

  o *have* has a nominative Possessor subject (1) with an accusative Possessee;
  o *be has* a dative Possessor subject (2) with a nominative Possessee.

(1) a. <u>Marcus</u>   librum   **habet**.
         Marcus.NOM[3] book.ACC   has
         'Marcus has a book.'

(2) a. Liber   **est** <u>Marco</u>.
         book.NOM   is   Marcus.DAT
         Lit. 'A book is to Marcus.'

➢ Analysis proposed by Belvin & Den Dikken (1997):
  o underlyingly, the structure is a small clause headed by Agr
  o Possessee in [Spec,AgrP]

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[3] Abbreviations: NOM = nominative, PRT = particle, DAT = dative, IO = indirect object, S = subject, SC = small clause, ACC = accusative, COP = copula and PASS = passive.

- o   Possessor is dominated by a PP which is the complement of AgrP
- o   *have* is spelled out when the preposition dominating the Possessor incorporates into Agr and this incorporated constituent, Agr and P, moves to F (1b).
- o   a preposition which regularly assigns dative case to its complement can no longer do so when it is incorporated (cf. also Řezáč (2008) and Alexiadou et al. (2014)), so when it incorporates into Agr, its complement has to receive case elsewhere, namely in SpecFP (where nominative is assigned).
- o   *be* is spelled out if the preposition remains adjacent to its complement and does not incorporate into Agr and the functional head F (2b).

(1) b. FP ... (2) b. FP

'Marcus librum habet'   'Liber est Marco'
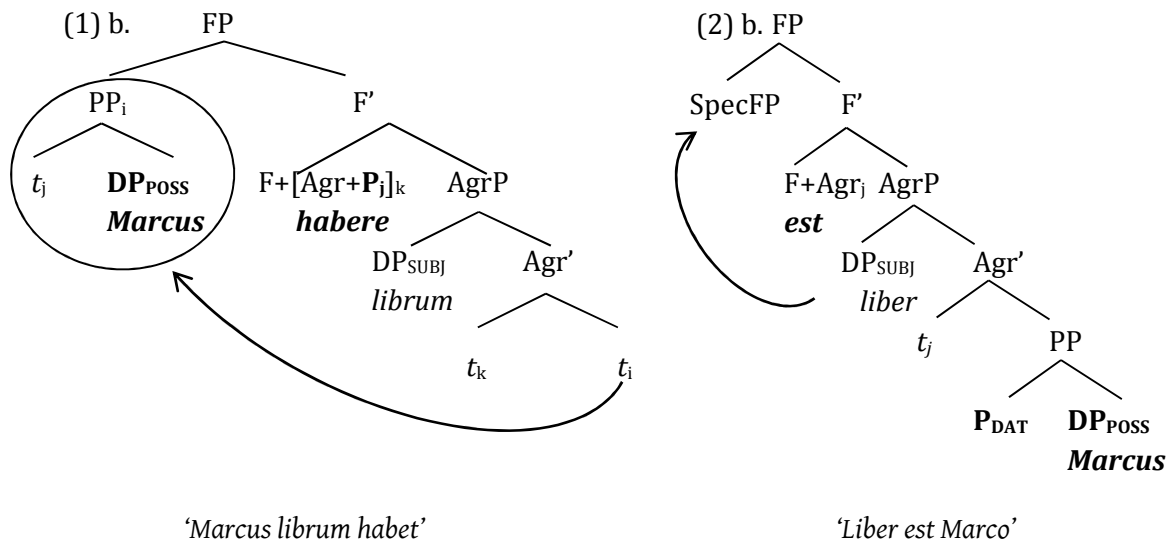
1.2. Possessive *have* and *be* structures in Netherlandic (Heerlen) Dutch

➢ Similar *have – be* alternation involving possession exists in Heerlen Dutch (Broekhuis & Cornips, 1994):

(3) a. <u>Hem</u>   **is**   de   fietsband   lek.
         him.DAT is   the bike tire   punctured

     b. <u>Hij</u>   **heeft**   de   fietsband   lek.
         he.NOM has   the bike tire   punctured
         'He has a punctured bike tire.'   (B&C: 180, (22c) and (21c); my paraphrase)

- o   the Possessor in the *be*-structure is a dative (3a) (*hem*).
- o   the Possessor in the *have*-structure is a nominative (3b) (*hij*).
- o   clausal possession arises between a dative indirect object (IO) and the direct object (DO) of the same predicate (~Agr).
- o   the possessed state (*de fietsband lek*) can be analysed as a small clause.
- o   Possessor in both the *have*- and the *be*-structure is interpreted as an underlying IO.

➢ Broekhuis & Cornips' (1994) analysis of these sentences is in line with the common analysis of *have* as the spell-out of *be*+preposition/case (a.o. Benveniste 1966, Kayne 1993, Den Dikken 1997):

(4)   a. [$_{TP}$ *hem*.DAT$_j$ [$_{T'}$ **is**$_i$ [$_{v2}$P t_j [$_{v2'}$ t_i [$_{v1P}$ [$_{v1'}$ t_i [$_{SC}$ *de fietsband lek*]]]]]]]]
      b. [$_{TP}$ *hij*.NOM$_j$ [$_{T'}$ **heeft**$_i$ [$_{v2}$P t_j [$_{v2'}$ t_i [$_{v1P}$ [$_{v1'}$ t_i [$_{SC}$ *de fietsband lek*]]]]]]]]

  - *Be* can assign dative case:
    - the Possessor (underlying IO), a structural dative, can retain its case even in the inverted possessive datives (3a-4a).[4]
    - *be* is incapable of accusative case assignment.
  - *Have* is an undative verb and as such cannot assign dative case.
    - *have* as an undative verb is able to assign accusative case to its direct object (DO).
    - the *have*-Possessor has to raise to the subject position to receive (nominative) case (7b-8b).

➢ Note: Broekhuis & Cornips only discuss structural case assignment
  - dative case is associated with the IO position
  - accusative case is associated with the DO position.
  - consequently, when stated that only *have* is capable of accusative case assignment, what is meant, is that it can license a DO.

2. Flemish Event Possession (FEvP)

2.1. Description of the data
➢ Possessive dative of Heerlen Dutch is not available in Flanders (van Bree 1981): one could argue that even though cross-linguistically possessive *have* and *be* are associated with nominative-dative alternations, this does not extend to Flemish.

➢ However, Flemish can express 'the possession of an event' ('something has happened to me'), with *have* and *be* (= Flemish Event Possession (FEvP)).
  - Matrix introduces the argument that 'possesses' the event expressed in the embedded clause[5].
  - Two 'alternating' varieties in Flemish[6] (5a-b):
    - *hebben* ('have'; (5a))
    - *zijn* ('be'; (5b)).

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[4] In (8a) *hem* is analysed as a dative. Nonetheless, *hem* is syncretic for dative and accusative, so analysing it as morphologically dative is not straightforward. For the analysis of FEvPs this complication is not necessarily problematic since the *be*-FEvP does not allow *hem* as matrix subject, whether it is accusative or dative:

   (i)   **Hem* is nog <u>geweest</u> dat zijn laptop gestolen was.

        he.ACC/DAT is PRT been that his laptop stolen was

[5] The Possessor in the FevPs could arguably also be called an Experiencer. I use the term Possessor to emphasize the link it has with other clausal possessive structures.

[6] Note on the geographical spread of FevPs: the *have*-FEvP is accepted throughout the Netherlands and Flanders (mostly the variety with resumptive pronoun '*het*' is common); the *be*-FEvP is accepted only by some speakers of Flemish in their *tussentaal* (lit. 'in-between language'), regiolectal and/or dialectal registers. Some speakers accept both patterns and alternate between them without attaching a difference in meaning between the two.

- Note that the meaning of the *have*-FEvP and that of the *be*-FEvP is the same.

(5) a. <u>We</u>   hebben **(het)**   nog   **gehad**   dat   onze   valiezen   plots   openscheurden.
      we.NOM   *have*   *it*   *PRT*   *had*   *that*   *our*   *suitcases*   *suddenly*   *open-ripped*

    b. <u>We</u>   zijn   **(* het)**   nog   **geweest**   dat   onze   valiezen   plots   openscheurden.
      we.NOM   *are*   *it*   *PRT*   *been*   *that*   *our*   *suitcases*   *suddenly*   *open-ripped*
     'We've had it happen to us that our suitcases suddenly ripped open.'

➢ **Puzzle**: why is there no regular nominative-dative alternation in the Flemish event possessives (both the *have*-and the *be*-matrix subject are nominative)?

➢ **Hypothesis**: the matrix subject in the Flemish event possessive does not only possess the event but is also affected by it. This interpretation forces it into a higher clausal position where it surfaces as a nominative in both the *have*- and the *be*-variety.

➢ **Main points of argumentation:**
  - o Properties of the FEvP: Affectedness of the matrix subjects
  - o The syntax of the FEvP can be related to that of the Flemish External Possessor (FEP); especially with regards to sensitivity towards aspect/argument structure.
  - o This shared Affectee-property and its sensitivity to the structure to which it is assigned is syntactically encoded. This syntactic encoding results in nominative case assignment.

2.2. FEvPs and the possesive *have* and *be* alternations

➢ Difference between the Heerlen Dutch sentences and the Flemish FEvPs:
  - o The Heerlen Dutch sentences involve a <u>small clause Possessee</u>, not a full clause Possessee.
  - o The Heerlen Dutch sentences express the <u>possession of a state</u>, not the possession of an event.

➢ However, the availability of the DO pronoun *het* <u>only</u> with the *have*-FEvP ((5) = (6)) can be explained by Broekhuis & Cornips' (1994) proposal:
  - o *have* can assign accusative (5a, 6a).
  - o *be* cannot assign accusative (5b, 6b).
  - o *het*: analysed as an accusative DO pronoun coreferential with the extraposed embedded *that*-clause (7).

(6) a. <u>We</u>   hebben **(het)**   nog   **gehad**   dat   onze   valiezen   plots   openscheurden.
      we.NOM   *have*   *it*   *PRT*   *had*   *that*   *our*   *suitcases*   *suddenly*   *open-ripped*

    b. <u>We</u>   zijn **(* het)**   nog   **geweest**   dat   onze   valiezen   plots   openscheurden.
      we.NOM   *are*   *it*   *PRT*   *been*   *that*   *our*   *suitcases*   *suddenly*   *open-ripped*
     'We've had it happen to us that our suitcases suddenly ripped open.'

(7) [we.NOM [<u>hebben</u> [(*het.ACC$_i$*)][nog gehad [dat [onze valiezen] plots openscheurden$_i$]]]]

→ FEvPs, too, exhibit a nominative-dative alternation.

➢ Flemish has a dative
   o It is not the absence of the dative case in the Flemish nominal case paradigm that results in the matrix subject of the *be*-sentences being nominative (deflection).
   o Flemish has a fragile class of verbs and adjectives that show a contrast between the 3rd.sg.f. pronouns *eur* and *ze* ('she/her'):
      ▪ *Eur* and *ze* can both be used for the accusative.
      ▪ In some dative contexts *eur* seems to at least have a strong preference over *ze* (8).
      ▪ So, *eur* can be both accusative and dative, whilst *ze* cannot express dative.

(8)　't　Staat　**eur**　**/*ze**.
　　　it　stands　her.DAT　/her.ACC
　　　'It suits her.'

> → The matrix subject of the *be*-FEvP could be a dative.

   o This dative pronoun is ungrammatical as matrix subject of the FEvPs:

(9) a. * <u>Eur</u>　　heeft　nog　**gehad**　　dat　　eur　valiezen　plots　　openscheuren.
　　　　 she.DAT　has　PRT　had　　　that　　her　suitcases　suddenly　open-ripped

   b. * <u>Eur</u>　　is　　nog　**geweest**　dat　　eur　valiezen　plots　　openscheuren.
　　　　 she.DAT　is　　PRT　been　that　her　　suitcases　　suddenly　open-ripped
　　　　 'She has had it happen to her that her suitcases suddenly ripped open.'

2.3. Interim conclusion

> ➢　Flemish FEvPs show a deviation from the regular *be-have* alternation in possessive sentences.
> ➢　The analysis presented by Broekhuis and Cornips (1994) does not suffice to explain the nominative in the matrix subject of the *be*-FEvPs (and presumably the *have*-FEvPs where the same syntactic operation could be present without it overtly showing).
> ➢　B&C's analysis does help explain the unavailability of a DO pronoun in the *be*-FEvP.

2.4. Flemish event possessives' matrix subjects are affectees
2.4.1. Affectees
➢ = semantic role assigned to the argument affected by the semantic content of the constituent it is associated with.
➢ a diagnostic for Affectees is the ban on dead arguments (Hole 2006:387-388):[7]

(10)　't　overkomt　**mijn pé**　　　da　zijn uis　　nu　　moe　　verkocht　wordn.
　　　it　happens.to　my　grandfather　that his　house　now　has.to　sold　　PASS
　　　'It happens to my grandfather that his house now has to be sold.'
　→ only possible if the grandfather is still alive.

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[7] Affectee diagnostics include the felicity of sentences where affection of the argument is semantically illogical, sentences with inanimate arguments, and the matching pronoun test (which, as pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, also shows that the possessive pronoun in the embedded clause is derivationally linked to the matrix subject).

➢ when applying the 'ban on dead Possessor' test to the *have-* and *be*-FEvP we can see that the Possessor has an Affectee role:

(11) **Mijn pé**   heeft /is nog gehad/geweest da   Jada me   zijnen fiets   rondreed.
      my   grandfather   has /is PRT had /been   that Jada with his   bike   around.rode
      'My grandfather has had it happen to him that Jada rode around on his bike.'
      → only possible if the grandfather is still alive.

2.4.2. Applicatives[8]

➢ In my analysis, I will assume that Affectees are introduced into the structure in a specialized functional projection ApplicativeP (ApplP).

➢ Note: not all applied arguments are necessarily affected by an entire event. As such, an analysis with a light verb instead of an Applicative phrase could also be possible. At this point, I remain agnostic about which is preferred.

➢ Crucially, I will assume that applicatives can be added onto the structure at different points of the clausal spine which relate them to different constituents. Pylkkänen (2000, 2002, 2008) identifies two applicative positions:
   o   a low ApplP between VP and DO, attaching an individual onto a direct object
   o   a high ApplP between VoiceP and VP, attaching an individual onto a verbal event (Pylkkänen 2000:197).

➢ Rivero (2009): even higher ApplP:
   o   above TP
   o   semantically relates the applied argument to the whole clause (12).
   o   e.g.: Bulgarian involuntary state constructions (13)

(12) **Na Ivan mu   se** "etjaxa   knigi.
     P Ivan 3Sg.Dat Refl read.Imp.3Pl   book.Pl
     'John[sic] {was in the mood/desired} to read books.'   (Rivero 2009: 147, (1b))

(13)
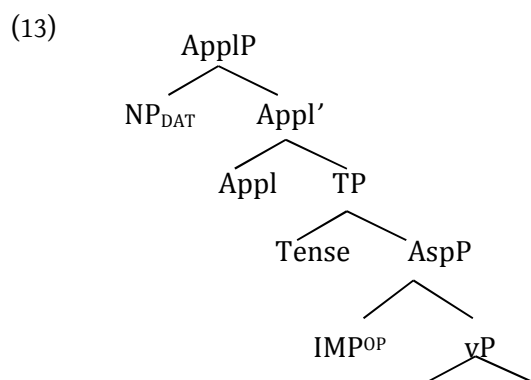
                                                   (based on Rivero 2009: 147, (3)) [9]
   o   This is the position that is most likely compatible with the FEvP's matrix subjects' positions, since it also seems to scope over the entire TP.[10]

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[8] For recent discussion of the syntax of applicatives, see Pylkkänen (2000, 2002, 2008), Kim (2011, 2012) and Rivero & Arregui (2012).

[9] ImpOP = imperfect(ive) operator (needed for the involuntary state construction) (Rivero 2009: 148).

3. A Similar Structure: Flemish External Possession (FEP)

3.1. The Flemish External Possessor: what?

➢ Internal doubling Possessor (Hendriks 2010):

(14)   Pieter   zijnen   stoel
        Peter   his.M.SG   chair
        'Peter's chair'

➢ For speakers of Dutch, the 'internal' doubling Possessor DP (Hendriks 2010) does not allow an adjunct to come in between the Possessor and the Possessee:

(15) [**Pieter   zijn   stoel**] viel <u>dan   net</u> omver
        Peter   his   chair   fell   then   just   over
        'Peter's chair fell over just then.'

➢ But in a number of Flemish dialects and regiolects, an external Possessor where the Possessor is separated from its Possessee by an adjunct, is allowed (Haegeman 2011; Haegeman & van Koppen 2012; Haegeman & Danckaert 2013; Buelens & D'Hulster forthc.):

(16)   Het is jammer dat   [**Pieter**] <u>dan   net</u> [**zijn   stoel**] omver gevallen was.
        it is too bad   that   Pieter   then   just   his   chair   over   fallen   was
        'It is too bad that Pieter's chair had fallen over just then.'

    o Possessor and Possessee do not form a constituent (cf. intervention of clausal-scope adjunct '*dan net*').
    o Possessor has argument properties (e.g. complementizer agreeement).
    o The Possessor in this pattern does not reside in a DP-internal position; instead the Possessor occupies a higher position in the clause (see also Landau 1999; Hole 2004, 2006; Lee-Schoenfeld 2006; Deal 2011, 2013, forthc.).

➢ Proposal of very high ApplP(Haegeman 2011; Haegeman & Danckaert 2013):
    o When related to subject[11]: external Possessor scopes over VoiceP (Haegeman & van Koppen 2012).
    o Affectee properties (ban on dead Possessor) (Haegeman 2011; Haegeman & Danckaert 2013):

(17)   Ik vertelde dat [**mijn pé**]   jammergenoeg [zijn   fiets]   gestolen was.
        I   told   that my   grandfather   unfortunately   his   bike   stolen   was
        'I told that my grandfather's bike unfortunately had been stolen.'
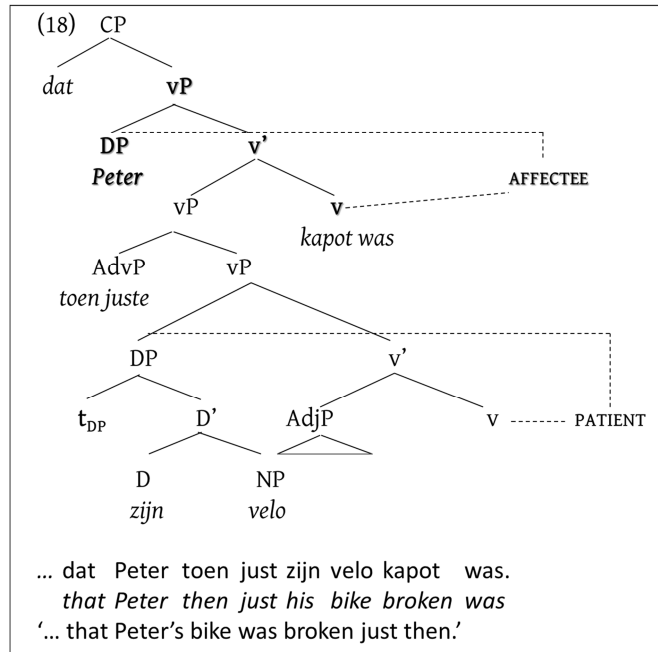   → only possible if the grandfather is still alive.

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[10] For more on applicatives, see Kim (2011; 2012), Pylkkänen (2002), and Rivero & Arregui (2010).

[11] (16) is an example of a subject-related external possessor in Flemish. However, there is also an object-related external possessor (ii) and a predicate-related external possessor (iii) (Haegeman 2011):

    (ii) 't Moest lukken dat Hanne **[Marie]**<u>toen just</u> **[eur   velo]** geleend   had.
         *it had-to   happen that Hanne   Mary   then   just   her.f.sg   bike.**DO**   borrowed   had*
         'It so happened that Hanne had borrowed Mary's bike just then.'

    (iii) 't Moest lukken dat   het   **[Marie]**<u>toen   just</u> **[eur   verjaardag]**   was.
          *it   had-to   happen that   it   Mary   then   just   her.f.sg   birthday.**PRED**   was*
          'It so happened that it was Mary's birthday just then.'

Analysis:

(18)   CP

```
    CP
   /  \
 dat   vP
      /   \
    DP     v'
   Peter  /   \
        vP      v------- AFFECTEE
       /  \    kapot was
     AdvP  vP
  toen juste /  \
           DP    v'
          /  \  /   \
       t_DP  D' AdjP   v ------- PATIENT
            / \  velo
           D   NP
         zijn  velo
```

... dat Peter toen just zijn velo kapot was.
that Peter then just his bike broken was
'... that Peter's bike was broken just then.'

3.2. FEP: Thematic restrictions on the verbal structure

➢ The FEP-pattern is sensitive to certain verbal argument structures:
- o   It is degraded in transitive sentences (18)
- o   It is even more degraded in agentive structures than in less agentive transitives (18a, b and c are on a scale of acceptability)

(18)   a. *?? ... dat [Karel]   toen just [zijn moeder] **een appel gegeten   had**.
          that Karel   then just his   mother   an apple eaten   had
    '... that Karel's mother had just then eaten an apple.'

transitive; agent subject
b. ?   ... dat [Karel]   toen just [zijn moeder] **een taart gekregen   had**.
          that Karel   then just his   mother   a   pie   received   had
    '... that Karel's mother had just then received a pie.'
transitive; recipient subject

c. ?   ... dat [Karel]   toen just [zijn moeder] **de griep   had**.
          that Karel   then just his   mother   the flu   had
    '... that Karel's mother had the flu just then.'
transitive; patient subject

3.3. FEvP: Aspectual sensitivities

➢ Both varieties are accepted with perfective aspects:
(19)   a. Ik **heb** 't nog **gehad** dat ik naar huis moest omdat de school dicht was.
    I   have it PRT had   that I to   home must   because the school   closed was
    'I've had it happen to me that I had to go home because the school was closed.'

b. Ik **heb**[12] nog **geweest** dat ik naar huis moest omdat de school dicht was.
I have PRT been that I to home must because the school closed was
'I've had it happen to me that Ihad to go home because the school was closed.'

➤ The imperfective iterative and habitual aspect are only allowed with *have*-EvPs:

(20)   a. Ik **heb** 't <u>nu wel meer</u> dat ik naar huis moet omdat de school dicht is.
I have it now PRT more that I to home must because the school closed is
'It happens to me quite often now, that Ihave to go home because the school is closed.'

        b. *Ik **ben** <u>nu wel meer</u> dat ik naar huis moet omdat de school dicht is.
I am now PRT more that I to home must because the school closed is

➤ Other imperfective aspects are not grammatical in any of the EvP structures:

(21)   a. * Ik **had** 't <u>gisteren</u> dat ik naar huis moest omdat de school dicht was.
I had it yesterday that I to home must because the school closed was

        b. * Ik **was** <u>gisteren</u> dat ik naar huis moest omdat de school dicht was.
I was yesterday that I to home must because the school closed was

3.4. FEP and FEvP

➤ <u>Similarities:</u>
  o Affected Possessor
  o Possessor is nominative
  o Sensitivities to the structure which the Possessor is involved in
  o Suggestion: the nature of the Possessee, which is stative in the FEP and eventive in the FEvP, may be the source of the different kinds of tense and (viewpoint) aspectual restrictions.

➤ Note: while this section focuses on the commonalities between the FEvP and the FEP, there are also a number of differences that still need to be accounted for.

  o The reason for the sensitivities towards the structure in which the Possessors are involved.
  o The optionality of the ApplP in the nominal possession differs from the FEvP where the matrix subject has to move to SpecApplP.
  o Many other properties of the FEP (cf. Haegeman 2011; Haegeman & Danckaert 2013; Buelens & D'Hulster forthc.), also seem particular to the FEP.

4. Analysis: Affected possession in the clause[13]

➤ Recap: Belvin & Den Dikken (1997:154 (7b-a)):

(22)   a. *have:* $[_{FP} [_{PP} t_j DP_{Poss.}]_i [_{F'} [_F F+[_{Agr} Agr+P_j]_k] [_{AgrP} DP_{Subj} [_{Agr'} t_k [_{PP} t_i]]]]]$
        b. *be:* $[_{FP} Spec [_{F'} F [_{AgrP} DP_{Subj} [_{Agr'} Agr [_{PP} P_{dat} DP_{Poss.}]]]]]$

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[12] The verb *be* often has as preferred auxiliary *have* in the dialects that accept the *be*-FEvP. The auxiliary *be* is also possible, though.

[13] These are a tentative analyses; I do not have anything to say about what exactly the relationship is between the subject position and the applicative position (movement? binding?).

(23) a. <u>We</u>   hebben **(het)**   nog   **gehad**   dat   onze valiezen   plots   openscheurden.
      we.NOM   *have*   *it*   *PRT*   *had*   *that*   *our suitcases*   *suddenly*   *open-ripped*

   b. <u>We</u>   zijn **(* het)**   nog   **geweest**   dat   onze valiezen   plots   openscheurden.
      we.NOM are it   *PRT*   *been*   *that*   *our*   *suitcases*   *suddenly*   *open-ripped*
   'We've had it happen to us that our suitcases suddenly ripped open.'

➢ Following B&DD's analysis, I assume that the difference between the *be*-FEvP and the *have*-FEvP lies in whether the prepositional element moves to the functional head F or not:
  o If P moves to the functional head, the incorporation of Agr, F and P spell out *have* (24)
  o If P does not move, *be* is spelled out (25).
I further assume that:
  o FEvPs are underlyingly AgrPs with full clause propositional Possessees.
  o There is some feature related to the Affectee semantics of the FevPs which projects an ApplP/vP between CP and FP; this feature attracts the Possessor to its Spec and assigns it nom. case.
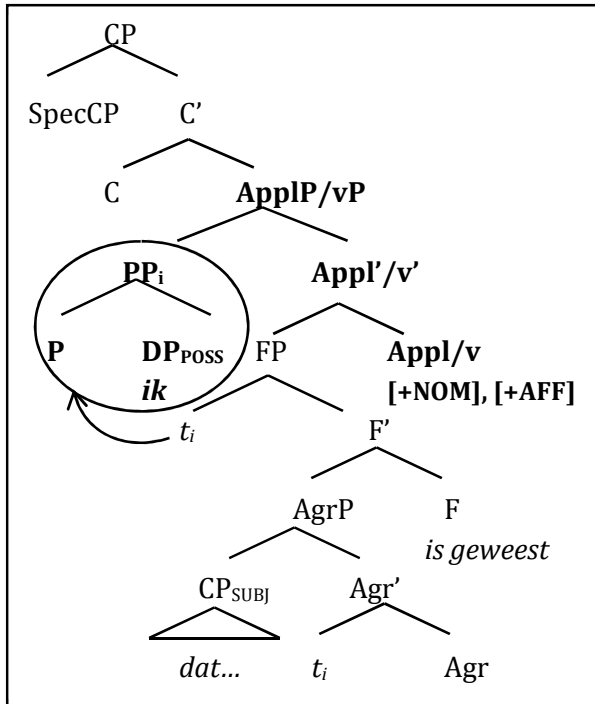
<u>*have*-FEvP</u>[14]

(24) a.
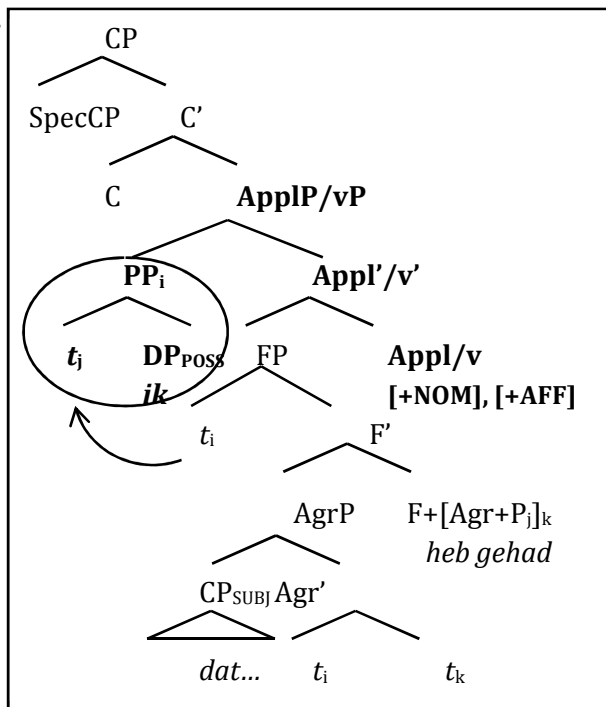
     b. Ik   heb   gehad   dat...
       I.NOM   *have*   *had*   *that*
       'I have had it happen that...'
       (Lit. 'I have had that...')

  o Possessor in SpecFP receives nominative case (cannot receive dat. from P+Agr+F)
  o *have* assigns accusative case to its complement in SpecAgrP → possible to insert accusative DO pronoun (*het*).

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[14] Flemish, like Standard Dutch, has OV word order, except when the object is a CP (Sybesma 2002: 151)

➤ *be*-FEvP

(25) a.

```
                    CP
               ╱         ╲
          SpecCP          C'
                      ╱        ╲
                     C          ApplP/vP
                           ╱              ╲
                        PPᵢ               Appl'/v'
                      ╱      ╲          ╱        ╲
                     P      DP_POSS   FP        Appl/v
                            ik      ╱          [+NOM], [+AFF]
                          tᵢ       ╱
                                  F'
                              ╱       ╲
                          AgrP          F
                        ╱      ╲      is geweest
                   CP_SUBJ    Agr'
                      ╱        ╱    ╲
                   dat…     tᵢ      Agr
```

b. Ik   ben geweest dat…
  I.NOM is   been   that
  'I have had it happen that…'
  (Lit. 'To me is been that…')

- o P moves to SpecFP with Possessor ➔ Agr and F spell out as *be*.
- o *Be* cannot assign acc. case to its direct object (SpecAgrP) (the CP can survive without case (cf. Stowell 1981)) ➔ insertion of DO pronoun *het* is impossible.
- o P is expected to assign dative case to the matrix subject; but Appl/v requires its Affectee feature to be checked and attracts the Possessor to its Spec. As a result, the Possessor receives nominative case and an Affectee reading.

5. Conclusions

➤ Flemish External Possessors (both those external to a possessive DP – FEP – and those external to a possessive functional predicative structure – EvPs –) are Affectees.

➤ The Affectee-Possessor structures show sensitivity towards functional material within the clause, the nature of which depending on the kind of relationship the Affectee-Possessor has with the clause:
  - o FEP: sensitivity towards the argument structure and (in)transitivity of the embedded clause.
  - o EvP: sensitivity towards the outer aspect of the matrix clause.

➤ This suggests that:
  - o external Affectee-Possessors can only be added onto particular structures;
  - o the FEP and the EvP are reflections of a similar underlying syntactic mechanism.

➤ *Be* is a 'dummy' verb spelling out the structure of the Appl/v head that cannot assign accusative case; *have* is a 'dummy' verb spelling out the structure of the Appl/v head that can assign accusative case.

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