Chapter 17

Rethinking passives: The canonical GOAL passive in Dutch and its dialects

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The main goal of this paper is empirical: it challenges the claim repeatedly found in the current generative literature (Alexiadou et al. 2014; Broekhuis & Cornips 2004; 2012) that Dutch lacks the GOAL passive. As will be shown, among other things, these claims fail to take into account the microvariation already reported in the earlier generative literature.

The paper contains a detailed discussion of the properties of GOAL passive in West Flemish, showing that, based on the standard diagnostics, the GOAL argument has acquired subject status in the passive. This conclusion thus provides a challenge for those accounts of Germanic passivization which are crucially based on the claim that English is the only West Germanic languages with a canonical GOAL passive (cf. Stein et al. 2016).

1 The typology of double object patterns

The cross-linguistic variation in passivization of double object patterns has recently been the source of renewed interest. It is sometimes claimed (most recently in Stein et al. 2016) that English is the only West Germanic language allowing for the passivization of the indirect object, illustrated in (1). The passive form in (1b) is variously referred to as the indirect object passive, the GOAL passive (Haddican & Holmberg 2012; 2015) or the RECIPIENT passive (Stein et al. 2016). I will use the label GOAL passive for convenience sake, as this term allows me to use the same term to refer to the constituent which functions as the indirect object in the active sentence and to the constituent that becomes the subject in the passive

sentence.[1] Stein et al. claim: "the recipient passive arose in English but *not in other West Germanic languages*" (2016: slide 3, my italics). German has been reported not to have a canonical GOAL passive (2) (Anagnostopoulou (2003: 70); Alexiadou & Schäfer (2013: 9); Alexiadou et al. (2014: 10) for recent discussions). The claim that, like German, Dutch lacks a canonical GOAL passive, as shown in (3), is also common in the literature, as in, for instance, Broekhuis & Cornips (2004; 2012); Broekhuis et al. (2015); Alexiadou & Schäfer (2013: 8); Alexiadou et al. (2014: 10).

(1) Haddican & Holmberg (2012; 2015)

    a. They gave the girl the ball.

    b. *The girl* was given the ball.

    c. % *The ball* was given the girl.

(2) German (Alexiadou et al. 2014: 10)

    a. Sie hat dem Mann die Blumen geschenkt.
       she has the-DAT man the flowers given
       'She has given the man the flowers.'

    b. * *Er* wurde die Blumen geschenkt.
       he.NOM was the.ACC flowers given
       'He was given the flowers.'

    c. * *Die Blumen* wurden dem Mann geschenkt.
       the.NOM flowers were the.DAT Mann given
       'The flowers were given to the man.'

(3) Dutch (Alexiadou et al. 2014: 10)

    a. Ik heb hem het eten bezorgd.
       I have him the food delivered
       'I delivered the food to him.'

    b. * *Hij* werd het eten bezorgd (door mij).
       he was the food delivered (by me)
       'He was delivered the food by me.'

    c. *Het eten* werd hem bezorgd (door mij).
       the food was him delivered (by me)
       'The food was delivered to him by me.'

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[1] I leave aside "non-canonical" passives such as the English *get* passive and the German/Dutch non- canonical *kriegen/krijgen* ('get') passives (Alexiadou & Schäfer 2013).

The goal of this paper is essentially empirical: it challenges the claim that English is the only West Germanic languages with a GOAL passive, and it challenges the specific claims made in the generative literature (Broekhuis & Cornips 2004; 2012) that Dutch lacks the GOAL passive. As I will show, among other things, such claims fail to take into account the microvariation reported in the earlier literature. The paper contains a detailed discussion of the GOAL passive in West Flemish.

2 The IO passive in West Flemish

2.1 The data: overview

As shown by the examples in (4) and (5), West Flemish (from now on WF), a dialect of Dutch and a West Germanic language, does have a GOAL passive: the definite GOAL, *Valère* in active (4a), has been promoted to become the subject of the passive sentence (4b). Similarly, the indefinite GOAL *nen student* ('a student') in active (5a) has been promoted to subject status in the passive (5b). The discussion in this section is based on my own dialect intuitions; the core intuitions are corroborated in Dhaenens (2014).[2]

(4) West Flemish

    a. dan   ze   *Valère* die   posten beloofd   een
        that.PL they Valère those jobs   promised have
        'that they promised Valère those jobs'

    b. da   *Valère* die   posten beloofd   wierd   / is
        that Valère those jobs   promised 'became'   is
        'that Valère was promised those jobs'

(5) West Flemish

    a. dan   ze   *nen student* die   posten beloofd   een
        that.PL they a   student those jobs   promised have
        'that they promised a student those jobs'

    b. dat   *(der) *nen student* die   posten beloofd   wierd   / is
        that ter   a   student those jobs   promised 'became'   is
        'that a student was promised those jobs'

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[2]A reviewer for this volume asks whether there are animacy effects for the double object pattern with verbs of motion, like those discussed by Haddican (2010). At first sight the effect is replicated in WF, but this issue needs further research.

Observe that the obligatory presence of expletive *(d)er* ('there') in (5b) is not a property specific to the GOAL passive. The obligatory presence of *(d)er* is fully in line with the patterns found elsewhere in (W)F: an indefinite or a quantified subject systematically requires that the sentence appear in the existential pattern with *(d)er*-insertion, as exemplified in active monotransitive (6a) or in passive monotransitive (6b).

(6) West Flemish

    a. dan   *(der) *drie* *studenten* dienen boek gelezen een
        that.PL there three students that   book read   have
        'that three students have read that book'

    b. dan   *(der) *drie* *studenten* betrapt zyn
        that.PL there three students caught are
        'that three students were caught'

§2.2 provides arguments to the effect that in WF GOAL passives, the GOAL argument is promoted to subject status. §2.3 shows that WF GOAL passives also comply with two specific diagnostics for Dutch passivization set out in Broekhuis & Cornips (2004; 2012), in particular with respect to the presence of an AGENT and the eventive interpretation.

2.2 Subject diagnostics for the GOAL passive

In the WF GOAL passives (4b) and (5b), the promoted GOAL acquires the syntactic properties of the WF subject, both when definite (4b) and when indefinite (5b) (for early diagnostics, cf. Haegeman 1986a,b).

2.2.1 Agreement

In the GOAL passive, the GOAL DP agrees for person and number with the finite verb and (in the relevant contexts) with the complementizer (7–8). (7a) illustrates a passive with a definite GOAL: the finite auxiliaries *wierden*/*woaren* ('were') are plural, as is the complementizer *dan* ('that'), and they thus can be seen to agree with the plural DP *de studenten* ('the students'). Neither complementizer nor auxiliary can be singular (7b–d). In (8a) agreement is triggered by the plural indefinite *drie studenten* ('three students'). Again the agreement is mandatory (8b–d). The patterns in (7) and (8) also entail that, in the passive sentences, singular agreement with the THEME *dienen bureau* ('that office') would be ungrammatical, cf. (7d) and (8d).

(7) West Flemish

    a. dan   *de studenten* dienen bureau beloofd   wierden / woaren
       that.PL the students that   office   promised were-PL
       'that the students were promised that office'

    b. * dat   *de studenten* dienen bureau beloofd   wierden / woaren
       that.SG the students that   office   promised were-PL

    c. * dan   *de studenten* dienen bureau beloofd   wierd / was
       that.PL the students that   office   promised was-SG

    d. * dat   *de studenten* dienen bureau beloofd   wierd / was
       that.SG the students that   office   promised was-SG

(8) West Flemish

    a. dan   *(der) *drie studenten* dienen bureau beloof
       that.PL   there three students that   office   promised
       wierden / woaren
       were-PL
       'that three students were promised that office'

    b. * dat   *(der) *drie studenten* dienen bureau beloofd
       that.SG   there three students that   office   promised
       wierden / woaren
       were-PL

    c. * dan   *(der) *drie studenten* dienen bureau beloofd   wierd / was
       that.PL   there three students that   office   promised were-SG

    d. * dat   *(der) *drie studenten* dienen bureau beloofd   wierd / was
       that.SG   there three students that   office   promised were-PL

2.2.2 Case

When pronominal, the GOAL DP is realised as a nominative, and, like other nominative pronouns, it allows for pronoun doubling. In (9a) the strong nominative pronoun *zie* is a doubler for the weak form *ze*. For full discussion of WF subject pronouns I refer to my earlier work (Haegeman 1990; 1992; 2004). In the Flemish regiolect, the subject of the GOAL passive can be the impersonal pronoun *men* ('one'), which is restricted to subject position of a finite clause (9b).[3]

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[3]This property cannot be tested for the dialect because the impersonal pronoun *men* is not used.

(9) West Flemish

    a. da *ze (zie)* die   posten   beloofd wierd
       that she (she) those positions promised was

       'that she was promised these jobs'

    b. Het komt veel voor dat *men* die behandeling afgeraden
       it   comes often for   that one that treatment   disrecommended
       wordt.
       is

       'It is quite common that one is advised against that treatment.'

2.2.3 Relativization

Like canonical definite subjects, relativized GOAL DPs are associated with relativizer *die* (10a) and with *dat/die* alternations (10b). These properties are characteristic of subject relativization in WF (10b), and they are unavailable in object relativization (10c). See Haegeman (1984; 1992).

(10) West Flemish

    a. Dat zijn de studenten *dien*   die   posten beloofd   woaren.
       that are the students   *die*-PL those jobs   promised were

       'Those are the students that were promised those jobs.'

    b. Dat zijn de studenten dan-k peinzen *dien*   die   posten beloofd
       that are the students   that-I think   *die*-PL those jobs   promised
       woaren.
       were

       'Those are the students that I think were promised those jobs.'

    c. Dat zijn de boeken dan-k peinzen da   / *die Valère besteld eet.
       that are the books   that-I think   that /   *die* Valère ordered has

       'Those are the books that I think that Valère has ordered.'

2.2.4 Existential patterns

When the GOAL is an indefinite nominal (5b), a numeral (11a) or a *wh*-constituent (11b), and is promoted to becoming the subject of the passive, *(d)er*-insertion is obligatory.

(11) West Flemish

    a. dan *(der) ∅ / *drie* *studenten* dienen post beloofd   zyn
       that *ter*   three students that   job promised are

       'that (three) students were promised that job'

b. Kweeten niet *wien* dat *(er)   dienen post beloofd   is.
   I know   not who that   there that   job promised is
   'I don't know who was promised that job.'

Obligatory *(d)er*-insertion is associated with indefinite or quantified subjects and not with objects.

2.2.5 Distribution

Like canonical definite subjects, the definite GOAL DP in the GOAL passive has to be linearly adjacent to the complementizer *dat* ('that')[4] in embedded clauses (12) and to the finite verb in root clauses (13). In (12a), adjuncts such as *gisteren* ('yesterday') or *verzekerst* ('probably') cannot intervene between the complementizer *dat* ('that') and the GOAL *Valère*. In (12b), the THEME *die posten* ('those jobs') cannot intervene between the complementizer *dat* ('that') and the GOAL *Valère*. In (13), the same adjacency requirement is illustrated for root clauses in which the finite verb, here the auxiliary *wierd* ('was'), has moved to C. (14) and (15) show that identical adjacency restrictions apply to definite subjects of transitive sentences.

(12)   West Flemish

   a.   dat (*gisteren / verzekerst) *Valère* die   posten beloofd   wierd
        that yesterday probably   Valère those jobs   promised was
        'that Valère was (probably) promised those jobs (yesterday).'

   b.   * dat die   posten *Valère* beloofd   wierd
        that those jobs   Valère promised was

(13)   West Flemish

   a.   Daarom   wierd (*gisteren   / verzekerst) *Valère* die   posten
        for that reason is   yesterday   probably   Valère those jobs
        beloofd.
        promised
        'For that reason, Valère was (probably) promised those jobs
        (yesterday).'

   b.   * Daarom   wierd die   posten *Valère* beloofd.
        for that reason was   those jobs   Valère promised

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[4]In WF the complementizer *dat* is obligatorily present in all embedded clause, frequently leading to doubly filled Comp positions.

(14)　West Flemish

    a.　dat (*gisteren　/ verzekerst) *Valère* die　posten beloofd　eet
       that　yesterday　probably　Valère those jobs　promised has
       'that (probably) Valère promised those jobs (yesterday).'

    b. * dat die　posten *Valère* beloofd　eet
       that those jobs　Valère promised has

(15)　West Flemish

    a.　Daarom　　　eet (*gisteren　/ verzekerst) *Valère* die　posten
       for that reason has　yesterday　probably　Valère those jobs
       beloofd.
       promised
       'For that reason, Valère probably promised those jobs (yesterday).'

    b. * Daarom　　　eet die　posten *Valère* beloofd.
       for that reason has those jobs　Valère promised

2.2.6　Non-finite clauses

The GOAL passive is available in non-finite control clauses, in which case the GOAL will be a controlled PRO (16a). The goal subject of a passive clause may undergo raising in *te* infinitives (16b).

(16)　West Flemish

    a.　Me　[PRO] dienen anderen post beloofd　te zyn, goa-se　niet
       with　　　　that　other　job promised to be　goes-she not
       veruzen.
       move
       'Having been promised that other job, she's not going to move house.'

    b.　Ze　pleegdege zie　zukken medicamenten voorengeschreven te zyn.
       she used　　she such　medications　prescribed　　　to be
       'She used to be prescribed that medication.'

2.2.7　Coordination

That it is the GOAL nominal which is promoted to subjecthood in the GOAL passive is confirmed by coordination data. For instance, an active clause can coordinate with a GOAL passive clause under one shared subject (17a); a clause with a THEME passive of a transitive verb can coordinate with a GOAL passive clause under one shared subject DP (17b).

(17) a. dan die twee studenten nor us mochten en da medicament
     that those two students to home might and that medication
     neu niet meer voorengeschreven goan worden.
     now no more prescribed go be
     'that those two students were allowed to go home and now will no
     longer be prescribed that medication.'

   b. da Valère eerst vur een interview utgenodigd is en doa toen
     that Valère first for an interview invited is and there then
     dienen post beloofd is
     that job promised is
     'that Valère was first invited for an interview and was promised the
     job there.'

2.3 The AGENT in the GOAL passive

As in other passive sentences, in a GOAL passive sentence, the AGENT can be
overtly expressed (18).

(18) West Flemish
     dan-k dienen velo aangeraden zyn *door twee collega's*
     that-I this bicycle recommended am by two colleagues
     'that I was recommended that bike by two colleagues.'

   An implied AGENT can be modified by an adjunct: in (19), *per ongeluk* ('unin-
tentionally') or *espres* ('intentionally') modify the understood AGENT.

(19) West Flemish
     dat Valère *per ongeluk* / *espres* te vele cortisonepillen
     that Valère by accident intentionally too many cortisone.pills
     voorengeschreven wier
     prescribed was
     'that Valère was prescribed too many cortisone pills by accident /
     intentionally.'

2.4 Event passive

Based on the diagnostics in Broekhuis & Cornips (2004; 2012), I conclude that the
WF GOAL passive can have an eventive reading both with the auxiliary *worden*
('become') and with the – probably much more common – alternative *zijn* ('be').
Temporal specifiers modifying the event time are compatible with the GOAL pas-
sive (20).

(20) West Flemish
      dat Valère *gisteren*   te vele   cortisonepillen voorengeschreven is
      that Valère yesterday too many cortisone.pills   prescribed   is
      'that Valère was prescribed too many cortisone pills yesterday.'

2.5 Conclusion: WF has a GOAL passive

All the diagnostics discussed above converge and point clearly towards the conclusion that WF, a dialect of Dutch and a West Germanic language, has a productive GOAL passive, contrary to claims in the current generative literature.

Whether the emergence of the GOAL passive in WF can also be attributed to contact with French, as argued for English by Stein et al. (2016), is a question that needs to be addressed. It is true that the WF lexicon provides strong evidence of contact of French as shown in Haegeman (2009). An alternative hypothesis might be that the emergence of the GOAL passive is due to Ingvaeonic influence (see Dhaenens 2014). I do not further speculate on this issue here.

3 Conclusion

This paper provides empirical evidence against persistent claims in the formal literature to the effect that English is the only West Germanic language with a GOAL passive, showing that at least the West Flemish dialect of Dutch has a productive canonical GOAL passive. The WF data strongly challenge the claims in the current literature that Dutch lacks a canonical GOAL passive, since at least one Dutch dialect does display the pattern.

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative	PL	plural
DAT	dative	SG	singular
NOM	nominative	WF	West Flemish

Acknowledgements

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