The Possessor that Came Home

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1. Introduction

This paper focuses on the Bulgarian nominal system and takes the minimalist approach to the discussed phenomena. Bulgarian provides evidence for the existence of a functional projection Possessor Phrase (PossP) between the lexical Noun Phrase (NP) and the top functional Determiner Phrase (DP). The present paper shows that the proposed PossP is the insertion point for the possessive (dative\textsuperscript{1}) clitic but not for the Adjectival or Prepositional Phrase (PP) possessive structures which exhibit different distributional properties. Evidence for this claim comes from both syntactic distribution and semantic properties of the different types of possessive structures in Bulgarian. On the other hand, this paper does not attempt to explain all the facts about the structure of Bulgarian NP in depth. Some of the phenomena are left as open ended questions for future consideration.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the basic facts about the structure and distributional properties of the Bulgarian noun phrase and its components. Special attention is paid to the representation and distribution of the possessive structures and their implication for Abney’s (1987) proposal. Section 3 presents an analysis of possessive structures\textsuperscript{2} in Bulgarian. The language shows evidence for two types of possessive structures. For lack of a better term, I will call the first type SYNTAXIC POSSESSORS, as they are syntactically (and to an extent semantically) restricted to the PossP functional projection. I refer to the second type as SEMANTIC POSSESSORS as they can function semantically as possessors but are not syntactically restricted to a specific projection and thus share the distributional and functional properties of either Adjectival Phrases (APs) or PPs. While the syntactic possessors are base-generated in PossP and remain there after spell out, the semantic possessors may (but do not have to) raise to the Spec, PossP position in the derivational process.

* I would like to thank Stanley Dubinsky, the audience of the Workshop on the Semantics/Syntax of Possessive Constructions and in particular Barbara Partee, Ji-Yung Kim, Yury Lander, Carmen Dobrovie-Sorin and Daniel Hole for their insightful comments. Needless to say, all remaining problems and omissions are the sole responsibility of the author.

\textsuperscript{1} The overlap between genitive and dative case is a feature shared by the languages in the Balkan Sprachbund. Pancheva (to appear) shows that in Bulgarian, Macedonian and Romanian the morphological genitive was lost and replaced by the dative, while in Greek the dative case was replaced by the genitive.

\textsuperscript{2} The term ‘possessive structures’ is used in this paper to cover all types of possessive phrases, including those in which the syntactic possessives do not denote semantic possession. Such cases will be discussed in Section 3.
2. Overview of the Bulgarian noun phrase and what it tells us about Abney’s proposal

2.1. Word order and agreement The following are some preliminary facts about the Bulgarian noun phrase. The surface word order of the adjective(s) and the noun is shown in (1) where we observe the adjectives in prenominal position. There is also overt gender and number agreement between the items in the noun phrase: in the singular, the adjectives are overtly marked with a gender agreement suffix that corresponds to the gender of the noun (cf. (1a-c) where all the constituents in the phrase are in the same gender in the singular).

(1)

a. malk-ijat bjal avtomobil small-MASC the-MASC white-MASC car-MASC ‘the small white car’
b. malka-ta bjala kəšta big-FEM the-FEM white-FEM house-FEM ‘the small red house’
c. malko-to bjalo tsvete small-NEUT the-NEUT white-NEUT flower-NEUT ‘the small blue flower’

(2)

a. malki-te beli avtomobili small-MASCPL the-MASCPL white-MASCPL car-MASCPL ‘the small white car’
b. malki-te beli kəšti big-FEMPL the-FEMPL white-FEMPL house-FEMPL ‘the small red house’
c. malki-te beli tsvetja small-NEUTPL the-NEUTPL white-NEUTPL flower-NEUTPL ‘the small blue flower’

In the plural, the gender agreement is neutralized (cf. (2a-c) where the adjectives appear as the base bound morpheme with an attached plural maker in accordance with the plural marker on the noun). Another fact that we observe in (1) and (2) is that the definite article (a bound morpheme) always attaches to the leftmost item in the noun phrase. Bulgarian does not show evidence for existence of an indefinite article.\(^3\)

2.2. Possessive structures A further issue to address here is the status of possessive structures in Bulgarian. Abney suggests that in English the possessive morpheme ‘s resides under [Spec, DP], but the possessive pronominal resides under [Spec, DP]. However, I would like to propose that ‘one’ is an adjectival type of quantifier which brings the referentiality reading of the indefinite NP much in parallel with the English referential ‘this’ indefinites and their treatment in Ionin (2003).\(^\)

\(^3\) Arnaudova (1995) assumes that the numeral ‘one’ serves as the indefinite article. However, I would like to propose that ‘one’ is an adjectival type of quantifier which brings the referentiality reading of the indefinite NP much in parallel with the English referential ‘this’ indefinites and their treatment in Ionin (2003).
D⁴ where it competes for the same node with other determiners such as articles, demonstratives and numerals. Bulgarian poses some questions and problems here. The Standard Modern Bulgarian has very few traces of the former case system, namely accusative and dative case in the pronominal system and vocative and genitive case on proper names and animate nouns. In this language possession can be expressed in four different ways: (i) with a genitival adjective (3); (ii) with a pronominal adjective (4); (iii) with an N + PP construction (5); and (iv) with a dative clitic (6):

(3) Ivan-ova-ta kniga
   Ivan-GÉN-DEF book
   ‘Ivan’s book’

(4) neg-ova-ta kniga
    his-GÉN-DEF book
    ‘his book’

(5) kniga-ta na Ivan/?na nego
    book-DEF of Ivan/ of him-DAT
    ‘Ivan’s book’

(6) kniga-ta mu
    book-DEF his-DAT
    ‘his book’

We will now take a closer look at the distributional properties of each of these possessive structures. The examples in (3)-(6) show a striking, yet somewhat superficial, pattern—where genitive inflection appears, the possessor is prenominal and there is gender and number agreement between the possessor and the rest of the elements in the DP ((3) and (4)), but where the dative case can be used, the possessor is in postnominal position and does not agree in gender and number with the rest of the DP ((5) and (6)). The first similarity holds across the board when the noun is modified by a sole possessive structure. Adjectival possessors can appear in any prenominal position within the DP. They can be in

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⁴ In past decades, the vocative has not been considered as a separate case marking form either.
⁵ Grammaticality judgements differ on forms like knigata na nego ‘his book’. The pronominal adjective in dative case is not grammatical in Standard Modern Bulgarian. However, some users render it acceptable in the colloquial form of the language. I will leave the question open for further investigation.
⁶ Traditional grammarians call the possessive structures in (4) and (6) respectively ‘full’ and ‘short’ forms of the possessive pronoun, but I would prefer, following Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti (1998), to call them pronominal adjectives and dative clitics. First, the pronominal adjectives show the same distribution and features as any other type of adjective. They are part of the DP, they do not compete
[Spec, DP] (7a), in [Spec, NP] (7b), or in an intermediate position between those two (7c). This last occurrence of the adjectival possessive structure will be discussed in Section 3:

(7) a. moja-ta/Ivan-ova-ta nova šapka
    my-DEF/ Ivan-GEN-DEF new hat
    ‘my/Ivan’s new hat’

b. njakolko-to novi moi/Ivan-ovi šapki
    several-DEF new my/ Ivan-GEN hats
    ‘several of my/Ivan’s new hats’

c. njakolko-to moi/Ivan-ovi novi šapki
    several-DEF my/ Ivan-GEN new hats
    ‘several of my/Ivan’s new hats’

d. *njakolko(-to) novi šapki moi/Ivan-ovi
    several(-DEF) new hats my/ Ivan-GEN
    ‘several of my/Ivan’s new hats’

Note that in (7b) there is an intervening adjective (novi ‘new’) between the quantifier njakolko ‘several’ and the possessor moi/Ivanovi ‘mine/of.Ivan’. The only position the adjectival possessors cannot take is the postnominal position as in (7d). Consider also the definiteness in all of the examples in (7)–in Bulgarian, unlike in English, the possessor and the definite article can co-occur. The non-definite counterparts of the same DPs are shown in (8a-c):

(8) a. (enda) moja/Ivan-ova bjala šapka
    (one) my/ Ivan-GEN white hat
    ‘(one) white hat of mine/Ivan’s’

b. njakolko novi moi/Ivan-ovi šapki
    several new my/ Ivan-GEN hats
    ‘several new hats of mine/Ivan’s’

c. njakolko moi/Ivan-ovi novi šapki
    several my/ Ivan-GEN new hats
    ‘several new hats of mine/Ivan’s’

The comparison between (7) and (8) shows that the possessor and the determiner do not compete for the same slot because they can co-exist. In such case Abney’s (1987) proposal that D₀ is the insertion point for both the definite article and the possessive clitic is not suitable for Bulgarian. Furthermore, if the dative clitic is examined, we are led to believe that there are syntactic reasons for the co-occurrence of a possessor and a determiner. Consider (9) where examples (a) and (b) show the same word order of constituents with the only difference being that

with the definite articles for the slot under D₀, and they are inflected for gender, number, and case in the same way as the adjectives. Second, it has been argued that the possessive clitics are actually the dative clitic pronouns (cf. Stojanov 1983:194 and Pancheva (to appear) for further details).
the ungrammatical example in (b) omits the definite article. Furthermore, the acceptability pattern is the same in constructions with more than one modifier of the noun (cf. (15a and b) where, in addition to the possessive structure, there is also a modifying adjective):

(9)  a. kniga-ta mu
    book-DEF his
    ‘his book’
   
   b. *kniga mu
    book his
    ‘his book’

(10)  a. goljama-ta mi šapka
    big-DEF my hat
    ‘my big hat’
   
   b. *goljama mi šapka
    big my hat
    ‘my big hat’

Let us now consider the distribution of the PP possessives. Examples (5-6) above suggest that there are some similarities between PP possessives and the clitic possessive structures. In all the examples, both possessors surface in DP-second position and (can) appear in dative case. However, further data reveals a different picture. As (11) shows, the dative clitic can appear only in DP-second position. Note here that the (non-)appearance of the definite article does not play any role in the grammaticality of the examples in (b) and (c). On the other hand, as (12) reveals, the PP possessor has to be in the DP-edge position. It can surface in the right-most position in its unmarked usage (12a) or in the left-most position if the possessor is focused and thus extraposed outside the DP (12b)\(^7\). In contrast, surfacing of the PP possessor in any intermediate position is prohibited (cf. (12c and d)):

(11)  a. xubava-ta mu kniga
    good-DEF his book
   
   b. *mu xubava(-ta) kniga
    his good(-DEF) book
   
   c. *xubava(-ta) kniga mu
    good(-DEF) book his
    ‘his good book’

(12)  a. nova-ta kniga na Ivan
    new-DEF book of Ivan

\(^7\) For a different view on the left-edge position of the PP possessive structures see Stateva (2002).
b. **na Ivan** nova-ta kniga
   of Ivan new-DEF book

c. *nova-ta **na Ivan** kniga
   new-DEF of Ivan book
   ‘Ivan’s new book’

d. *nova-ta **xubava na Ivan** kniga
   new-DEF good of Ivan book
   ‘Ivan’s new good book’ (as opposed to the old one which was not that good)

To summarize this section, the distribational facts about the different types of possessive structures in the Bulgarian nominal system are presented in Table 1 (where X stands for any element, such as adjective or nominal, that modifies the head noun):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dative Clitic in DP second position</th>
<th>X &gt;&gt; Dat. Clitic &gt;&gt; (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PP in edge position</td>
<td>X &gt;&gt; N &gt;&gt; PP or PP &gt;&gt; X &gt;&gt; N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronominal and Genitival Adjectives anywhere prenominally</td>
<td>Spec, DP: Adj &gt;&gt; X &gt;&gt; N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between DP and NP: Q &gt;&gt; Adj &gt;&gt; X &gt;&gt; N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spec, NP: Q &gt;&gt; X &gt;&gt; Adj &gt;&gt; N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>but not</strong> complement of NP: *Q &gt;&gt; X &gt;&gt; N &gt;&gt; Adj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The distribution of possessive structures in Bulgarian.

2.3. Adjective movement–head or phrasal? I adopt the view that there is constituent movement within the Bulgarian DP. In his dissertation, Abney proposes that in English the prenominal descriptive adjectives are base-generated in head of AP position and select for NPs as their complements. He finds evidence for this in the fact (illustrated in (13)) that the prenominal adjectives cannot take complements.

(13) a. the man [proud of his son]
        b. *the [proud [of his son]] man

However, Bulgarian facts reveal a different picture. As (14) shows, in Bulgarian not only can the preposed adjective take as its complement a PP (14a), but also it can simultaneously be modified by an intensifier such as ‘many’ or ‘completely’ (14b):

(14) a. the man [many [of his son]]
        b. *the [many [of his son]] man

8 For a different view see Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti (1999 a, b) who claim that there is no sufficient evidence for any movement within the Bulgarian DP. Instead, they treat the suffixed definite article as a special case of inflection on the left-most element in the DP.
3. Analysis of Bulgarian possessive structures

3.1. Syntax In Section 2.2 I have outlined the distributional facts about the possessive constructions in Bulgarian. The striking syntactic pattern for the clitic possessive is that it appears in second (Wackernagel) position in an obligatorily definite context. Consider again (9) and (11). The contrast between (9a) and (9b) shows that the dative clitic has to appear in definite context. As for (11), the examples in (b) and (c) show that displacement of the clitic in the surface word order leads to an ungrammatical construction. Note that the overtness of the definite article does not change the grammaticality of the examples with a dative clitic in second position.

None of the other three possessive structures are that restrictive in either surface word ordering or in the definiteness conditions. We already saw that the genitival and the pronominal adjectives are unrestricted in word ordering as long as they precede the head noun. In (15) we observe that both of them can surface in either definite or indefinite environments. Simultaneously, (16) shows that the dative clitic cannot surface even in the indefinite environments marked by the numeral ‘one’:

(15)a. (edna) xubava Ivan-ova/ neg-ova kniga
      (one) good    Ivan-GEN/his-GEN  book
      ‘a good book of Ivan’s/his’

Based on the facts in (14 a), Arnaudova (1995) proposes that the adjective ‘proud’ is in head of AP (which in its turn dominates NP) while its complement ‘of his child’ is in Spec, AP; thus to her the DP internal movement is head rather than phrasal. However, her analysis cannot account for the facts in (14 b) where the definite article attaches to the adjective rather than to the modifying intensifier.
b. xubava-ta Ivan-ova/ neg-ova kniga
   good-DEF Ivan-GEN/his-GEN book
   ‘Ivan’s/his good book’

(16)  *edna mu xubava kniga
       one his good book
       ‘(one of) his good book(s)’

The situation with the PP possessives is somewhere in between adjectival and clitic possessive structures. On one hand, the PP possessor is much more restricted in terms of surface word order than the adjectival possessor but a little less restricted than the dative clitic. Recall that PPs can appear only in either of the edge positions within DP. On the other hand, PPs resemble the adjectival possessives with respect to definiteness as they can also appear in indefinite contexts (cf. (17)):

(17) a. Na pod-a leži (edna) kniga na Ivan
       on floor-DEF lies (one) book of Ivan
       ‘A book of Ivan’s lies on the floor.’

b. Na pod-a leži (edna) Ivan-ova kniga
       on floor-DEF lies (one) Ivan-GEN book
       ‘A book of Ivan’s lies on the floor.’

In short, in terms of definiteness and word-order restrictions, the dative clitic possessives are strictly limited to the Wackernagel position in a definite environment, while each of the other three structures appear to be unrestricted in some way (cf. Table 2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Restricted to definite environments</th>
<th>Restricted position within the DP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dative clitic</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√ (second)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitival adjectives</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP possessives</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>√ (edge)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Definiteness and word-order restrictions.

3.2. Semantics Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti (later D-V & G) (1999b) work on the connection between a type of possessive structure in Bulgarian and the θ-role it can play with the DP. They look at the possessor>>agent>>theme hierarchy (Cinque 1980) and its implications on possessive structures in Bulgarian. The authors find that with object denoting nominals each of the four structures can express the possessor role, but the roles of Agent and Theme are split–only naDPs (PP possessives in this paper) can express themes, and naDPs are the only ones that cannot surface as agents. In this section I show that all four types of possessive structures can serve any of the three θ-roles at hand. D-V & G look also at object denoting DPs with two or three possessive structures. They stress that the
very fact that the co-occurrence of two or three possessive structures is possible raises questions concerning the base-generation of the ‘possessors’, as well as whether or not those different types of arguments should be unified under the same label. According to them, possessors can co-occur only if they are from different types and serve different θ-roles in accordance with the Uniform Theta Assignment Hypothesis (UTAH). I will show that while the dative clitics cannot indeed co-occur in the same DP, the rest of the possessive structures can, but only if they play different θ-roles, again in accordance with UTAH. As the theme θ-role does not play a significant part in the current analysis, I will focus further on the possessive and the agentive functions only.

First, let us consider examples with only one possessive structure. As we see in (18), all four possessive structures can play either of the two roles—possessor or agent. So the reading of the examples can be either ‘Ivan’s book’ or ‘the book by Ivan (that Ivan wrote)’:

(18) a. kniga-ta na Ivan/mu
    book-DEF of/by Ivan/him
    ‘Ivan’s/his book’

b. Ivan-ova-ta/ neg-ova-ta kniga
    Ivan-GEN-DEF/ his-GEN-DEF book
    ‘Ivan’s/his book’

However, the situation is not the same in examples where more possessive structures co-occur. The examples in (19a and b) show that adjectives and PPs can express either possessive or agentive roles. Although the first readings of the examples are the preferred (unmarked) ones, the second readings are also possible. On the other hand, in (19c-e), where the dative clitic is one of the multiple possessives, only the possessor reading is possible for this dative clitic.

(19) a. moja-ta kniga na Ivan
    my-DEF book by/of Ivan
    poss agent
    ‘my book by Ivan’
    agent poss
    ‘Ivan’s book by me’

b. Ivan-ova-ta moja kniga
    Ivan-GEN-DEF my book
    agent poss
    ‘my book by Ivan’
    poss agent
    ‘Ivan’s book by me’

c. Ivan-ova-ta mi kniga
    Ivan-GEN-DEF my book
    agent *poss
    ‘my book by Ivan’ but NOT
    *poss agent
    ‘Ivan’s book by me’

d. na Ivan kniga-ta mi
    of Ivan book-DEF my
    agent poss
    ‘my book by Ivan’ but NOT
    *poss agent
    ‘Ivan’s book by me’
e. ?kniga-ta mi Ivan-ova
    book-DEF my Ivan-GEN
    poss agent ‘My book by Ivan’ but NOT
    *agent poss ‘Ivan’s book by me’

The pattern is supported by examples with three possessive structures in the same constituent. In (20) we see that the dative clitic is bound to the possessive role again:

(20)a. Rembrand-ov-ijat mu portret na Aristotel
    Rembrandt-GEN-DET his portrait of Aristotle
    agent poss theme ‘his portrait of Aristotle by Rembrandt’
b. tozi mu Rembrand-ov portret na Aristotel
    this his Rembrandt-GEN portrait of Aristotle
    poss agent theme ‘this portrait of his of Aristotle by Rembrandt’

Furthermore, the language allows for phrases with two occurrences of the same possessive structure. Consider (21) where we observe two genitival adjectives (a), two pronominal adjectives (b), or two PPs (c) in the same constituent. As it was laid out above, one of the possessive structures plays the agent role and the other the possessor role. The only type which does not allow double occurrence is the dative clitic (d):

(21)a. Ivan-ova-ta Šekspir-ova kniga
    Ivan-GEN-DEF Shakespeare-GEN book
    ‘Ivan’s book by Shakespeare’
b. neg-ova-ta moja kniga
    his-GEN-DEF my-GEN book
    ‘his book by me’
c. na Ivan kniga-ta na Šekspir
    of Ivan book-DEF of Shakespeare
    ‘Ivan’s book by Shakespeare’
d. *kniga-ta mu i
    book-DEF his her
    ‘his book by her’

The restriction in (21d) is clearly not a semantic one. There is nothing which would prevent two possessors from the same type to play two different θ-

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10 The degrading in (19e) is not due to semantic reasons, but rather comes from the occurrence of the genitival in post-nominal position. The example is acceptable in highly marked or poetic speech.

11 For further discussion of the thematic roles of the different possessive structures in Bulgarian see Tasseva-Kurktchieva (to appear).
roles as we saw to be the case with adjectives and PPs. The only reason for the prevention of two occurrences of the dative clitic is that they compete for the possessor role, which is related to a specific syntactic node.

Another interesting fact is that the dative clitic possessors play the role of agent only in structures with one possessor. The examples in (22) show that mi ‘my’ can stand for either the person who owns the book or the person who wrote the book.

(22) a. kniga-ta mi
    book-DEF my
    poss/agent
    ‘my book’
b. njakolko-to mi novi knigi
    several-DEF my new books
    poss/agent
    ‘several of my new books’

As we see in (22b) the function of the clitic pronoun does not change regardless of the fact that the head noun is modified by an adjective and a quantifier. The fact that it is possible for the dative clitic to be treated as agent only in single possessive structures and the fact that in double and triple possessive structures it can be regarded only as a possessor (cf. (19c-e) and (20)) leads to the conclusion that it stands on its own in semantic, as well as in syntactic terms. However, the leading role in determining its function is played by the syntax.

3.3. Analysis In what follows I will propose an analysis of Bulgarian possessive DPs that differentiates between two types of possessive structures. Under this analysis the dative clitics are SYNTACTIC POSSESSORS as they appear to be restricted to a functional projection directly dominated by DP. The genitival adjectives and PP possessives are SEMANTIC POSSESSORS as they can function semantically as possessors but are not syntactically restricted to a specific projection and thus share the distributional and functional properties of either Adjectival Phrases (APs) or PPs.\(^\text{12}\)

\(^{12}\) The current analysis is close to that in Embick & Noyer (2001) and Franks (1998) in the sense that they also show that the dative clitic is directly dominated by DP at spell out. However, it differs from those analyses in (i) the position in which the clitic is base generated (in both analyses it is generated as right adjunct in head of DP), (ii) the directionality of the movement (both analyses propose PF lowering of the lexical element + determiner + dative clitic compound to the head of the next functional projection), and (iii) the account for the other types of possessive structures.

This analysis is also close to that in D-V&G (1999a and b) in its account for the thematic as well as syntactic differences between the possessive DPs in Bulgarian. It differs from what D-V&G propose in two aspects. First, unlike D-V&G, I propose that in Bulgarian there is DP-internal movement which helps us
If a possessor \( \theta \)-role is to be assigned to a possessive structure, the DP selects for a PossP. While the syntactic possessors are base generated in head of PossP (which is directly dominated by DP) and remain there after spell out (23a), the semantic possessors may (but do not have to) raise to the [Spec, PossP] position in the derivational process (23b):

(23) a. \([\text{DPnova} [\text{D}^0 - \text{ta} [\text{PossP} t_1 [\text{poss}^0 \text{mu} [\text{NP} t_1 [\text{NP knig}]]]]]]\)

\(\text{‘his new book’ (the one he owns)}\)

b. \([\text{DP Ivanova/ negova} [\text{D}^0 - \text{ta} [\text{PossP} t_1 [\text{poss}^0 \emptyset [\text{NP} t_1 [\text{NP knig}]]]]]]\)

\(\text{‘Ivan’s/his book’ (the one he owns)}\)

In (23 a) the DP, in this case overtly realized by -ta ‘the’, selects for a PossP. The strong syntactic possessor mu ‘his’ is base-generated in the head of PossP. In this case the highest XP below Poss\(^0\) can move over the head of the functional projection to its specifier position and then further raise to [Spec, DP] to check off the [+def] feature of the determiner phrase. At spell out the bound definite morpheme undergoes PF affixation and is pronounced as a suffix to the constituent residing under [Spec, DP]. On the other hand, in (23 b) the genitival adjective is base generated in [Spec, DP] and undergoes phrasal movement to [Spec, PossP] where it is assigned the possessor \( \theta \)-role, and further to [Spec, DP] where it checks the [+def] feature of the DP and attracts the bound definite morpheme at spell out. The raising of the genitival adjective is not mandatory. Recall that the genitival adjective can be preceded by a descriptive adjective in the surface word order (8b). In this case PossP is not projected and the first constituent moves directly to [Spec, DP] to check its [+def] feature.

As I showed above, the possessive structures in Bulgarian can also assume the agentive \( \theta \)-role. In this case, the DP selects for an nP\(^{13}\) which is headed by the overt possessive clitic (24a) or attracts the genitival adjective to its Spec position so the agent \( \theta \)-role can be assigned (24b). In this case PossP is not projected. I follow Szabolcsi (1987) and assume that the two cases in which possessive structures are found in Bulgarian reside under two different projections. DP checks the genitive case of pronominal and genitival adjectives (cf. (23b) and (24b)). The

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explain facts about the attachment of the definite article such as in (14). Second, D-V&G suggest that the functional projection ClP (which holds the clitic possessive) dominates DP. While DP-external movement can account for the surface word-order facts of Bulgarian, the proposal cannot account for either \( \theta \)-role assignment or the strong preference for definite environments that the dative clitics show.

Davies and Dubinsky (2001) propose nP as a nominal parallel to vP. If the similarities between the two functional projections hold then one would expect that [Spec, nP] would be the subject position (usually associated with agentive \( \theta \)-role) in the nominal system. In this case, the whole NP assigns the \( \theta \)-role to the possessive structure.
The dative case of the clitics is checked in the second highest functional projection (cf. (23a) and (24a)):

(24) a. \([\text{DP nova} [D^0-\text{ta} [nP t_1 [n^0 \text{mu} [nP t_1 [NP kniga]]]]]]\)

    new        -DEF   his     book

    ‘his new book’ (the one he wrote)

b. \([\text{DP Ivanova/negova} [D^0-\text{ta} [nP t_1 [n^0 \emptyset [nP t_1 [NP kniga]]]]]]\)

    Ivan        /his   -DEF   book

    ‘Ivan’s/his book’ (the one he wrote)

When PossP and nP co-exist, the former dominates the latter and only the head of the former, but not that of the latter, can host the dative clitic. Thus, on one hand, we allow for structures with more than one possessive (25), but on the other hand we can explain why two dative clitics cannot appear in the same DP (26)—the second one is not directly selected by DP:

(25) \([\text{DP Ivanova/negova} [D^0-\text{ta} [ PossP t_1 [ Poss^0 i [nP t_1 [n^0 \emptyset [nP t_1 [NP kniga]]]]]]]]\)

    Ivan        /his   -DEF   her     book

    ‘her book by Ivan’

(26) *\([\text{DP nova} [D^0-\text{ta} [PossP t_1 [Poss^0 \text{mu} [nP t_1 [n^0 i [nP t_1 [NP kniga]]]]]]]]\)

    new        -DEF   his     her   book

    ‘his her new book’

The other semantic possessors (the PPs) are base-generated as right adjuncts to the head noun as in (27).

(27) \([\text{DP nova} [D -\text{ta} [nP t_1 kniga [PP na Ivan]]]]\)

    new        -DEF   book   of Ivan

    ‘Ivan’s new book’ (the one he either wrote or has)

As an adjunct, the PP does not bear any relation to either PossP or nP and needs not move in syntax. The possessive or agentive \(\theta\)-role is assigned by the preposition \(na\) which has either the ‘of’ or ‘by’ reading (consider again (19a) which shows both readings of the preposition).

7. Conclusion

This paper proposes that Bulgarian DP shows evidence for the existence of a functional projection between NP and DP which is headed by the dative clitic. We saw both syntactic and semantic evidence that the possessive clitic is unique among the possessive structures in Bulgarian. While the adjectival and PP possessors have a freer distribution, do not require a definite environment, and can serve as both possessor and agent within the DP, the dative clitic opts for a definite en-
vironment, occurs in DP-second position only, plays only the possessor role in constructions with two or three occurrences of possessives, and can express agency only in structures where it is the single possessor.

This gave us a reason to propose that the dative clitic is a strong syntactic possessor. In the cases where the agentive role is drawn during the Numeration, the functional projection PossP is replaced by nP. The light nP then assigns the agent θ-role. The strong bond between the dative clitic and a mandatorily definite environment was explained by the selectional restrictions—the clitic needs to reside in the head of a functional projection directly dominated by DP. This also accounts for the ungrammaticality of two dative clitics in the same DP.

The proposed analysis is a step further into our understanding of the structure of possessives. The work of Szabolcsi (1983) and Abney (1987) establishes our fundamental understanding of the structure of the DP but cannot account for the co-occurrence of determiners and possessors. The clitic-lowering account of Franks (1998) and Embick & Noyer (2001) can explain the distribution of clitics only but not of the other three types of possessives. Finally, Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti’s analysis (1999a, b) falls short in explaining both the θ-role assignment with the DP in Bulgarian and the bond between clitic possessives and definite environments.

References

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