The Syntax of Inner Aspect in Hungarian

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Aims and claims: The aim of this talk is to argue for the syntactic representation of inner aspect in Hungarian. In line with previous literature on the syntax of inner aspectual markers across languages (Ritter & Rosen 2005; MacDonald 2008; Travis 2010), we propose that Hungarian also has an aspectual functional projection (Asp_1P) within the verbal domain sandwiched between VP and vP. Asp_1P is directly responsible for the aspectual interpretations that we refer to as weak telicity effects, induced by subcategorized measuring-out objects (Tenny 1994) of creation/consumption predicates (CCOs) and non-subcategorized pseudo objects (POs). In addition, we also argue for a second aspectual functional projection ($Asp_2P_{MAX\ E}$) above vP, which is directly responsible for strong telicity effects induced by verbal particles (VPrts) and result predicates (RPs). Support for our analysis comes from word order properties, scope facts, and the presence and absence of aspectual variability.

Previous literature: On the one hand, É. Kiss (2008) claims that CCOs are merged in a postverbal position and it is their lexical semantics that contributes to (a)telic interpretations. On the other hand, Csirmaz (2008) argues that POs move to [Spec, PredP] when they precede the verb, similarly to VPrts and RPs, which have also been claimed to be merged in the complement zone of V as arguments of V (É. Kiss 2008; Surányi 2009) or small clause predicates (Hegedűs & Dékány 2017), from which they undergo movement first to [Spec, PredP] (inside vP) and then to [Spec, TP] (outside vP) (Surányi 2009). In these analyses it is the predicative nature of VPrts/RPs and POs that triggers their movement in the verbal domain; their inner aspectual contribution is only a semantic matter. The novelty of our work is that it offers a unified analysis of the telicity facts associated with CCOs, POs and VPrts stressing the idea that the different aspectual interpretations arise due to the specific syntactic configurations associated with these elements.

Analysis: *Created/consumed objects:* CCOs in Hungarian, similarly to English, German, Dutch and Spanish, can measure out events when associated with quantized reference (É. Kiss 2008; Kardos 2016). Crucially, however, these objects can just as easily give rise to atelic interpretations, as shown in (1).

(1) Mari   10 perc alatt   /10 percig   evett   egy almát.
     Mary   10 minute under   10 minute.for   eat.PST   an apple.ACC
     'Mary ate an apple in/for 10 minutes.'

We propose that, as subcategorized, thematic and referential internal arguments, CCOs merge in the canonical direct object position in [Spec, VP] and move from the base-generated logical object position ([Spec, VP]) to the derived object position ([Spec, Asp_1P]) to receive accusative case (MacDonald 2008; Travis 2010). This one-stage derivation is also characterized by the verb undergoing head movement from V to (at least) v (see (2)):

(2) $[_{TP}$ T $[_{Asp2P\textit{MAXE}}$ $Asp_{2\textit{MAX E}}$ $[_{vP}$ v-V $[_{Asp1P}$ CCO Asp_1 $[_{VP}$ CCO V̶$]]]]]$

That atelic interpretations are also available with objects whose quantity is known is in line with recent observations in the literature, according to which aspectual markers attached lower in the syntactic structure are associated with a cancellable telicity (Travis 2010). Once a particle appears in the predicate, however, which is, as we argue, merged in a higher position, telicity is not cancellable (Kardos 2016). Another property that characterizes predicates whose telicity is calculated low in the structure is that they are associated with a simple event structure, as evidenced by their non-ambiguous counterfactual reading when they appear with the adverb *majdnem* 'almost' (Piñón 2008).

Pseudo objects: The PO *egyet* 'one.ACC', similarly to other POs such as (*egy*) *jót* '(one) good.ACC' or *nagyokat* 'big.PL.ACC', is a non-subcategorized and non-thematic Accusative constituent with no referential value. It is a situation delimiter (Csirmaz 2008) recategorizing the atelic VP *Mari sétált* 'Mary walked' into an unambiguously telic VP (3b). Farkas & Kardos (2018) argue that these POs encode an aspectual operator that picks out a contextually specified non-maximal subpart of the event in the denotation of the predicate. They give rise to an interpretation that corresponds to the generation or introduction of an event (É. Kiss 2004; Csirmaz 2008), the spatial and temporal extent of which is context-dependent. That is, in (3b), for instance, it is necessary to appeal to context in order to account for the precise spatial extent and runtime of the event of walking.

(3) a. Mari   sírt   egyet.   b. Mari   sétált   egyet.
      Mary   cry.PST one.ACC   Mary   walk.PST one.ACC
      'Mary performed a crying event.'   'Mary took/went for a walk.'

In sharp contrast to subcategorized, thematic and referential internal arguments affecting the structure of the event of V, which are merged in a lower specifier position ([Spec, VP]) but move to a higher specifier position ([Spec, Asp$_1$P]), these POs will be claimed to be base-generated in the [Spec, Asp$_1$P] position with the main verb undergoing head movement from V to v. We further claim that Asp$_1$ has an interpretable *EVENT* feature, which is not cancelled via feature checking. The base-generation of POs in [Spec, Asp$_1$P] generates the weak telicity that PO structures are associated with.

(4) [$_{TP}$ T [$_{Asp2P MAX E}$ Asp$_{2MAX E}$ [$_{vP}$ v-V [$_{Asp1P}$ PO Asp$_{1EVENT}$ [$_{VP}$ V̶]]]]]

PO structures have a simple event structure (i.e. non-ambiguous counterfactual reading with the adverb *majdnem* 'almost') and given that they do not encode that component of the notion of 'finish', which says that if a certain event is finished, then that event cannot be continued, the events described in (3) can be repeated later; therefore, these structures share many of the properties of weak accomplishments (Piñón 2008). In this respect, they contrast with VPrts and RPs, which are associated with maximal events (see below), which may cause the incompatibility of POs and VPrts/RPs, at least in standard Hungarian.

Verbal particles and result predicates: Hungarian VPrts and RPs appear in the immediately preverbal position in neutral sentences (i.e. affirmatives without progressive aspect, negation or narrow focus) and have a telicizing function (É. Kiss 2008; Csirmaz 2008):

(5) Mari   10 perc alatt/*10 percig   pirosra /le-festett   egy kerítést/*kerítéseket.
      Mary   10 minute under/10 minute.for   red.into PRT-paint.PST a fence.ACC fences.ACC
      'Mary painted a fence/Mary painted a fence red in 10 minutes.'

RPs like *pirosra* and VPrts like *le* have been shown to encode an event-maximalizing operator (*MAX$_E$*) (Filip & Rothstein 2006) that is applied to a partially ordered set of events, from which they pick out the unique largest event at a given situation (Kardos 2012, 2016), thereby ensuring that the resulting predicates have quantized reference, and thus they are interpreted strictly telically (cf. the temporal adverbial test). Contrary to previous proposals, we argue that Hungarian VPrts and RPs are merged in [Spec, Asp$_2$P$_{MAX E}$], where they exert their event-maximalizing function. The derivation of structures containing VPrts and RPs is also characterized by the V's movement to v and then to (at least) Asp$_{2 MAX E}$, which is supported by coordination facts (É. Kiss 2002). That VPrts and RPs are outside vP is, for example, evidenced by VP ellipsis and RNR facts (see Surányi 2009).

(6) [$_{TP}$ T [$_{Asp2P MAX E}$ VPrt/RP Asp$_{2MAX E}$ -v-V [$_{vP}$ $v̶$-V̶ [$_{Asp1P}$ Asp$_1$ [$_{VP}$ V̶]]]]]

An important consequence of event maximalizing elements in [Spec, Asp$_2$P$_{MAX E}$] is that they impose semantic constraints over their theme in their c-command domain such that it must be specific (5). Unlike predicates containing POs and CCOs, predicates containing VPrts and RPs are associated with a complex event structure, which is shown by their ambiguous (counterfactual and incompletive) interpretations in the presence of the adverbial *majdnem* 'almost' (Piñón 2008).

Some consequences of the analysis: The proposal predicts the co-occurrence restrictions between POs and CCOs: the semantic incompatibility between the two objects is completed by syntactic facts: the movement of the CCO from [Spec, VP] to [Spec, Asp$_1$P] is blocked by the PO, which is merged in the same position (cf.＊*evett egyet egy almát* 'ate one.ACC an apple.ACC'). Another consequence of this analysis is the strictly telic interpretation of predicates containing both a VPrt and a quantized CCO, as in *meg-evett egy almát* 'VPrt-ate an apple' (cf. (1)). A third consequence is that although the co-occurrence of POs and VPrts is syntactically allowed, as attested in Transylvanian Hungarian (cf. *le-futott egyet a partra* 'VPrts-ran one.ACC the river bank.to'), the non-maximal vs. maximal event interpretations associated with these telicity markers give rise to a semantic incompatibility in standard Hungarian.

Conclusion: In Hungarian the class of telicity markers is heterogeneous. This aspectual heterogeneity is not only a semantic matter, but is also reflected in the syntactic representation of the Hungarian sentence.

Selected references: Csirmaz, A. 2008. Accusative Case and Aspect. In K. É. Kiss (ed.), *Event Structure and the Left Periphery*, 159–200, Springer. **É. Kiss, K.** 2004. Egy igekötő elmélet vázlata. *Magyar Nyelv* 100: 15–42. **Piñón, C.** 2008. Weak and strong accomplishments. In K. É. Kiss (ed.), *Event Structure and the Left Periphery,* 91–106, Springer. **Surányi, B.** 2009. Verbal particles inside and outside vP. *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* 56: 201–249.