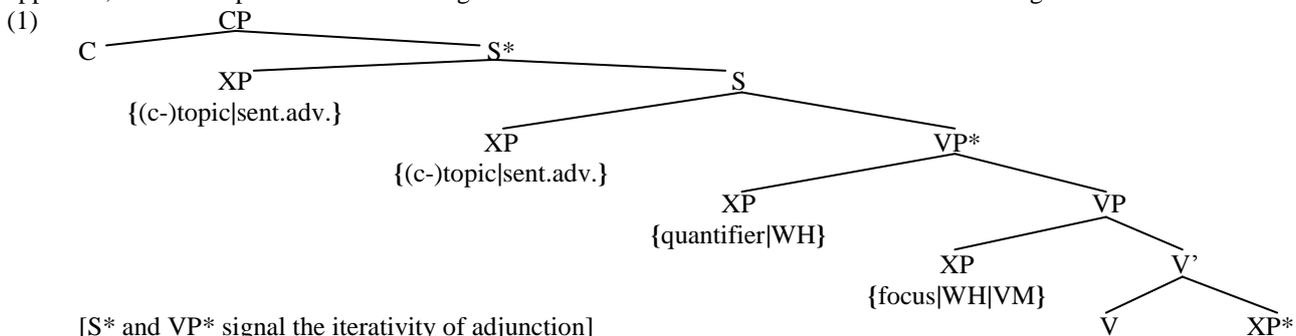


Focusing on the specific features of Hungarian Spec,VP from an LFG perspective

The syntax of Hungarian finite clauses has received relatively little attention from an LFG(-friendly) perspective (as opposed to the enormous literature in the GB/MP tradition). The following works have concentrated on particular aspects of Hungarian syntax (in an LFG, LFG-OT or OT framework): Börjars et al. (1999), Payne & Chisarik (2000), Mycock (2006), Laczkó & Rákosi (2011) and Gazdik (2012). Recently, Laczkó (2014a, 2014b, 2014c) has offered a detailed critical overview of these analyses, and proposed the basic ingredients of a comprehensive LFG(-XLE) approach, and developed an account of negation and verbal modifiers. He assumes the following sentence structure.



As (1) shows, one of the key assumptions (in the spirit of É. Kiss’s (1992,1994) unorthodox GB analysis as opposed to Brody (1990) and É. Kiss (2002), for instance) is that focussed constituents, ‘WH’-phrases and a whole range of elements (verbal prefixes, reduced or maximally projected, designated arguments, idiom chunks, etc.) collectively called verbal modifiers (VMs) are in complementary distribution in the Spec,VP position. Laczkó (2014b) presents a detailed (and implementationally tested) LFG treatment of a range of VMs (see (2), (4), (5) and (7)) and their complementarity with focussed constituents. Interestingly, not all LFG/OT works mentioned above assume this complementarity, e.g. Payne & Chisarik (2000) and Gazdik (2012). For critical remarks, see Laczkó (2014c). For obvious, theory-internal reasons, the current GB/MP mainstream assumes two distinct syntactic positions for focussed constituents and VMs (the main consideration is that, in a typical cartographic setting, each syntactic position should serve as a landing site for one particular constituent type whose movement is triggered/licensed by a particular feature). In this talk we explore what motivates and justifies, in addition to the preverbal complementarity, the postulation of a single, designated syntactic position for the above-mentioned constituent types in an LFG framework. In this theory, thanks to its parallel levels of representation, the occurrence of two (or more) constituent types in the same syntactic position can be trivially captured in a principled manner. However, the deeper question of why exactly those particular constituent types are involved needs to be addressed. Our hypothesis, based on several crucial aspects of a variety of approaches to a considerable extent, is as follows.

- a) Obviously, the “common denominator” is that the preverbal constituent and the verb make up a phonological word (unit) with the verb losing its ordinary word-initial stress completely or to a considerable extent. (It is an issue belonging to a subordinate dimension whether the intonation of the rest of the sentence after the verb follows the focus (i.e. non-neutral), “eradicating” stress pattern, with all the phrases losing their customary stress entirely or to a large extent or it follows the neutral stress pattern.)
- b) This syntactic adjacency and phonological pattern of the two elements can serve two distinct purposes. On the one hand, the preverbal constituent receives a remarkable degree of prosodic salience, which enables it to encode a designated type of discourse salience (= focussing, for details, see point c) below). On the other hand, when the verb definitely makes up a lexical unit with a syntactically separable element (an obviously marked but not at all uncommon option across languages) as in the case of particle verb constructions (PVCs) and idioms, this lexical unity can be naturally encoded by this configuration in neutral sentences. Given that there is always only one finite verb in a clause, and, therefore, only one prosodically salient position, the two purposes cannot be simultaneously satisfied under normal circumstances. This is the cause of the famous preverbal complementarity. We think, it is for this reason that approaches postulating a single designated syntactic position (in combination with the what-you-see-is what-you-get principle of LFG) can be considered more feasible intuitively. Naturally, discourse salience enjoys priority.
- c) Capitalizing on Kálmán’s (2001) important empirical generalizations, and by developing them further, our basic idea is that four types of focus should be distinguished in [Spec,VP]: (i) ordinary focus (“everybody’s focus”): exhaustive/exclusive identification (ii) Kálmán’s (2001) hocus: identification (also see Gazdik 2012) (iii) presentational focus (iv) verum focus. The differences between them are as follows. (i) cannot be used in an out-of-the-blue sentence: it has to be used as an answer to a constituent question or as a corrective sentence. (ii) can be used in an out-of-the-blue sentence, but certain “shared knowledge” or a shared presupposition is necessary for identification to be possible, see Kálmán’s (2001:67) example in (9) and compare it with its focussed counterpart in (10). (iii) can be used in an out-of-the-blue sentence, and it does not require any “shared knowledge” or any shared presupposition, see (5). Verum focus emphatically verifies the truth value of a statement, see (8).
- d) We claim that a generalization assuming that the motivation for the occurrence of a constituent in [Spec,VP] is complex predicate formation in general (which is often rather vaguely defined) is untenable. And a partially related issue: we also claim that a general (uniform) syntactic and/or semantic incorporation analysis in the case of VMs is not feasible either. Of course, there are VM types in which the VM and the verb clearly make up a lexical unit (a complex predicate

in this sense), see PVCs and idioms, for instance; however, even in these cases the VM should not be analyzed as incorporated into the verb in the syntax.

- e) The generalization we intend to explore is that the “common denominator” of the behaviour of all VMs is that they are lexically specified. At one end of the scale we have PVCs and idioms (lexical but not syntactic complex predicates), and at the other end we find verbs that require one of their designated XP arguments to occupy the preverbal position in neutral sentences, for instance *érkezik* ‘arrive’. In this case, only this requirement is encoded in the verb’s lexical form. It stands to reason to assume that such verbs create a special “presentational focus” configuration for their designated argument in a neutral sentence. In an important sense, the properties of this VM type yield an additional motivation for assuming that focussed constituents and VMs occupy the very same syntactic position in complementary distribution: an ordinary VM (in a neutral sentence) exhibits presentational focus behaviour, a borderline case between the two domains.
- f) In our view, in multiple ‘WH’-questions the first ‘WH’-constituent is in Spec,VP, and all the others are VP-adjoined (see (1)). This is not an uncontroversial assumption in the LFG (and GB/MP) literature, see Mycock (2006), for instance; however, it is not directly relevant to our main theme. The important point is that at least one ‘WH’-constituent has focus properties preverbally.
- g) We subscribe to the by now widely accepted LFG view that discourse-functional information needs to be systematically represented at the level of i-structure, (for a variety of approaches, see Gazdik (2012), Mycock (2013) and Szűcs (2014), a. o.). The main objective of the talk is to provide an explanation for the complementarity of VMs and focussed constituents (see (a)-(f) above). However, we will also discuss in a detailed fashion how the focus types distinguished above can be handled in LFG’s featural space of DFs.

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|------|--|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (2) | Ma | Péter | fel | hívta | a barátját. | verbal particle (coverb) |
| | today | Peter.NOM | up | called | the friend.his-ACC | |
| | ‘Today Peter called up his friend.’ | | | | | |
| (3) | Ma | Péter | A BARÁTJÁ-T | hívta | fel. | focussed constituent |
| | today | Peter.NOM | the friend.his-ACC | called | up | |
| | ‘Today Peter called up HIS FRIEND.’ | | | | | |
| (4) | Ma | Péter | újság-ot | olvasott. | | bare (object) |
| | today | Peter.NOM | newspaper-ACC | read.PAST | | nominal argument |
| | ‘Today Peter read a newspaper / newspapers (= did newspaper-reading).’ | | | | | |
| (5) | Ma | Péter | a városunk-ba | érkezett. | | (unfocussed) designated |
| | today | Peter.NOM | the city.our-into | arrived | | (oblique) XP argument |
| | ‘Today Peter arrived in our city.’ | | | | | |
| (6) | Ma | Péter | A VÁROSUNK-BA | érkezett. | | focussed designated |
| | today | Peter.NOM | the city.our-into | arrived | | (oblique) XP argument |
| | ‘Today Peter arrived IN OUR CITY.’ | | | | | |
| (7) | Ma | Péter | pali-ra | vette | János-t. | idiom chunk |
| | today | Peter.NOM | paul-onto | took | John-ACC | (pali ‘Paul’ = dupe) |
| | ‘Today Peter made a dupe of John.’ | | | | | |
| (8) | Igen, | Péter | PALI-RA | vette | János-t. | idiom chunk & verum focus |
| | yes | Peter.NOM | paul-onto | took | John-ACC | |
| | ‘Yes, Peter DID make a dupe of John.’ | | | | | |
| (9) | ’Ma | ’Feri | vitte el | az ’óvodá-ba | a ’gyerekek-et. | hocus |
| | today | Feri.NOM | took VM | the kindergarten-into | the children-ACC | (identification) |
| | ‘Today Feri took the kids to the kindergarten.’ | | | | | |
| (10) | ’Ma | ’FERI | vitte el | az óvodá-ba | a gyerekek-et. | focus |
| | today | Feri.NOM | took VM | the kindergarten-into | the children-ACC | (exhaustive identification) |
| | ‘Today Feri took the kids to the kindergarten.’ | | | | | |

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