HOCUS, FOCUS, AND VERB TYPES IN HUNGARIAN INFINITIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the contrast between corrective and neutral or level prosody sentences in Hungarian, and the corresponding preverbal Focus and Hocus positions. The authors outline the results of their investigation of Hungarian verb types (auxiliaries and main verbs) and of the elements that can occupy the Focus and the Hocus positions in infinitive constructions.

0. *Introduction.*

In what follows, we reproduce some of the theoretically relevant results of our comprehensive descriptive study of Hungarian infinitive constructions (Kálmán et al. 1984). Our aim in the earlier paper was a classification of the verbs occurring in infinitive constructions into auxiliaries and main verbs. In order to carry out this classification, we had to make a clear-cut distinction between neutral and corrective sentences and between two structural positions which we refer to as Hocus and Focus. We believe that our taxonomy is of interest to all those intrigued by Hungarian syntax.

1. *Preliminary Remarks: Hungarian Sentence Patterns.*

The Hungarian language has recently achieved some popularity owing to claims about non-configurationality in general, and Hungarian non-configurationality in particular. We will assume that the only relevant accounts of Hungarian the reader is familiar with are in the framework of É. Kiss (1981).

Significant objections to É. Kiss's conception of Hungarian sentence structure have been voiced in Hungary and elsewhere. In particular, cf. Ackerman (1984), Ackerman and Komlósy (1983), Komlósy (1984), Kenesei (1984), Kálmán (1984), Prószéky (1984) for various counterindicating remarks on this matter.

On É. Kiss's account, Hungarian sentences have a single main stress. This is a quite arguable assumption, however. Since her definition of Focus (F position) relies on the assumption of a single "sentence stress", one must be sceptical about how her rule system, containing the F position as a crucial notion, might be made to work.

According to É. Kiss, a Hungarian sentence would have the shape shown on Fig. 1. Such sentences do in fact exist in Hungarian, but they are fairly marked semantically. In order to make a clear-cut distinction, we refer to them as CORRECTIVE SENTENCES, as oppossed to the NEUTRAL ones. This latter sentence type is not covered by É. Kiss's analysis.

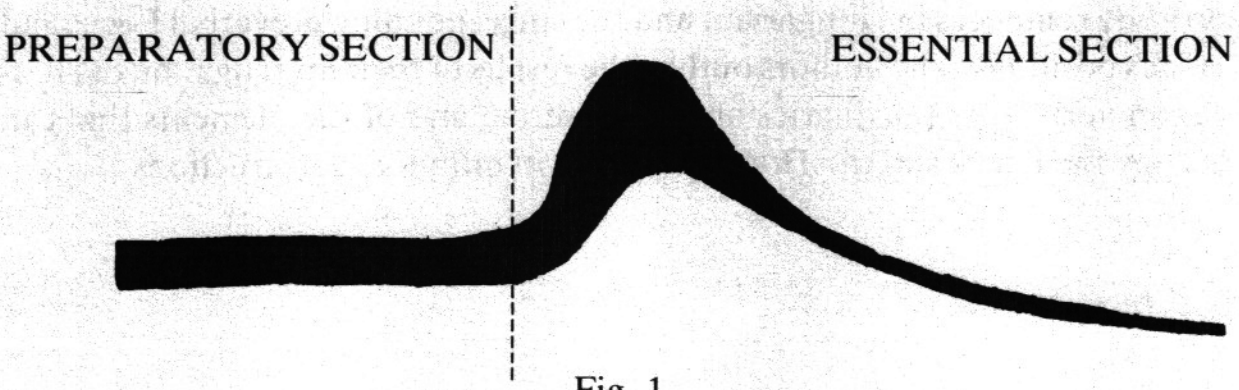


Fig. 1

Pragmatically, a corrective sentence is either EMPHATIC or CONTRASTIVE. Both of these types of sentences occur most frequently in retorts:

(1) *'Péter 'megvárta Marit a klubban.*
Peter-NOM PREF-wait-ed Mary-ACC the club-in
Peter DID wait for Mary at the club.
What Peter (actually) did was wait for Mary at the club.

(2) *'Péter 'Marit várta meg a klubban.*
Peter-NOM Mary-ACC wait-ed PREF the club-in
It is Mary that Peter waited for at the club.

Both sentences have the shape shown on Fig.1 (1) is ambiguous (emphatic or contrastive), while (2) is contrastive. In emphatic sentences, either the V' constituent (see Ackerman and Komlósy 1983) or the bare verb is in

FOCUS, whereas in contrastive ones almost anything can go there, including the verb (as in (1)) and this element then receives a contrastive interpretation. Therefore, all sentences with a verbal Focus are ambiguous (they can be emphatic or express verb contrast).

As might be expected in view of the above, a corrective sentence is very free in word order: as É. Kiss also points out, almost anything can be topicalized or focussed. However, this is not the case in NEUTRAL sentences. This latter sentence type has the intonation and prosody shape shown on Fig. 2. That is, there is no single prominent stress (the downdrift in Fig. 2 is a well-attested universal tendency). Most corrective sentences cannot be read with this LEVEL-PROSODY pattern. For example, only (1) of the last two examples is possible with level prosody:

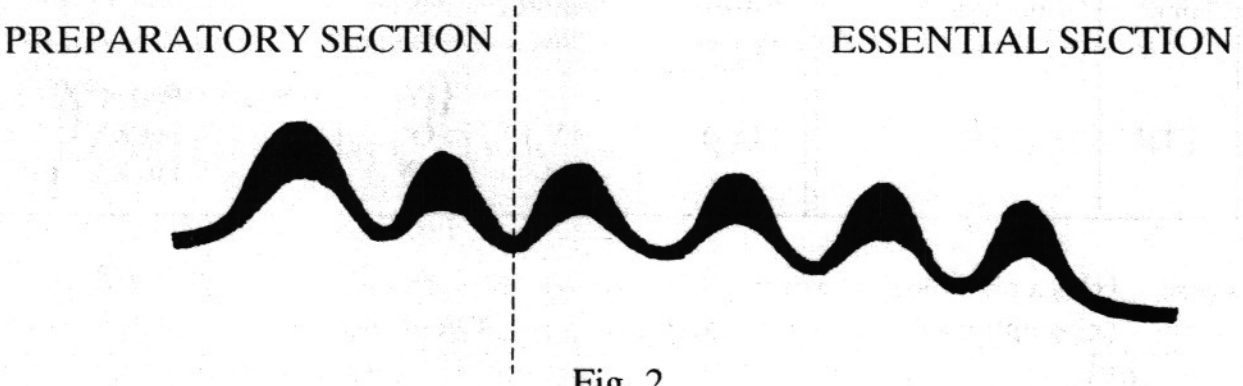


Fig. 2

(3) *'Péter 'megvárta 'Marit a 'klubban* (≠ (1))
Peter waited for Mary at the club

(4) * *'Péter 'Marit 'várta 'meg a 'klubban* (≠ (2))

On the other hand, every phrase in (1) can be focussed with a corrective pattern:

(1) *'Péter 'megvárta Marit a klubban*

(5) *'Péter 'várta meg Marit a klubban*
There has been an occasion when Peter waited for Mary at the club

(2) *'Péter 'Marit várta meg a klubban*

(6) *'Péter a 'klubban várta meg Marit*
It is at the club that Peter waited for Mary

(7) *'Péter várta meg a klubban Marit* (= (8))

(8) *'Péter várta meg Marit a klubban*
It was Peter who waited for Mary at the club

Among (1-8), only (1) and, of course, (3) are possible with level prosody.

We now turn to some interesting details of Hungarian sentence patterns. In every Hungarian corrective sentence there is what we refer to as an ERADICATING STRESS, i.e. a main stress that is not necessarily stronger than a normal main stress, but which "eradicates" all subsequent stresses, and thus, cannot be followed by any more main stresses (except for multiple contrast, which we shall disregard here). The eradicating stress may not be on the Focus element itself. This is shown in the following general schema:

(9)

PREPARATORY SECTION		ESSENTIAL SECTION				
Topic	Contrastive Topic	"Even"-"Also" Pos.	Quantor Pos.	Focus Pos.		
['T]*	["CT]*	['(Y_4)]	(Y_3)	{Y_2 / Y_1 / (Y_1)}	{((Neg) V Fin) X* / (V Fin X* / V Fin X*)}	]

where [x] is a phonological word
(x) is optional
{x / y} are alternatives
x* means 0 or more x-s
T = neutral topic (only free adverbials, adjuncts)
CT = contrastive topic (practically any free form, with an 'as for CT' interpretation)
Y_4 = X *is* 'also X' or X 'even X'
Y_3 = 'emphatic' quantified expressions (e.g. *mindig* 'always', *mindenki* 'everyone', *gyakran* 'often')
Y_2 = 'contrastive' focussed element
Y_1 = a Focus element which does not get a contrastive interpretation
Neg = negative particle
V = verb stem
Fin = finite ending
X = a complement or an adjunct

In a neutral sentence there can be absolutely no eradicating stress and word order is rather fixed:

(10)

PREPARATORY SECTION	ESSENTIAL SECTION
['P]*	Hocus Pos. ['(VC) V Fin] ['C]*

where Ps are adjuncts except for one of them which is a complement with a distinguished role (this is the 'psychological subject')
VC is the verb carrier
Cs are complements (if any)

We call HOCUS the first stressed element in front of the finite ending (i.e. the first element of the Essential Section) in level-prosody sentences. The Hocus element has no 'focus interpretation'. A VERB CARRIER is an element that is in constituency with the verb: $[_V$,VC V]. It is either a modifier (VM) or not:

(11) $[_V$' $[_{VM}$ *fát*] $[_V$ *vág*]]
wood-ACC cut-s
he is cutting wood

12) $[_V$' $[_{VC}$ *részt*] $[_V$ *vesz*]]
part-ACC take-s
he takes part

The VC in (11) is a VM since, traditionally speaking, 'cutting wood is a kind of cutting'; *részt* in (12), on the other hand, is not a modifier, because 'taking part is not a kind of taking'. The distinction of modifier and non-modifier VCs, however, is not based upon this fuzzy explanation, but rather on their contrastive vs. non-contrastive interpretation in corrective sentences:

(13) *'Vágott fát*
cut-ed wood-ACC
'He did cut some wood'

(14) *'Fát vágott*
'He cut WOOD'

(15) *? 'Vett részt a koncerten*
take-ed part-ACC the concert-on
'(He did participate at the concert)'

(16) *'Részt vett a koncerten*
'He did participate at the concert'

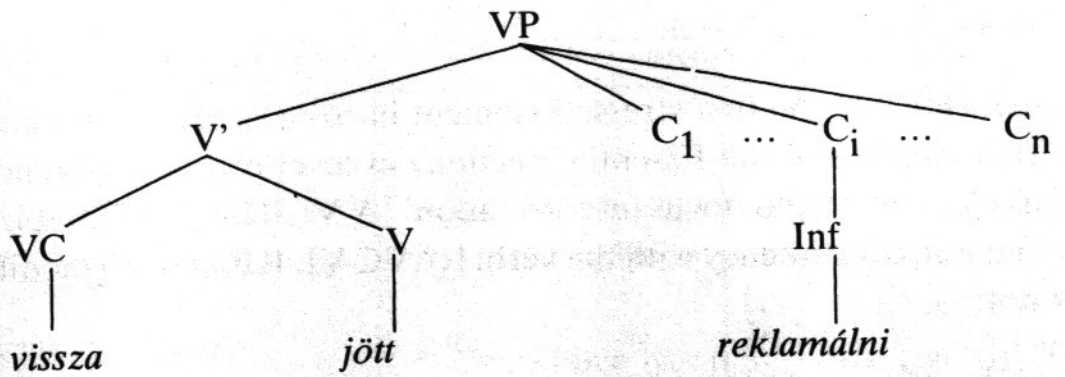
Note that VCs cannot be considered as just normal or "reduced" complements of the verb: they are under V' (for details see Ackerman and Komlósy (1983)).

2. *Infinitive Constructions in Hungarian.*

Our hypothesis is that there are two kinds of infinitive constructions in Hungarian:

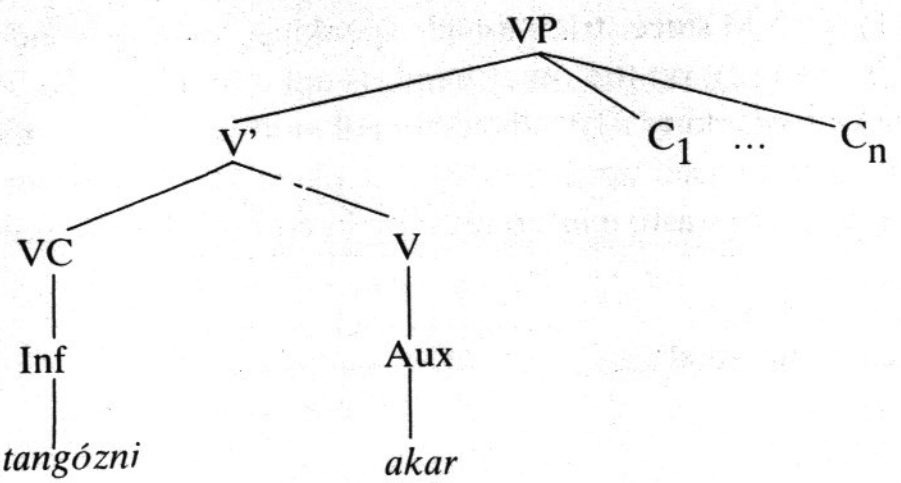
(A) The infinitive is a complement of the verb (of V'):

visszajött reklamálni
back-come-ed complain-INF
'he came back to complain'



(B) The infinitive forms a complex verb (a V' constituent) with the finite verb, which we call in this case an AUXILIARY:

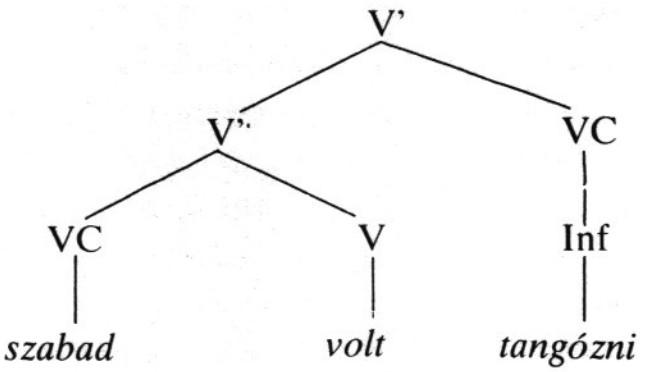
tangózni akar
tango-INF want-s
'he wants to tango'



There are some phenomena that seem to complicate the situation, namely:

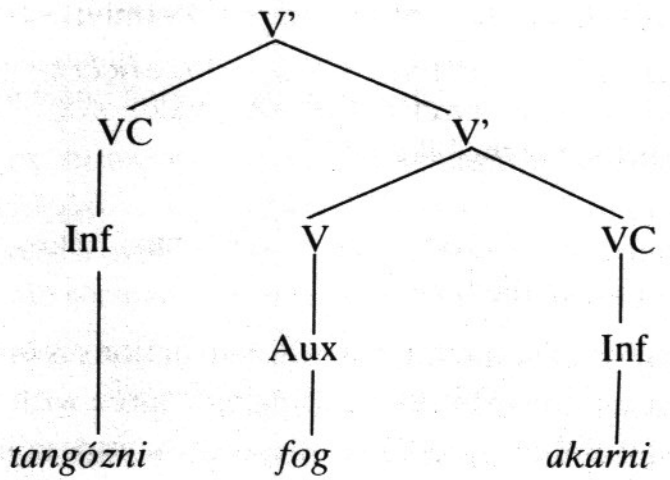
(i) In an infinitive construction, the auxiliary can be a complex verb itself. It can be a *N* + copula construction:

(17) *szabad volt tangózni*
free be-ed tango-INF
'it was allowed to tango'



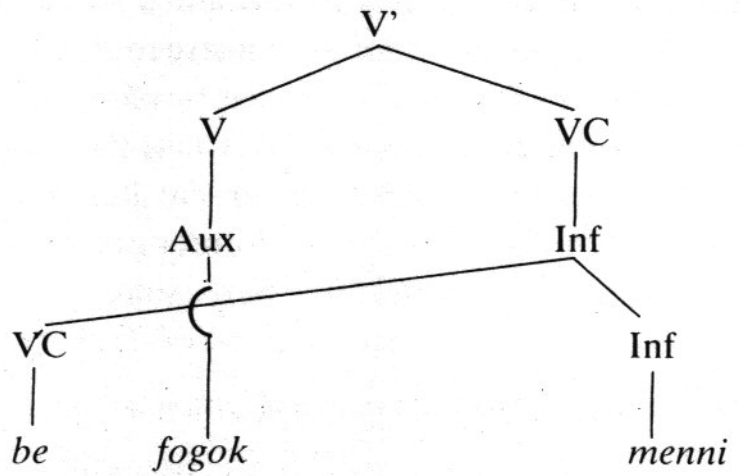
or an infinitive construction:

(18) *tangózni fog akarni*
tango-INF will-s want-INF
'he will want to tango'

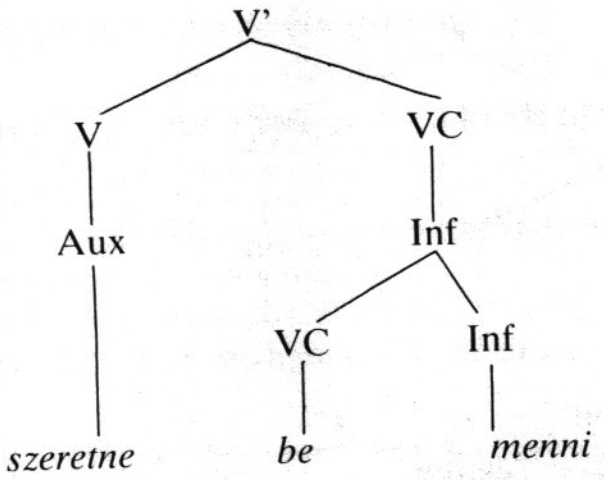


(ii) The infinitive can have a complex stem:

(19) *be fogok menni*
in will-I go-INF
'I shall go in'



(20) *szeretne bemenni*
like-would-s in-go-INF
'he would like to go in'



(iii) Some finite verbs agree in definiteness with the object selected by the infinitive, by taking the Definite or Indefinite Object Suffix (DOS/IOS), whereas others take IOS only:

(21) *be akarja vinni a biciklit*
in want-s(DOS) carry-INF the bike-ACC
'he wants to take the bike in'

(22) *be igyekszik vinni a biciklit*
in endeavour-s(IOS) carry-INF the bike-ACC
'he tries to take the bike in'

(iv) The subject of some infinitive constructions is in the dative case. In these cases, the infinitive ending can agree with the subject in person and number, and the finite verb is impersonal (viz. always in the 3rd person singular):

(23) *Jánosnak be kell mennie*
John-DAT in must-s go-INF-3Sg
'John must go in'

In our earlier paper we demonstrated that the above problems have little to do with the tree configurations for infinitive constructions. Namely, there are both auxiliaries and main verbs among the verbs mentioned in (i); the same is true for the verbs referred to by (iii) and (iv). (i-ii) have some influence on possible word orders that differ between auxiliary and main-verb constructions (e.g. only auxiliaries show the word-order pattern illustrated by (19)), but these phenomena do not concern us here, since they are the consequences of more general laws that we shall describe later on.

2.1. *Traditional Substitution Method Does Not Work.*

There is no clear indication in the literature on Hungarian about the fact that auxiliaries exist at all in this language. When the term itself is used (*fog*

'will' is often referred to as an auxiliary), the criteria of determining whether a verb can function as an auxiliary are missing. However, we examined the only argument that traditionally would demonstrate the existence of such a category in Hungarian, i.e. a difference in substitution relations between auxiliary and non-auxiliary infinitive constructions. In fact, infinitives can often be substituted by accusative pronouns or nouns:

(24) *Péter tangózni akar.* ~ *Péter azt akar*
Peter-NOM tango-INF want-s Peter-NOM that-ACC want-s
'Peter wants to tango. Peter wants to do that.'

In other cases, namely where the infinitive has a clear complement (adverbial) function, oblique pronominalization is possible:

(25) *A kapitány azért jött vissza*
the captain-NOM that-for come-ed back
The captain came back in order to do so
(*azért* can stand here for an infinitive)

In a number of cases, however, the infinitive cannot be pronominalized:

(26) *A kapitány aggódni látszott*
the captain-NOM worry-INF seem-ed
The captain seemed to worry.

(27) **A kapitány az /annak /azt etc. látszott*
that-NOM that-DAT that-ACC

One could argue that infinitives cannot be complements when they cannot be pronominalized, and *vice versa*. But infinitives, even when complements, are VERBS, and the fact that they cannot be proNOMINALized is irrelevant. Of course, the question remains why some infinitives seem able to be pronominalized. Our opinion is that possible pronominalization does not demonstrate the complement status of the infinitive (it only demonstrates that the verb can have a nominal complement with a function similar to that of the infinitive). This is supported by the fact that even in cases when the infinitive can be pronominalized, the conjunction of an infinitive and a complement is still strange if not impossible:

(28) *??A kapitány visszajött reklamálni és a*
the captain-NOM back-come-ed complain-INF and the
bicikliért
bike-for
The captain came back to complain and to take the bike

2.2. *Auxiliaries.*

In the preceding section we argued that traditional criteria are unlikely to apply to Hungarian infinitive constructions; the only way we can proceed in order to classify the verbs in infinitive constructions is to apply the principle of analogy otherwise. Namely, we suppose auxiliaries to behave like the finite verbs in complex verbs, whereas main verbs resemble whole V's. That is, we can examine how infinitive constructions fit schemata (9-10).

The hypothesis that schema (9) provides us with is that 'Inf V Fin must be ambiguous (emphatic if Inf = Y_1 or contrastive if Inf = Y_2) if V is an auxiliary and Inf is not its modifier. This is true for 6 Hungarian verbs, which we call CENTRAL AUXILIARIES:

(29) Central Auxiliaries in Hungarian

akar 'want to'
fog 'will'
kell 'have to' (impers.)
szokott 'used to'
tetszik 'be pleased to' (auxiliary of polite verb forms, impers.)
tud 'can'

Schema (10), on the other hand, provides the following hypothesis: in any 'Inf V Fin or 'VC V Fin 'Inf construction V is an auxiliary, provided VC is the verb carrier of Inf rather than that of V. All Central Auxiliaries occur in such constructions, as well as 14 other verbs, which we call PERIPHERAL AUXILIARIES:

(30) Peripheral Auxiliaries in Hungarian

bír 'can'
kezd 'begin'
kíván 'wish to'
lehet 'it is possible to; one can' (impers.)
mer 'dare'
méltóztatik 'be pleased to' (obs. auxiliary of polite verb forms; no definiteness agreement)
óhajt 'desire'
próbál 'try to'
szabad + copula 'it is permitted to' (impers.)
szándékozik 'wish to' (no definiteness agreement)
szeretne 'would like to'

szokás + copula 'it is usual to' (impers.)
talál 'happen to'
tud 'know how to'

2.3. *Non-Auxiliaries*

In order to discuss the rest of verbs occurring in infinitive constructions, we have to make two more remarks, on Hungarian verb stems and on schema (10), respectively.

2.3.1. *Verbs in Hocus and Focus.*

In contrast to Komlósy (1983), we found that there are 4 types of verb stems in Hungarian according to their occurring in stressed (Hocus or Focus) position:

(31) Verb-Stem Classes in Hungarian

I. Obligatorily-stressed verbs
II. Potentially-stressed verbs
} Komlósy's stress-expecting verbs

III. Neutral-when-unstressed verbs
IV. Obligatorily-unstressed verbs
} Komlósy's stress-avoiding verbs

Now, our classification of infinitive constructions does not allow for an auxiliary to belong to Class I, and puts all Class-III and Class-IV verbs automatically in the auxiliary rubric (see the criteria in 2.2.). This would mean that auxiliarihood is always neutralized except for verbs of Class II. In our study about auxiliaries, we accepted this for obligatorily-stressed verbs, and we looked for other criteria for neutral-when-unstressed and obligatorily-unstressed verbs ((29-30) reflect, in fact, the end-result of our classification). Our reason for having done so is that Class I contains only negative, intensive and complex verbs (like *utál* 'hate', *imád* 'adore' and *elfelejt* = away-forget 'forget'), which can easily be considered as lexical V's (since negative and intensive particles are VCs in Hungarian, all these verbs have either an implicit or an explicit VC in their lexical form), whereas we see no positive argument to consider all Class-III and Class-IV verbs automatically auxiliaries. The reasons are explained in the following section.

2.3.2. *Are All Hocus Elements VCs?*

The Hocus position can be occupied by maximal major categories, i.e. complement-like or even adjunct-like elements:

(32) A 'biciklit akarta 'visszavinni_
the bike-ACC want-ed back-carry-INF
'He wanted to take the bike back'

(33) *'Tegnap érkezett 'Budapestre*
yesterday arrive-d Budapest-onto
'He arrived in Budapest yesterday'

The verb stems in sentences like (32-33) are, as far as we know, all neutral-when-unstressed or obligatorily-unstressed verbs.

Moreover, when in Focus position, these elements always get a contrastive interpretation (they correspond to Y_1 in (9)):

(34) *A 'biciklit akarta visszavinni*
(This can be only contrastive, not emphatic)

(35) *'Tegnap érkezett Budapestre*
(only contrastive, not emphatic)

This fact led us to the conclusion that the Hocus element in these cases is not a VC, i.e. it is not under V'. Thus we have to reformulate schema (10) as follows:

(36) $['P]^* \quad [' \begin{Bmatrix} VC \\ X \\ \emptyset \end{Bmatrix} V \ Fin] \ ['C]^*$

Consequently, there can be infinitive constructions where the infinitive appears in the Hocus position without being under V', hence, without the verb being an auxiliary.

It is worth mentioning that, as far as we can judge for the time being, all Class-III and Class-IV verbs can form complex verbs or lexically select one of their complements (and possibly a semantic class of adjuncts, mostly time or place adverbials) to occupy the Hocus position.

2.3.3. *The Main Verbs in Infinitive Constructions*

According to what has been said above, the non-auxiliary verbs occurring in infinitive constructions can be classified as follows:

(37) Hungarian Main Verbs with Infinitive Complement
- (a) Obligatorily-stressed verbs (negatives, intensives, and complex verbs, e.g. *utál* 'hate', *imád* 'adore', *elfelejt* 'forget')
- (b) Potentially-stressed verbs (non-auxiliaries in their own right, e.g. *szeret* 'like to', *enged* 'allow')
- (c) Neutral-when-unstressed and obligatorily-unstressed verbs (main verbs that select their infinitive complement to occupy the Hocus position, e.g. *megy* 'go', *vél* 'believe')

Group (c) differs from auxiliaries in the following respects:

(i) They allow maximal infinitive projections (complex-verb infinitives) to appear in the Hocus position, while auxiliaries do not:

(38) *'Péter 'beiratkozni ment az 'iskolába*
Peter-NOM in-register-INF go-ed the school-into
Peter went to register with the school

(39) **'Péter 'beiratkozni akart az 'iskolába*
want-ed

(ii) They do not allow the VC of the infinitive to stay in the Hocus position:

(40) **'Péter 'be ment 'iratkozni az 'iskolába*

(41) *'Péter 'be akart 'iratkozni az 'iskolába*

Moreover, our judgment about the verbs in (c) is supported by the fact that they form, as all main verbs do, open classes. Class-III and Class-IV main verb classes contain, for example, all motion verbs (e.g. *megy* 'go', *jön* 'come', *visz* 'carry') and all verbs of perception (e.g. *hall* 'hear', *lát* 'see').

3. *Conclusions.*

We have pointed out that

(i) there are two kinds of Hungarian declarative sentences: corrective and neutral sentences;
(ii) there are wo kinds of corrective sentences: contrastive and emphatic sentences;
(iii) corrective sentences differ from neutral ones in eradicating vs. level prosody;
(iv) emphatic and contrastive sentences differ from each other in verbal vs. non-verbal Focus;
(v) corrective sentences fit schema (9);
(vi) neutral sentences fit schema (36);
(vii) the Hocus of neutral sentences has little to do with the Focus of corrective sentences;
(viii) VCs are not always modifiers;
(ix) there are two lexical classes of finite verbs participating in infinitive constructions: auxiliaries and main verbs;
(x) auxiliaries have two subclasses: with Central Auxiliaries (6 items) infinitives can go into Y_1 position, whereas with Peripheral Auxiliaries (14 items) they can go into Hocus but not into Y_1;

(xi) verb stems have four classes: obligatorily-stressed (I), potentially-stressed (II), neutral-when-unstressed (III), and obligatorily-unstressed (IV);

(xii) the Hocus element can be a complement or adjunct of the verb only if the verb is from class (III) or (IV);

(xiii) in infinitive constructions without an auxiliary, the infinitive can go into any position except Y_1, Y_3, Y_4 and T in a corrective sentence; it can be a C or an X in a neutral sentence; this latter case occurs only if V is a neutral-when-unstressed or an obligatorily-unstressed verb.

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