

Radically Truncated Clauses in Hungarian and Beyond: Evidence for the Fine Structure of the Minimal VP*

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1 Main claims

- Hungarian has a clause type which is to be analyzed as a minimal VP that lacks vP and all the higher projections in both the inflectional domain (subject and object agreement, tense, aspect, modality) and the higher left periphery of the clause (focusing and negation). I dubbed these phrases ‘radically truncated clauses’ (RTCs).
- A unique window for observing the fine structure of VP, which is otherwise obscured by obligatory movements even in neutral sentences.
- Hungarian VP turns out to be underlyingly head-final (contrary to previous claims): this means Hungarian is better-behaved typologically than we thought.
- Additional evidence against the universality of head-complement branching order (Kayne 1994).
- Support for the conception of OV as a basic, non-derived word order (Haider 2000).
- Support for the adjunction analysis of both topicalization and quantification (Lasnik and Saito 1992, Fox 1995, Reinhart 1995, Chomsky 1995).
- Support for the split-DP proposal of Sportiche (1998).

2 The data

- Radically truncated clauses (RTCs) are used in informal spoken registers (everyday speech) and informal written registers (such as blogs or discussion forums). All the data below come from a database containing 2793 utterances collected from the internet and the Hungarian National

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Corpus. All the grammaticality judgements reported were also tested by way of a web-based survey.²

- Typically used to describe a succession of sub-events (or a single subevent) within a well-defined containing event or situation:

(1) [Namármost amikor én alud-t-am ott, úgy kezd-t-em, hogy]
 well when I slept-PST-1SG there so start-PST-1SG that
 ‘So when I was sleeping there, the way I started was
szemet le-visz, szoba rendbe-rak, fürdőszoba el-pakol...
 rubbishPRT³-carry room PRT-put bathroom PRT-pack
 I took out the rubbish, I cleared the room, I cleared the bathroom.’

- Not a syntax-free to-do-list. To-do-lists in Hungarian typically involve an infinitival construction with relatively free word order, with objects obligatorily carrying accusative case and (optionally) having the definite article:

(2) a. (a) *szemet-et le-vin-ni*
 the rubbish-ACC PRT-carry-INF
 b. *le-vin-ni a szemet-et*
 PRT-carry-INF the rubbish-ACC
 ‘to take out the rubbish’

- RTCs are subject to strict constraints. They lack all phi-feature agreement (subject agreement as well as object agreement) and they also lack all tense, aspect and mood features. RTCs also lack infinitival suffixation:

(3) a. *sör meg-isz*
 beer PRT-drink
 ‘I/you/she/he/we/you-pl/they drink/drank the/a beer.’
 b. **sör meg-isz-ik*
 beer PRT-drink-3SG.INDEF
 ‘She/he drinks a/some beer.’
 c. **sör meg-isz-sza*
 beer PRT-drink-3SG.DEF
 ‘She/he drinks the beer.’
 d. **sör meg-in-ni*
 beer PRT-drink-INF

2 For the results and discussion, see paper at www.tamashalm.com.

3 Verb modifiers express the result state or location of the theme argument. There are two kinds of verb modifiers: verbal particles (such as *le* ‘down’ above), and bare adjectival phrases or noun phrases (such as *rendbe* ‘into order’ above.) For convenience, I will use the term verbal particles and the gloss PRT, but all the claims and statements in the paper are valid for the broader family of verb modifiers as well. For details, see Appendix.

‘to drink the/a beer.’

- In RTCs, the object is obligatorily in the morphologically unmarked case form (a form otherwise reserved for nominative subjects and possessors), which is highly unusual since objects in Hungarian obligatorily carry accusative case:

- (4) a. **sör-t* *meg-isz*
beer-ACC PRT-drink
b. *sör* *meg-isz*
beer PRT-drink
‘I/you/she/etc. drink/drank the/a beer.’

- The word order in neutral full sentences in Hungarian is V-initial:

- (5) *Be-kapcsol-t-a* *János* *a* *tévé-t.*
PRT-switch-PAST-3SG.DEF John the television-ACC
‘John switched on the television.’

- As opposed to this, in RTCs, the word order is strictly O PRT V:

- (6) a. **be-kapcsol* *tévé,* **ki-nyit* *sör*
PRT-switch television PRT-open beer
b. *tévé* *be-kapcsol,* *sör* *ki-nyit*
television PRT-switch beer PRT-open
‘I/you/she/etc. switch(ed) on the/a TV and open(ed) the/a beer.’

- In RTCs, unlike in to-do-lists (see (2) above), the object cannot have a definite article or an indefinite article:

- (7) a. (**a*) *kád* *ki-mos,* (**a*) *padló* *fel-mos*
the bathtub PRT-wash the floor PRT-wash
‘(I/you/she/he/we/you-pl/they) clean(ed) the tub and mop(ped) the floor.’
b. (**egy*) *sör* *be-dob,* (**egy*) *pizza* *meg-esz*
a beer PRT-throw a pizza PRT-eat

- Importantly, the object is a nominal phrase (not a mere N), it can be an AdjP, a NumP, a PossP, a QP or even a CP:

- (8) *az* *üvegajtón* *lévő* *és* *eddig* *nem* *használt* *sötétítőfüggöny*
the glassdoor.on being and so.far not used shading.curtain
be-húz
PRT-draw

‘I/you/etc. draw/drew the shading curtain which is on the glass door and has not been used so far.’

- (9) *két sör meg-isz*
two beer⁴PRT-drink
‘(I/you/she/he/we/you-pl/they) drink/drank two beers.’
- (10) *hajam meg-szárít*
hair-POSS.1SG PRT-dry
‘(I/you/she/he/we/you-pl/they) dry/dried my hair.’
- (11) *minden polc le-töröl*
every shelf PRT-wipe
‘I/you/she/etc. throw/threw wipe(d) off every shelf.’

- The object can be in the plural:

- (12) *ablak-ok be-csuk*
window-PL PRT-close
‘I/you/she/etc. closed/closed the windows.’

- In RTCs, no subject is allowed in transitive or unergative sentences (13), however, the subject is allowed in unaccusatives (14):

- (13) a. *(*én) tévé be-kapcsol*
I television PRT-switch
‘I switch(ed) on the television.’
- b. *(*én) fut*
I run
‘I run/ran.’
- (14) *én át-öltöz⁵*
I PRT-dress
‘I change(d). (meaning: I change(d) my clothes).’

- Also, reflexive pronouns are not acceptable as RTC objects:

- (15) a. *kez-em meg-mos*
hand-1SG PRT-wash
‘I/you/he/she/it/etc. wash(ed) my hands.’
- b. **magam meg-mos*

4 In Hungarian, nouns premodified by a numeral appear in the singular.

5 The unaccusative status of *átöltöz* ‘lit. over-dress, meaning: change clothes’ is evidenced by the following: 1) the presence of a verbal particle, 2) the fact that *átöltöz* can appear in an adjectival participle expressing anteriority (*az át-öltözött fiú* the PRT-dress-PART boy ‘the boy who changed clothes’ and 3) the fact that it can appear in predicative adverbial participle phrases (*a fiú át van öltöz-ve* the boy PRT be.3SG dress-PART ‘the boy has changed clothes (lit. the boy is in a state of having changed clothes)’). (Cf. É. Kiss 2002, 223-229)

myself PRT-wash
 'I wash(ed) myself.'

- Importantly, RTCs are not cases of incorporation (true or pseudo) (Mithun 1984, Massam 2001, Farkas and De Swart 2003, Borik and Gehrke 2015). The objects of RTCs can be arbitrarily complex: heavily modified NPs (8), QPs (10), NumPs (9,12), DPs (35) or even CPs (34). Verb-adjacency is not required: the object can be topicalized, heavy-right-shift is possible, and indirect objects typically intervene between the object and the verb (see Section 6.4 and Appendix). The objects are not number-neutral (9,12). There is no requirement of name-worthiness or conceptual unity:

(16) *borotvahab elő-vesz*
 shaving.foam PRT-take
 'I/you/she/etc. take/took out the shaving foam.'

- Known cases of incorporation in Hungarian (Farkas and De Swart 2003) are very different from RTCs. First, incorporated objects are obligatorily accusative-marked:

(17) a. *Újságot olvas-t-ak a lány-ok.*
 newspaper-ACCread-PAST-3PL the girl-PL
 b. **Újság olvas-t-ak a lány-ok.*
 newspaper read-PAST-3PL the girl-PL
 'The girls read a/some newspapers. (The girls were engaged in newspaper-reading.)'

- Also, incorporated objects and PRTs are in complementary distribution.

(18) a. *Újságot olvas-t-ak a lány-ok.*
 newspaper-ACCread-PAST-3PL the girl-PL
 b. **Újság el-olvas-t-ak a lány-ok.*
 newspaper-ACCPRT-read-PAST-3PL the girl-PL
 'The girls read a/some newspapers. (The girls were engaged in newspaper-reading.)'

- This is in stark contrast with RTCs, where the objects cannot have accusative case marking and PRTs are typical.

3 A note on pragmatics

- Productive construction, but restricted pragmatically to describing a subevent (or succession of subevents) within a well-defined containing

event/situation (either contextually given or spelled out explicitly)

- Since an RTC is underspecified in terms of tense, mood, phi-features etc., these are inferred from the hearer from contextual knowledge
- Out of the blue, RTCs are infelicitous:

(19) a. #*Képzeld, szemet le-visz, szoba el-pakol.*
imagine:IMP:2SG rubbish-NOM PRT-carry room-NOM PRT-pack
'Imagine, I/you/she/etc. take/took out the rubbish, clear(ed) the room.'

b. *Képzeld, a szemet-et le-vit-té-k,*
imagine:IMP:2SG the rubbish-ACC PRT-carry-PAST-2PL
a szobá-t el-pakol-tá-k.
the room-ACC PRT-pack-PAST-2PL
'Imagine, they took out the rubbish, they cleared the room.'

- RTCs are overwhelmingly telic (in my corpus, 2660 RTCs out of 2793 are telic, ~97%): since RTCs typically describe a quick succession of non-overlapping subevents, it is natural that atelic predicates are generally infelicitous, since by their unboundedness, they would violate the condition on non-overlapping.
- They contain either inherently telic verbs (which are all derived via the denominal/deadjectival verbalizer *-ít*), or have a telicizing PRT:

(20) a. *könyv el-olvas*
book-NOM PRT-read
'I/you/etc. read the book. (the entire book, telic)'

b. #*könyv olvas*
book-NOM read
'*I/you/etc. read the book (not necessarily the entire book, atelic)'

c. *lazackocka pirít*
salmon.cube-NOM fry
'I/you/etc. fry/fried the salmon cubes.'

- RTCs are unspecified for illocutionary force: they can be interpreted as declarative (see above) or imperative⁶:

(21) *Pofa be-fog!*
jaw PRT-keep
'Shut up! (lit. Keep your jaw closed!)

6 Since in Hungarian, interrogatives generally only differ in intonation from declaratives, the fact that RTCs can be used in interrogatives as well is trivial.

4 Background: the VP in Hungarian

- I assume the following structure for vP and the inflectional domain (cf. Bartos 1999, den Dikken 1999, É. Kiss 2002 etc.):

$$(22) \quad [_{AgrSP} [_{AgrOP} [_{MoodP} [_{TenseP} [_{ModP} [_{vP} \text{ external arg. } [_{VP} \text{ internal arg. } [_{V'} V \text{ PRT }]]]]]]]]]]$$

- The heads are joined to V via an operation called morphosyntactic merge, and the surface order of the suffixes is the mirror image of the morphosyntactic order (Bartos 1999, Baker 1985).
- I assume that PRT is phrasal and a base-generated complement of V (É. Kiss 2006), but nothing hinges on this particular choice, see Appendix.
- For the higher functional projections, I follow É. Kiss (2006) (see also Marácz 1989, Brody 1995, Olsvay 2006, Puskás 2000, Surányi 2003, 2006b for different proposals):

$$(23) \quad [_{NegP} [_{FocP} [_{NegP} [_{PredP} [_{vP} [_{VP} \dots]]]]]]]$$

- I further assume that even in neutral sentences, the verb obligatorily moves to Pred⁰ (or Asp⁰ or T⁰) and the verbal particle moves to Spec, PredP (or Spec, AspP or Spec, TP) (É. Kiss 2006, see also Koopman and Szabolcsi 2000, Olsvay 2002, Csirmaz 2006 and Surányi 2009a). The word order of the postverbal elements is free.

$$(24) \quad [_{PredP} \text{ meg } [_{Pred'} \text{ ette } [_{vP} \text{ Péter } [_{V'} \text{ ette } [_{VP} \text{ a levest } [_{V'} \text{ ette meg }]]]]]]]]$$

Meg-ette Péter a leves-t.
 PRT-eat:PAST:3SG Peter the soup-ACC
Meg-ette a leves-t Péter.
 PRT-eat:PAST:3SG the soup-ACC Peter
 ‘Peter ate the soup.’

- The internal structure of the Hungarian VP (vP) has been long debated (Marácz 1989, Brody 1995, É. Kiss 2002, Bene 2005, Surányi 2006). While the different behaviour of unergative and unaccusative verbs and anaphora facts seem to support a hierarchical VP, other observations concerning binding principle C violations, weak crossover and the free post-verbal word order point to a flat VP.
- É. Kiss (2008) proposed a unified account, which assumes that as the verb moves to Pred⁰, the vP is flattened: that is, at one stage of the derivation, the vP is hierarchical, but in later stages, it is flat. As a result, the word order associated with the hierarchical vP is unobservable, since the vP always

flattens.

5 The core analysis

- RTCs exhibit the intact Hungarian VP, before V-movement.
- RTCs are pure VPs, lacking every functional projection above VP (with the possible partial exception of NegP).
- This analysis naturally explains the lack of phi-feature agreement, tense (or infinitive marking), mood, modality and higher functional projections (such as focus).
- Lack of accusative case marking and the fact that external arguments (the subjects of transitives and unergatives) cannot be realized is due to the lack of a vP layer. (Bowers 1993, Chomsky 1995, Kratzer 1996).
- Because of the lack of accusative case assignment, the object emerges in the nominative (with no overt case marking). Cf. nominative as an ‘unmarked case’ (Marantz 1992), ‘caseless’ (Bittner and Hale 1996), the ‘default case’ (Schütze 2001) or ‘no case at all’ (Kornfilt and Preminger 2015). Unacceptability of reflexive pronoun objects is also due to lack of syntactically realized external argument.⁷
- Strict word order is further evidence that the VP (prior to V moving out) is hierarchical underlyingly. However, in contrast to earlier proposals, the word order of this minimal VP is strictly head-final: O PRT V:

(25) *sör* *meg isz*
 [_{VP} internal arg. [_V PRT V]]
 beer PRT drink
 ‘I/you/etc. drink/drank the beer.’

- The internal argument is generated in SpecVP ; PRT is a complement to the left of V.
- The alternative would be to assume a [_{VP} O [_V V PRT]] structure and derive the O PRT V surface order of RTCs by stipulating a set of movements (either the movement of the elements of VP out of VP or the remnant movement of VP itself).⁸ However, in RTCs, the lack of structure above VP means that there are no structural positions that these hypothetical movements could target.
- While the object may be topicalized, there is evidence that PRT and V never leave the VP. Thus, RTCs in Hungarian provide prima facie evidence

⁷ Note also the optional drop of the verbalizing suffix with certain verbs (in 142 of of 224 cases): *tévé ki-kapcs(-ol)* television PRT-switch_N-VRB ‘switch off TV’, *kocsit le-park-%(ol)* car PRT-park_N-VRB ‘park car’, *ajándék be-csomag-*(ol)* present PRT-pack_N-VRB ‘wrap present’. Variation due to differences in transparency of suffixation, [N+VRB] vs. [V].

⁸ Cf. e.g. Zwart (1993, 1997) and Koster (1994) for the former and Hinterhölzl (1997) and Haegeman (2000) for the latter.

against the assumption that all complements are to the right of the respective head (Kayne 1994).

- There is also independent evidence that topicalization is non-obligatory in RTCs.
- For a discussion of how this analysis can be transposed into other proposals for the syntax of verbal particles, see Appendix.
- Terminological note: ‘truncation’ in Haegeman (2003) technical sense: missing layers were never built up in the first place.
- RTCs arise in cases where the derivation of a clause is stopped prematurely, at the VP level.
- Motivation: maximize the efficiency of information exchange: whatever can be reconstructed from the context does not need to be uttered/encoded.
- Price to be paid: VPs are not phases, in most RTCs, one argument of a two-argument predicate is unrealized. Uttering RTCs involves flouting of basic rules of spellout.
- RTCs are properly built, informative, but also somewhat illegal. This is reflected in acceptability: RTCs are perceived as acceptable but degraded (average 4.2 on 1-to-7 Likert scale), as compared to grammatical non-RTCs (6.8) and ungrammatical non-RTCs (1.2).⁹

6 Operations targeting RTCs

- Over 75% of RTCs in my database exhibit the pure O PRT V sequence.
- The rest are (X) O (X) PRT V. I claim these are the result of topicalization (via adjunction) or adjunction of free adjuncts or adverbials.
- O > PRT > V is never violated.

6.1 Topicalization as adjunction: possible but not obligatory

- Topicalization is a flexible operation in Hungarian: topics can be left-adjoined to PredP, FocP and NegP (cf. É. Kiss 2002), so there is no principled reason why topics could not be adjoined to a pure VP.
- Most manner adverbs such as *óvatosan* ‘carefully’ can be left-adjoined to PredP or VP but crucially not to a topic (standard test of the topic-predicate boundary, cf. É. Kiss 2002). Interestingly, *óvatosan* ‘carefully’ is attested in two possible positions:

(26) a. [VP *óvatosan* [VP_{ajtó} *be-csuk*]]
 carefully door PRT-close

⁹ The test was filled out by 680 respondents. 546 of them (80%) were ‘RTC-accepters’ (average RTC acceptability score ≥ 2) and 134 (20%) were ‘RTC-rejecters’ (average RTC acceptability score < 2). The figures above reflect the ‘RTC-accepter’ population (the 80%). For a discussion of this, other methodological issues and other results of the test, see paper at www.tamashalm.com.

- ‘I/you/she/etc. close/closed the door carefully.’
- b. [VP_{ajtó} [VP *óvatosan* [VP_{ajtó} *be-csuk*]]]
 door carefully door PRT-close
 ‘The door, I/you/she/etc. close/closed carefully.’

- O must be in situ in VP in (26a), and it has been topicalized in (26b). That is, RTCs are minimally VPs, but the topicalization of the object is possible. Since topics are always left-adjoined and topicalization does not induce verb movement, the topicalization of O leaves the O PRT V order intact.
- The availability of topicalization accounts for O X PRT V sentences such as:

(27) [VP *telefon* [VP_{ebben a pillanatban} [VP_{telefon} *le-tesz*]]]
 phone this.in the moment.in phone PRT-put
 ‘I/you/etc. put the phone down in this very moment.’

- For the adjunction analysis of adverbials in the Hungarian sentence, see É. Kiss 2010a). The object can also remain in situ, resulting in X O PRT V:

(28) [VP_{egy ablakkal} *arrébb* [VP_{csekk} *befizet*]]
 one window.with further bill PRT-pay
 ‘I/you/etc. pay/paid the bill at the next window.’

- Additional evidence for non-obligatoriness of topicalization: availability of strongly non-referential idiomatic objects:

(29) a. *János ki-ver-te a balhé-t.* (38 in HNC)
 John PRT-beat-PST:3SG:DEF the trouble-ACC
 b. **A balhét ki-ver-te János.* (0 in HNC)
 the trouble-ACC PRT-beat-PST:3SG:DEF John
 c. *balhé ki-ver* (attested + acceptable)
 trouble PRT-beat
 ‘I/you/he/she/etc. protest(ed) very strongly.’
 Idiomatic meaning: ‘John protested very strongly.’
 Literal meaning (nonsensical): ‘John beat out the trouble.’

- Note also: in full counterparts of RTCs, in-situ object often sounds more natural, cf. (1).

6.2 Focussing: not possible

- Identificational focus construction¹⁰ is characterized by the inversion of the PRT and V and a special intonation contour (focused element receives heavy stress and all following elements are obligatorily destressed):

(30) *JÁNOS hívta meg Marit.*
 John invite-PAST.3SG PRT Mary-ACC
 ‘It was John who invited Mary.’

- PRT-V inversion is only obligatory in tensed clauses. In tenseless clauses (such as infinitives or participles), it is optional (cf. Brody 1995).
- In RTCs, both O and PRT V are obligatorily stressed (PRT V forms a single phonological word), which rules out focus (since after a focused O, PRT V would be destressed):

(31) a. *ajtó be-csuk*
 door PRT-close
 ‘I/you/etc. close/closed the door.’
 b. **AJTÓ be-csuk*
 door PRT-close
 ‘Intended: It is the door that I/you/etc. close/closed.’

6.3 Negation: marginally available?

- Negation is only very marginally attested in RTCs (22 cases out of altogether 2793, <1%). All attestations are O Neg PRT V:

(32) a. *telefon nem fel-vesz*
 phone not PRT-pick
 ‘I/you/etc. do/did not pick up the phone.’

- Proposed structure: [_{NegP} Neg [_{VP} O PRT V]]
- Similarly to focussing (see above), negation obligatorily triggers PRT V inversion in finite clauses but not in infinite clauses. So the lack of inversion in RTCs is not surprising.
- Why is Neg O PRT V order unattested? Note that in clausal negation in non-RTCs in Hungarian, Neg and V typically form a single phonological word (Neg+V in simple negation, Neg+Foc+V if a focused element intervenes, and Neg+PRT+V in non-finite clauses without PRT V inversion). (Cf. Kenesei 1994 on the adjacency requirement concerning Foc and V.)

10 See Horvath 1986, Szabolcsi 1981, Kenesei 1986, Brody 1995, É. Kiss 1998, Horváth 2004, É. Kiss 2010b among others.

- In non-RTCs, this adjacency of Neg and V comes about as a result various movement operations, some triggered by negation (cf. Szendrői 1998, Olsvay 1998, Puskás 2000, Olsvay 2000, 2006, Surányi 2002, É. Kiss 2002, 2008, 2009) In RTCs, no such movements are possible. As a result, the phonological requirement of linear adjacency can only be satisfied at PF by linearizing Neg immediately to the left of PRT+V. (For other phonologically motivated operations at PF in Hungarian, cf. the D-deletion rule proposed by Szabolcsi (1992) or the linearization of the elements in the postverbal field according to their phonological weight proposed by É. Kiss (2008).)
- Alternative motivation: topicalization in order to remove the pre-verbal object (which is underspecified in terms of definiteness/specificity) from the scope of negation in order to ensure a specific interpretation. (In non-RTCs, this comes about for free.) (In all 22 sentences, the object is definite/specific but this is morphologically not marked in RTCs.) Note parallel with participial relatives.
- If focusing is completely out, why is negation marginally possible? Tentative answer: while negation is only Merge, focusing is Merge and Move.

6.4 O PRT V X

- Some rare instances of material to the right of V are attested (70 cases out of 2793, ~2.5%).
- Either right-adjunction of free adjuncts and adverbials (something which Hungarian generally allows, see É. Kiss 2010), or heavy CP shift:

(33) [VP [VP *gyógyszer ki-vált*] [PP *teljes ár-on*]]
 medicine PRT-redeem complete price.on
 ‘I/you/etc. buy/bought the medicine at full price.’

(34) [VP *kávézóban* [VP [_{CP} ~~*merre vannak a koalák*~~ *meg-kérdez*]] [_{CP} *merre*]]
 café.in where are the coals PRT-ask where
~~*vannak a koalák*~~
 are the coals
 ‘I/you/etc. ask/asked in the café where the coals are.’

7 Lack of definite article

- Objects of RTCs cannot have a definite article, even in cases where a contextually salient, unique entity is being referred to (6).
- Proper names (standardly analyzed as DPs) are admitted:

(35) *anya fel-öltöz, Malacka le-vetkőz*

mother PRT-dress Piglet PRT-undress
 ‘Mother gets/got dressed, Piglet undresses/undressed.’

- PossPs, which are obligatorily definite in Hungarian (e.g. they obligatorily trigger definite agreement within the DOM system of Hungarian) are also admitted in RTCs (10).
- Objects of RTCs are often topicalized (6.1) which suggests that they can be interpreted as definites even if they lack a definite article.
- Lack of AgrOP (the projection responsible for object agreement on the verb) does not explain the unavailability of the definite article, as infinitives also lack AgrOP but can readily have an object with a definite article:

(36) *a gázszerelő-t fel-hív-ni*
 the gas.fitter-ACC PRT-call-INF
 ‘call the gas fitter (as an element on a to-do-list, literally: ‘to call the gas fitter’)

- Pragmatic constraint? The defective clause lacks any frame of reference of its own, so definiteness is not specified within the defective clause itself but it is inferred later on from the context (much as tense, person, number etc. are inferred from the context).
- The low availability of definite articles in RTCs (22 out of 2793, <1%) suggests that the constraint may be syntactic.
- Silent DP layer? Possible analysis (following Weir 2017’s analysis of optional article drop affecting subjects and objects in English reduced written register): phonologically null determiner with choice-function semantics underspecified for definiteness:

(37) \emptyset_D *hűtő ki-nyit*
 D fridge PRT-open
 ‘I/you/he/she/etc. open the fridge’

- Problems: Why only in reduced registers? Why only in arguments? Why obligatory in RTCs but optional in English reduced register? Why are demonstratives also unacceptable?
- No DP layer? Sportiche (2005) split-DP proposal: V selects for NP arguments, D layer added later on, outside VP:

(38) a. ... D ... [NP V ...]
 b. ... [D NP] ... [~~NP~~ V ...]

- Since RTCs are minimal VPs, lack of D falls out automatically. Lack of

demonstratives is also explained (these are normally in Spec,DP).

- On balance, split-DP approach appears more plausible.
- For details on the structure of the extended NP, see Appendix.

8 Similar constructions in other languages

- ‘Inflektiv’ in German (Teuber 1998, Schlobinski 2001, Bücking and Rau 2013, Gärtner 2017) exhibits a lack of inflection, strict O PRT V order (which is not surprising for German) and a lack of overt subject:

(39) *meinen satz direkt wieder streich* (B & R 2013, 72)
 my-ACC sentence directly again delete
 ‘I am deleting my sentence again on purpose.’

- Differences:
 - Only in web-based electronic written communication and comics.
 - Silent subject can only be interpreted as 1SG/1PL, the tense as the immediate present, and the illocutionary force is taken to be performative.
 - Object can have a definite article and it carries accusative case.
 - Subject drop happens indiscriminately: subjects of unaccusatives are compulsorily dropped too.
 - Tentatively, obligatory accusative case assignment suggests that the Inflektiv appears to have a vP layer plus a general subject-drop rule.
- Truncated subordinated clauses bigger than VPs, e.g. adverbial clauses (Haegeman 2003, 2010):

(40) a. Main clauses: (Sub) Top* Focus Force Fin IP
 b. Adverbial clauses: Sub Fin IP

- Chechetto (to appear): ‘internal argument drop’ sentences in Romance: root clauses that are specified for force yet lack a vP layer.
- Root infinitives or optional infinitives in child language studies (Rizzi 1993, Wexler 1998, Guasti and Rizzi 2002 a.o.): truncated matrix clauses which lack either agreement or tense (or indeed both) and where the verb emerges in either infinitival or bare form.
- Clause chains (cf. Wiesser 2015): a succession of clauses where all but the last one lack finiteness marking (tense or mood). However, subject and object agreement is present, external arguments are not excluded, accusative case is being assigned.
- Reduced written register (Haegeman 1987, Massam & Roberge 1989, Massam 1992 a.o.): full sentences with optional subject (and object) drop,

subject is syntactically active.

9 Implications for Hungarian and cross-linguistically

- Several known surface phenomena in Hungarian which are typical of SOV languages: the lexical layer of the NP is head-final, the PP is head-final, the possessor precedes the possessum, participial relatives precede the nominal that they modify, manner adverbs precede the verb, predicative nominals precede the copula, PRTs precede the verb (cf. É. Kiss 2013).
- Since Hungarian is generally assumed to be VO, it is assumed that these are either fossils from an earlier head-final stage in the history of Hungarian or they can be derived without assuming a head-final VP. The fact that the Hungarian VP turned out to be head-final may make some of these phenomena worth revisiting.¹¹
- More generally, RTCs in Hungarian provide prima facie evidence against the universality of head-complement branching order (Kayne 1994), and strong support to the conception of OV as a basic, non-derived word order (Haider 2000).
- While the focus position is absolutely unavailable in RTCs, topicalization can happen freely. This is in line with the analysis of topicalization as adjunction (Lasnik and Saito 1992, see also the studies in É. Kiss 1995): while in RTCs, the functional projections above VP such as TenseP, FocP etc. are missing (with the possible exception of NegP), topicalization via adjunction is possible.
- The fact that QPs are attested in RTCs (11) favours the analysis of Quantifier Raising as adjunction (Fox 1995, Reinhart 1995, Chomsky 1995, É. Kiss 2010a): the alternative analysis of QR in terms of movement to the specifiers of designated functional projections (Beghelli and Stowell 1997, Szabolcsi 1997) would require that such functional projections (DistP, RefP) be available in RTCs. However, as we have seen, RTCs typically lack functional projections above VP.
- The unavailability of definite articles in RTC may be interpreted as supporting evidence for the split-DP hypothesis (Sportiche 2005).
- RTCs may prove useful in the exploration of the fine structure of VP in other languages as well. RTCs are most easily identifiable in languages with rich inflectional morphology, an articulated left periphery, overt accusative case marking (and overt definite articles).

Appendix 1: RTCs and the theories of verbal modification in Hungarian

11 The languages most closely related to Hungarian, Khanty and Mansi, are SOV. É. Kiss (2003) has argued that Proto-Hungarian was also SOV. I claim that Modern Hungarian, too, is in essence SOV, even if this quality is masked in non-truncated clauses due to the obligatory movement of V out of vP.

- The syntactic status, base-generated position, and movement options of PRTs in Hungarian have been the subject of considerable discussion in the literature (for recent overviews, see Hegedűs 2013 and Hegedűs to appear).
- For ease of exposition, I have assumed É. Kiss (2006):
 - PRTs are base-generated as phrasal complements of V^0 (they are AdvPs which consist of a single head in the case of verbal particles),
 - they move in neutral sentences to Spec,PredP (and the verb is moved to Pred⁰).
- My analysis carries over seamlessly to all those proposals which assume that PRT is base-generated as a phrasal complement of V^0 , and that it is moved in neutral sentences to the specifier of a functional projection (PredP/AspP/TP depending on the proposal) which subsumes VP (followed by a movement of V into the head position of said projection). (Piñón (1995), É. Kiss (2002), Alberti (2004), Den Dikken (2004), Csirmaz (2004), Csirmaz (2006) and Surányi (2009a).
- Some authors assume that PRT and V form a complex head (Horvath 1986, Brody 1990, É. Kiss 1999b, Szendrői 2003, Olsvay 2004. Crucially for our purposes, however, many of these authors (Brody 1990, É. Kiss 1999, Olsvay 2004) also assume that in neutral sentences, PRT is moved to a higher position outside of vP. This means that the gist of our proposal can be straightforwardly implemented in these frameworks as well.
- In the lexicalist approach (Ackerman 1984, Ackerman 1987, Ackerman and Webelhuth 1998), no movement of PRT is assumed in neutral sentences, and it is assumed that [PRT+V] is inserted into syntax as complex lexical unit, which means that the O PRT V word order in RTCs falls out trivially. (Note, however, that the lexicalist approach as a whole is problematic, see e.g. Hegedűs 2003, 18-21 for a discussion.)
- Uniquely among the non-lexicalist models, Horvath (1986) and Szendrői (2003) assume no PRT or V movement in neutral sentences. Also, both authors assume that the PRT is base generated to the left of V. Adding the trivial assumption that direct objects are in a specifier position, these models would also predict the O PRT V word order observed in RTCs. Note, however, that the assumption of a non-phrasal PRT has been convincingly argued to be problematic for independent reasons by various authors (see e.g. É. Kiss (2006, 44-47), Surányi (2009a, 209-212), and also that the near-consensus in the literature is that PRT and V *are* moved even in neutral sentences (see discussion above).
- Surányi (2009a) claims that in neutral sentences, a phrasal PRT moves to Spec,TP through an intermediate landing position below vP and above VP, which he identifies as Spec,PredP projection.¹² While I wish to remain agnostic as to whether this position exist to general, it can be safely claimed that is not projected in RTCs. If it were, then the obligatory movement of PRT to Spec,PredP and of V to Pred⁰ would produce a PRT V O surface word order, which is completely unattested with RTCs.
- Hegedűs (2013) argues that, in line with their predicative nature, PRTs are subsumed under a small clause complement of V, together with the internal argument: [_{VP} [_{V'} V [_{SC} ... int.arg... PRT ...] (see also Hegedűs and Dékány 2017). In Hegedűs (to appear), the SC is instantiated as pP with where the internal argument is base-generated in Spec,pP and the PRT is merged under p: [_{VP} [_{V'} V [_{pP} internal arg. [_{p'} p PathP]]]]. PathP is taken to house regular directional PPs, which may cooccur with a PRT (in what has been dubbed 'locative doubling', cf. Surányi 2009b) but may also occur on their own. The word order

¹² Note that this is different from É. Kiss's (2006) proposal, where PredP is situated above vP and where Spec,PredP is the final landing slot for PRT in neutral sentences.

of RTCs falls out from this structure as well, if one assumes that the pP complement is to the left of V:

- (41) *sör meg isz*
 [VP [V' [pP internal arg. [p' p PathP]] V]]
 beer PRT drink
 'I/you/etc. drink/drank the beer.'

- RTCs where a PRT and a directional or locative adverbial cooccur have an O PP PRT V word order, which indicates that the pP itself is head-final (in line with FOFC, Biberauer, Holmberg and Roberts 2014):

- (42) *kulcs zár-ba be tesz*
 [VP [V' [pP internal arg. [p' PathP p]] V]]
 key lock-into PRT put
 'I/you/etc. put/put the key into the lock.'

RTCs containing a dative-marked recipient can receive a similar analysis:

- (43) *fél keflivég gyerek-nek oda ad*
 [VP [V' [pP internal arg. [p' PathP p]] V]]
 half croissant.tip child-DAT PRT give
 'I/you/etc. give/gave a bit of croissant to the/a child.'

Appendix 2: Fine structure of RTC objects

Cf. Szabolcsi (1983), Szabolcsi (1994), Bartos (1999), Den Dikken (1999), Bartos (2000), É. Kiss (2000), Dékány (2011), Csirmaz and Dékány (2014), Egedi (2014) a.o.

- (56) [AdjP *új* [NP *kategória*]] *létre-hoz*
 new category PRT-bring
 'I/you/he/she/etc. create(d) a new category.'
- (57) [NumP *három* [CIP *szál* [NP *cigi*]]] *el-szív*
 three SPEC.CL cigarette PRT-suck
 'I/you/he/she/etc. smoke(d) three cigarettes.'
- (58) [NumP *négy* [Num' *darab* [NP *imbusz*]]] *ki-csavar*
 three GEN.CL Allen.screw PRT-twist
 'I/you/he/she/etc. screw(ed) off three Allen screws.'
- (59) [NumP *két* [Num' [NP *sör*]]] *meg-isz*
 two beer PRT-drink
 'I/you/he/she/etc. drink/drank two beers.'
- (60) [NumP [Num' *-ok* [NP *ablak*]]] = *ablak-ok be-csuk*
 PL window PRT-close
 'I/you/he/she/etc. close(ed) the windows.'
- (61) [QP *minden* [NP *polc*]] *le-töröl*
 every shelf PRT-wipe
 'I/you/he/she/etc. wipe(d) off every shelf.'
- (62) [QP *összes* [NP *ruha*]] *le-vesz*
 all cloth PRT-take
 'I/you/he/she/etc. take/took off all the clothes.'
- (63) [AgrP *épület* [Agr' \emptyset [PossP *-ja* [NP *ajtó*]]]] = *épület ajta-ja be-csuk*
 building 3SG POSS door PRT-close
 'I/you/he/she/etc. close(d) the door of the building.'
- (64) [AgrP *proi* [Agr' *-m* [PossP *-a* [NP *haj*]]]] = *haj-a-m meg-szárít*
 1SG 1SG POSS hair PRT-dry

‘I/you/he/she/etc. dry/dried my hair.’

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