

The interaction of future-time reference and modality in a dialect of Hungarian—the case of *kellesz* ‘must.FUT’ and *lehetlesz* ‘may.FUT’

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When working on the use of future referring morphemes, one must look beyond their temporal functions. The future differs greatly from the past; one can never be certain of the future. Therefore, it is not unique in languages, not even in standard Hungarian, that future-referring morphemes develop different pragmatic functions. *Kellesz* ‘must.FUT’ and *lehetlesz* ‘may.FUT’ are used in certain dialects of Hungarian, namely, in the Northern-Eastern Hungarian and the Subcarpathian dialect.

- (1) Most 11.-es vagyok. Tovább szeretnék menni egyetemre. A jogi karon gondolkozom. Olvastam a felvi.hu-n, hogy emelt töri, vagy magyar érettségit **kell tenni**. Ti melyiket választanátok? Nekem faktnak valamelyiket **választanom kellesz** ebben az évben.

‘I’m an 11th-grade student now. I want to go to university. I’m thinking about law school. I read on felvi.hu that you **need to take** an A-level History or an A-level Hungarian exam. Which one would you choose? I **will** actually **have to** choose one of them this year.’

The authors who worked on *kellesz* almost always consider the effect of temporal factors only on its usage/acceptability. In this talk, I present the results of two empirical and corpus studies on the use of *kellesz*, and the results of a corpus study on the use of *lehetlesz*. Apart from describing their grammatical properties, I argue that besides the temporal factors the use of *kellesz* can have different pragmatic functions; uncertainty and delay. The use of *kellesz* ‘must.FUT’ either emphasizes that the scope proposition is not necessary at present, but it is probable that it will be necessary in the future, or that the speaker is unsure of the necessity of the scope proposition (because it has been inferred, or the speaker has second thoughts about it). These two main usages have a lot in common, they both imply that the necessity of the scope proposition is not a fact but has a certain probability, and therefore they both imply a lesser degree of speaker’s commitment. Based on interviews with native speakers of the NEH dialect and the result of corpus studies, I argue that the pragmatic functions of *kellesz* developed from its original, mainly temporal meaning (marking future temporal perspective).