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Extending extended spatial PPs to Hungarian

Hungarian is widely known as a language with notoriously many cases and an extensive system of spatial and non-spatial postpositions. The syntactic properties of Hungarian adpositional phrases (PPs) have received some attention in the literature, but their intricate syntactic relationship to the class of so called verbal particles (sometimes called prefixes) that appear in preverbal position in neutral sentences has not been discussed much so far. The aim of this talk is to extend the analyses proposed for the structural representation of PPs in Germanic (and other) languages to Hungarian and present evidence that particles and PPs form a constituent, but the particle is most often moved to the preverbal position during the derivation.

Traditionally, postpositions have been distinguished from case suffixes mostly on morphophonological grounds (e.g. Marácz, 1989). Additionally, Marácz (1986, 1989) identifies two types within the class of postpositions based on their different case marking characteristics. He calls those that take caseless complements ‘dressed’ postpositions and those that go with oblique-marked complements ‘naked’ postpositions. É. Kiss (2002), however, reclassifies most of the elements that Marácz (1989) analyzes to be ‘naked’ postpositions as adverbial or participial elements. Furthermore, she draws a strong parallel between ‘dressed’ postpositions – as the only type of postposition – and case suffixes, where the conclusion could simply be that they belong to the same underlying category. I follow É. Kiss (2002) in assuming that oblique case and postpositions are essentially the same – namely, postpositional elements. I assume, contra É. Kiss (2002), however, that ‘naked’ postpositions do belong to the extended projection of PPs, just in the functional domain, as they are particles. That there is a relation between locative PPs and particles is obvious and acknowledged in various places, but most of the literature on Hungarian particles focuses on their semantic properties or on the syntax behind their aspectual and/or predicative properties (cf. Kiefer (1992), Kiefer – Ladányi (2000), É. Kiss (1998, 2002, 2004)). Their semantic properties follow from an analysis which treats them as secondary predicates.

An early analysis of German circumpositional phrases (e.g. *auf den Berg herauf* ‘on the mountain up’) in terms of extended PPs is Van Riemsdijk (1990). Since then, there have been various analyses proposed to capture the syntactic properties of extended PPs (e.g. den Dikken (2003) on Dutch and German; Svenonius (2004a, 2004b) on English and PP cross-linguistically), but the basic idea is the same: the lexical PP is extended by functional projections that host Location and Path and/or Direction, and Germanic particles are instantiations of one (or maybe more) of these functional heads which is related to their predicative nature in Svenonius’ analysis, thus accounting for their semantic contribution in the clause.

I propose that the same is true of Hungarian PPs and particles. Verbal particles are in fact representatives of a directional head in the Hungarian PP underlyingly, but they are often separated from the rest of the phrase by movement to the preverbal position. The relationship between the particle and the PP seems to be of various types. We can, on first sight, distinguish between (at least) three groups: (1) directional particle with any path PP (as in (1)); (2) ‘reduplication’-like combinations of directional particle and PP (like in (2)); and (3) particle with dative DP (cf. the example in (3)).

- (1) A gyöngy be-gurult az ágy alá.
the bead into-rolled the bed under

- ‘The bead rolled under the bed.’
- (2) Mari hozzá-vágta a tányér-t a fal-hoz.
Mary to-threw the plate-ACC the wall-ALL
‘Mary threw the plate at the wall.’
- (3) Mari utána futott a busz-nak.
Mary after ran the bus-DAT
‘Mary ran after the bus.’

I argue that the particles originate in the extended PP in all cases. That they do form a constituent with the PP can be shown by various tests, like movement (e.g. contrastive topicalization as in *Be az ágy alá nem gurult egy gyöngy sem*. ‘None of the beads rolled under the bed.’) or the *PP-with-DP* test (*Le a pincébe az üres üvegekkel!* ‘Down to the cellar with the empty bottles.’). The agreement marking on the particle and the reduplication looking relation between the particle and suffix in the PP in (2), suggests a different derivation from the example in (1). I agree with É. Kiss (2002), who regards the last case (i.e. (3)) as an instance of extraction of the DP-complement out of the PP, but these sentences are not fully acceptable for all native speakers and the derivation does not seem to be productive in modern Hungarian.

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