Author(s):

Arguments for Arguments in the Complement of the Hungarian Nominal Head

This paper argues that a Hungarian nominal head may have a (phonetically not empty) complement zone containing arguments of this head, including the possessor (a distinguished argument in Hungarian seeing that it shows agreement in person and number with the head).

Let our starting point be Broekhuis & Keizer & den Dikken's (2012: page x) standpoint concerning the Dutch DP, formulated in (1a) below: "Although this is often less conspicuous with nouns, adjectives and prepositions, it is possible to describe examples like (1b) ... [as follows]. The phrases between straight brackets can be seen as predicates that are predicated of the noun phrase *Jan*, which we may therefore call their logical SUBJECT (...). Furthermore, ... the noun *vriend* may combine with a PP-complement that explicates with whom the SUBJECT *Jan* is in a relation of friendship..." As (1c) shows, however, the standard Hungarian generative literature accepts no postnominal complement domain.

(1) a. $[_{DP}$ ... D ... $[_{NP}$ ... N ...]]
b. Jan is [een vriend *van Peter*]
Jan is a friend of Peter
c. $[_{DP}$ ... D $[_{NP}$ (DP) ... N]]]: the DP structure in Szabolcsi&Laczkó (1992:291, (6))

The reason lies in the practice of using the focus construction in Hungarian as a *constituency test* (Broekhuis&Keizer&dDikken 2012:1121), illustrated in (2a). We claim, however, that the focus construction is not suitable for this task as it refuses any sort of "right branching" from the head. In (2b), for instance, ill-formedness is caused by the DP-internal phonetic presence of the subordinate clause in the postnominal domain. The subordinate clause in question is to leave the focused DP (2b').

(2) a. *[A kalap-ja$_N$ Péter-nek]$_{Focus}$ veszett el. (Kiefer (1992:190, (10b))
the hat-Poss3Sg Peter-Dat lost away
intended meaning: 'It is Peter's hat that has lost.'
b. Ki hívott meg? *[Az a lány$_N$, akivel tegnap találkoztunk]$_{Focus}$, hívott meg.
who invited prt. that the girl who-Ins yesterday met-1Pl invited prt.
b'. Ki hívott meg? [Az a lány$_N$ $\varnothing_i$]$_{Focus}$ hívott meg, [akivel tegnap találkoztunk]$_i$.
who invited prt. that the girl invited prt. who-Ins yesterday met-1Pl
'Who has invited you?' 'Who has invited me is the girl we met yesterday.'
b''. [Az a lány$_N$, akivel tegnap találkoztunk]$_{Topic}$ nagyon tetszett nekem.
that the girl who-Ins yesterday met-1Pl very pleased to_me
'As for the girl we met yesterday, I liked her very much.'
c. $^{(?)}$[Az a vicces kalap-ja$_N$ annak a kissé részeg barátodnak]$_{Topic}$ nagyon tetszett nekem.
that the funny hat-Poss3Sg that-Dat the quite drinken friend-Sg2-Dat very pleased to_me
c'. Na például [az a régi cikke$_N$ Szabolcsinak a főnevekről], az nagyon tetszett nekem.
well for_example that the old paper-Poss3Sg Sz-Dat the nouns-Del that very liked to_me
'Well, as for that old paper by Szabolcsi on nouns, I liked that very much.'

A topic construction, however, triggers no split like this (obligatorily), as is shown by (2b'') above. Neither triggers it any split in the case of a DP with an argument of the N-head appearing postnominally (2c). On the basis of this observation, we will use the contrastive topic construction demonstrated in (2c') as a constituency test. Similar to the focus construction, this construction is also an answer to a question concerning a participant (which is, hence, expected to form a constituent), but there is no danger of splitting because of the phonetic refusal of right branching. The basic structure above in (1a) with the postnominal N-complement, thus, can be followed in Hungarian as well.

Note in passing that, compared to the proposals in (1a) and (1c) above, É. Kiss (1998:85–

86) proposes the intermediate structure in (3a) below, according to which an N head may have a complement for its arguments but these arguments should leave this zone because of some constraint on case assignment (3b):

(3) a. $[_{DP}\ NP_i\ D\ [_{predNP}\ N\ \varnothing_i\ ]$: É. Kiss' (1998:86, (54)) DP structure
b. Constraint on Case assignment (É. Kiss 1998:77)
i. The case marker of an NP appears on the right edge of this NP.
ii. The case marker cliticizes on the head of the NP or, in the case of an empty head, it cliticizes on the constituent preceding the head.

Surprisingly, Szabolcsi & Laczkó (1992:257-258, (87); 264, (134)) themselves provide acceptable examples of nominal heads with phonetically non-empty complements. In the light of all these, we argue that the constraint in (3b) functions in Hungarian as a gradual phonetic constraint. We have tested examples like those mentioned in (4) below in order to point at some decisive factors concerning the extent of acceptability of nominal heads with phonetically non-empty complements. The results are summerized in Table 1 below.

(4) a. Nominative head noun / I. *Possessor + heavy oblique* order in the complement:
Na például [az egyeztetés nélküli meghívása Ilinek arra a gyanús koncertre], az bosszant.
well for_example the agreement without invitation Ili-Gen that-Sub the suspicious concert-Sub that annoy
'Well, what annoys me, for instance, is Ili's invitation to that suspicious concert without any agreement.'
b. Head noun with postposition / IV. *Oblique + not heavy possessor* order in the complement
*Na például [a meghívása miatt a koncertre Ilinek], amiatt dühös vagyok.
well for_example the invitation Ili-Gen because_of the concert-Sub because_of_that angry am
'Well, what makes me angry, for instance, is Ili's invitation to that concert.'
c. Én is mutatok neked egy régi képet magamról / *?rólam / *?magadról / rólad.
I too show-1Sg you_Dat an old picture myself-Del / Del-1Sg / yourself-Del / Del-2Sg
'I also show you a picture of myself / me / yourself / you.'

Table 1: Dependence on the weight of the inflection on N and the order of complements

	ORDER I: POSS + HEAVY OBL	ORDER II: POSS + NOT HEAVY OBL	ORDER III: OBL + HEAVY POSS	ORDER IV: OBL + NOT HEAVY POSS
- (Nominative)	✓ (4a)	✓	✓	✓
-t (Accusative)	✓	✓	(?)	?
-n (Superessive)	(?)	(?)	?	??
OBL (other case)	?	??	??	*?
PP (postposition)	??	*?	*	* (4b)

We will conclude the talk with a systematic investigation of the manifestation of Behaghel's Law (É. Kiss 2009) and examples containing pronouns/anaphors, like the one in (4c) above, in order to decide the syntactic position of constituents semantically belonging to an N head.

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