

Complex Predicates and Discourse Referents: the Case of Hungarian

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1 Introduction

Introduction

- Adjectival and prefixal resultatives in Hungarian; (time permitting: remarks on depictives);
- desiderata, partly met: a DRT-based method for semantic composition that can account for
 - the semantic effects that accompany these constructions (quasi-presuppositionality with adjectives, somewhat fuller presuppositionality with prefixes);
 - differences in argument structure.

Syntactic background, Main Data

Syntactic structure: preverbal ‘modifiers’ (Könlósy[13]):

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------|--|-------------|
| (1) | <i>a.</i> | Marit [<i>részegen</i> látta] János | depictive |
| | | Mary-Acc [<i>drunk-ly</i> saw+def3Sg] John | |
| | | “John saw Mary drunk” | |
| | <i>b.</i> | Mari [<i>piros-ra</i> festette] a kerítést | resultative |
| | | Mary [<i>red-onto</i> painted+Def3Sg] the fence-Acc | |
| | | “Mary painted the fence red” | |
| | <i>c.</i> | A kutya [<i>fel-ugatta</i>] a szomszédokat | res. prefix |
| | | The dog [<i>up-barked</i> +Def3Sg] neighbour-Pl-Acc | |
| | | “The dog barked the neighbours awake” | |

Tmesis, with semantic consequences: if the ‘modifier’ is postverbal, it may leave the event structure of the verb unchanged (details: Kiefer, Piñón):

- | | |
|-----|--|
| (2) | János éppen [? festette] <i>piros-ra</i> a kerítést |
| | John just [? painted+Def3Sg] <i>red-onto</i> the fence-Acc |
| | “John was just painting the fence red” |

Syntactic structure: debate in the current literature:

- ‘modifiers’ are heads and incorporate into the verb: [_V X V] (Kömlösy, Ackerman in earlier work, É.Kiss, Dalmi);
- ‘modifiers’ are XPs and move to a specifier position [_{ZP} [_{Spec} XP] [_{Z'} V ...]] (Koopman–Szabolcsi);
- small clause analysis (in the vein of Hoekstra): [_{X_i} ... V ... [_{SC} t_i NP]] (G. Tóth, ms);
- this work: between incorporation and small clauses; the semantic analysis proposed here does not depend on a choice between alternative syntactic accounts.

Semantic properties:

1. The loss of the Definiteness Effect with the appropriate verbs (on the Definiteness Effect in Hungarian: Szabolcsi [18], Kálmán [8], Bende-Farkas [5]):

- (3)
 - a. Mindenkit [**(részeg-en)* talált] János
Everyone-Acc [*(drunk-ly)* found] John
“John found everyone (drunk)”
 - b. Mari [**(be-)*adott] minden könyvet
Mary [*(into-)*gave] every book-Acc
“Mary handed in every book (to me)”, or
No prefix: “Mary gave every book (to me)”
 - c. János [**(szűk-re)* kötött] minden pulóvert
John [*tight-onto* knitted] every pullover-Acc
“John knitted every pullover (into a tight fit)”

Similar effect in English with small clause complements of *have* (better examples welcome):

- (4)
 - a. *#The Queen of Hearts had every castle
 - b. The Queen of Hearts had every knight executed
 - c. The Queen of Hearts had her coffee piping hot

2. All three types: the Theme may not remain implicit:

- (5)
 - a. Mari festett
Mary painted
“Mary was painting”
 - b. *Mari piros-ra festett
Mary pred-onto painted
Intended: “Mary painted (it) red”

3. (Quasi-)presuppositionality:

Adjectival resultatives: pragmatic presupposition, cancellable.

- (6) Ha Mari pirosra festett egy kerítést, a tulajdonos nem örül
If Mary red-onto painted one fence-Acc, the owner not is-glad
“If Mary has painted a fence red, the owner won’t be amused”
- (7) a. **A:** Ebben a városban Mari nem festett pirosra egy kerítést sem
This-in the town-in Mary not painted red-onto one fence-Acc SEM
“In this town, Mary painted no/none of the fences red”
b. **B:** Persze, mert itt nem kerítés van, hanem sövény
Of-course, because here not fence is, but hedge
“Of course, since there are hedges and not fences here”

Prefixal resultatives: ‘full’ presupposition (Kiefer, Bende-Farkas). With the resultative combinations presented here, it concerns the status of the location argument of the prefix. The precondition state and one location discourse referent is said to have presuppositional status.

- (8) a. János ki-lopott egy kutyát a laborból
John out-stole one dog-Acc the lab-from
“John stole/smuggled a dog out of the lab”
b. János ki-fütyült egy politikust (az emelvényről)
John out-whistled one politician-Acc (the podium-from)
“John whistled a politician off the stage”

Ki-lop ‘steal from’, ‘smuggle out of’ in (8a) is a genuine presupposition trigger, comparable to *again* or *too*. By contrast, *ki-fütyül* ‘whistle off’ in (8b) is weaker. Dependency on the \pm anchoring of the Source location.

4. Adjectival resultatives: cannot contribute to argument structure change; prefixal resultatives can (and do) contribute to argument structure change:

- (9) a. A kutya [*fel-ugatta*] a szomszédokat
The dog [*up-barked+Def3Sg*] neighbour-Pl-Acc
“The dog barked the neighbours awake”
b. *A kutya [*éber-re-ugatta*] a szomszédokat
The dog [*awake-onto-barked+Def3Sg*] neighbour-Pl-Acc
Intended: same
- (10) a. Mari [*álom-ba ringatta*] a gyermeket
Mary [*sleep-into cradled+Def3Sg*] the child-Acc
“Mary cradled the child to sleep”
b. *Mari [*álom-ba énekelte*] a gyermeket
Mary [*sleep-into sang+Def3Sg*] the child-Acc
Intended: “Mary sang the child to sleep”

Exception: fake reflexives:

- (11) a. A kismacska [*álm-ba sírta*] magát
The kitten [*sleep-into cried+Def3Sg*] self-Acc
“The kitten cried itself to sleep”
b. Mari [*beteg-re ette*] magát
Mary [*sick-onto ate+Def3Sg*] self-Acc
“Mary ate herself sick”

Some prefixal resultatives:

- (12) a. Mari [*ki-sírt*] egy sor engedményt a főnökből
Mary [*out-cried*] one row concession-Acc the boss-from
“Mary whined a host of concessions out of the boss”
b. A politikust [*ki-fütyülték*] (a színpadról)
The politician-Acc [*out-whistled-+def3Pl*] the stage-from
“The politician was whistled off the stage”
c. Az énekesnőt [*ki-vissza-tapsolták*] a színpadra
The singer-Acc [*out/back-applauded*] the stage-onto
“The singer was applauded back onto the stage”
d. Mari [*ki-ette*] Jánost a vagyonából
Mary [*out-ate+Def3Sg*] John-Acc the fortune-Poss3Sg-from
“Mary ate John out of house and fortune”

Assumptions, Methods

- Subevent structure of achievement verbs: precondition state, the transition proper, consequent state (Dowty, Moens–Steedman, Pustejovsky);
- The verb’s arguments and subevent structure: Themes are linked to consequent states (Levin-Rappaport, Kamp–Roßdeutscher, Kratzer, Tenny);
- ‘sublexical’ DRT (Kamp–Roßdeutscher [10]);
- semantic composition: asymmetric merge (Muskens [16], van Eijck–Kamp [20]) plus very local anaphora resolution (Kracht, Bende-Farkas, Bittner [6]). Lexical entries can introduce *pronominal* discourse referents that need to be resolved—locally, if possible. This contrasts with discourse referents that are ‘existential’, or anchored.
- Presupposition *computation* vs presupposition justification (binding and/or accommodation).

Van der Sandt [19]: presuppositions are like pronouns. Within complex predicates: pronominal/anchored discourse referents create effects similar to presuppositions (without being presupposition triggers comparable to *too* or *again*).

2 Adjectival Resultatives

Main problems:

- why Hungarian adjectives cannot contribute to argument structure change;
- how the Definiteness Effect is cancelled with verbs of creation.

Argument Structure

(13) a. *piros* (red-Adj):

b.
$$\boxed{\begin{array}{l} s \ \underline{\alpha} \\ s: \text{red}^*(\alpha) \end{array}}$$

(14) a. *piros-ra* (red-onto):

b.
$$\boxed{\begin{array}{l} s_0 \ \underline{\varepsilon} \ s \ \underline{\alpha} \\ s_0 = \text{PRE}(\varepsilon) \\ s = \text{RES}(\varepsilon) \\ s_0 < \varepsilon)(s \\ s: \text{red}^*(\alpha) \end{array}}$$

The precondition state in (14a) need not say that α was not red prior to the event (*John painted the fence red again*). Without going into formal details, *paint* is taken to mean *apply a quantity of paint to a surface*, describing a change of location.

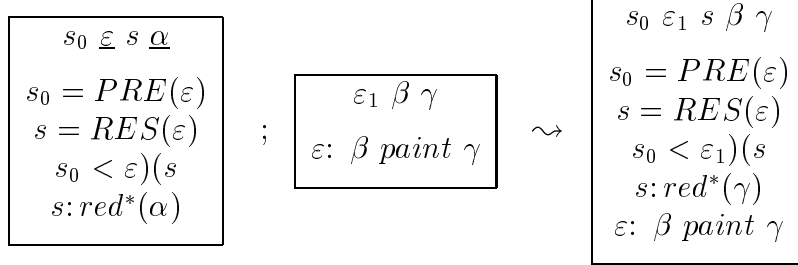
The case markers used in resultative constructions correspond to *BECOME* and *CAUSE*, in one. The reason: combinations with process verbs (*ringat* ‘cradle’) that have no *CAUSE* component, as far as I can see. Then it is reasonable to say that *CAUSE* is contributed by the adjective+suffix. In what follows, I take *CAUSE* to be implicit in the functor *RES* that is assumed to map events to their consequent states. (Added later: *CAUSE* seems necessary for Hungarian, where Rothstein’s noncausal exx are not possible: *the crowd danced the Canadians to Dam Square, the crowd cheered the gates open*.)

Underlining: pronominal status. So, in (14), the eventuality discourse referent ε and the individual discourse referent α need to be bound (to referents contributed by the verb).

Composition: merge. This is constrained by the triggering configuration [_VX V]. The reason: progressive/intensional readings when the ‘modifier’ is postverbal, as

seen in (2).

- (15) *piros-ra* *fest* *piros-ra fest*
 red-onto paint paint red

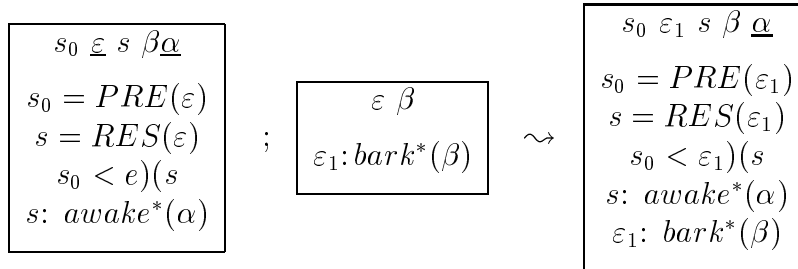


Problem(i): why adjectival resultatives cannot contribute new arguments.

- (16) a. A kutya [*fel-ugatta*] a szomszédokat
 The dog [*up-barked+Def3Sg*] neighbour-Pl-Acc
 “The dog barked the neighbours awake”
 b. *A kutya [*éber-re-ugatta*] a szomszédokat
 The dog [*awake-onto-barked+Def3Sg*] neighbour-Pl-Acc
 Intended: same

So, why is the following unacceptable for Hungarian?

- (17) *awake* *bark* *bark awake*



- Additional constraint in the entry of adjective+suffix: there is a thematic role θ for the eventuality ε , s.t. $\theta(\varepsilon) = \alpha$.
- Suffixed adjectives are modifiers of the verb (though not for all verbs, it will be argued later); they add a precondition and a consequent state. And, the status of the discourse referent α can vary from language to language. In Hungarian, it is pronominal. In English, it is ‘existential’. And then, the ‘Hungarian’ constraint on α having a thematic role w.r.t. the verb’s eventuality need not be stated separately, since it is seen as a consequence of anaphora resolution.

Remaining problem: the obligatory presence of the Theme NP. The disc. referent of the adjective is bound to the one introduced the verb, and this predicts the same behaviour for Hungarian *paint* and *paint red*.

Aside: Cradle to Sleep

Strictly speaking, this is a resultative construction with a suffixed noun. Like adjectival resultatives, it cannot add a non-subcat. argument, and this justifies its inclusion.

- (18) Mari [*álom-ba ringatta*] a gyermeket
 Mary [*sleep-into cradled+Def3Sg*] the child-Acc
 “Mary cradled the child to sleep”

Levin–Rappaport: two overlapping events (processes). So, temporally (18) is more like a depictive. And the event of falling asleep is definitely not identified with the process of cradling (as opposed to cases like *paint the fence red*).

- (19) *álom-ba ringat*
 cradle to sleep

$$\begin{array}{l}
 s_0 \ s_1 \ \varepsilon_1 \ \varepsilon_2 \ \alpha \ \beta \\
 s_0 = PRE(\varepsilon_1) \\
 s_0: \neg asleep^*(\beta) \\
 \dots \\
 \varepsilon_1 \circ \varepsilon_2 \\
 CAUSE(\varepsilon_2, s_1) \\
 \varepsilon_2: \alpha \text{ cradle } \beta
 \end{array}$$

In (19), the transition from s_0 to s_1 is by means of an event ε_1 of falling asleep, distinct from the process ε_2 of cradling. It can be provided by a postulate from Kamp–Roßdeutscher [10]:

$$(20) \quad \begin{array}{l} s_1 \ s_2 \ C \\ s_1 < s_2 \\ PRE(C) = s_1 \\ RES(C) = s_2 \end{array} \Rightarrow \begin{array}{l} \varepsilon \\ s_1 < \varepsilon)(s_2 \\ C(\varepsilon) \end{array}$$

(N.b., one could say that the cradling event is the cause of the falling-asleep process, and not of the state of being asleep. So, (19) is not too precise in this respect.) The distinctness of $\varepsilon_{1,2}$: world knowledge? Added later: the event nominal properties of *álom* ‘sleep’ may be responsible for this.

No Definiteness Effect

Problem(ii): the loss of the Definiteness Effect:

- (21) a. János [**(szűk-re)* kötött] minden pulóvert
 John [*tight-onto* knitted] every pullover-Acc
 “John knitted every pullover into a tight fit”
 b. János [**(hosszúra)* rajzolta] a Mari orrát
 John [*long-onto* drew+Def3Sg] the Mary nose-Poss3Sg
 “In the picture, John drew Mary’s nose longer than it really was”

Background: Hungarian Definiteness Effect verbs bind their internal argument (Bende-Farkas [5]).¹ Then the discourse referent contributed by the adjective is seen to ‘free’ the internal argument (existential disclosure?).

Contradiction: adjectives are modifiers, do not change argument structure. Here, this implies that the discourse referent provided by adjective is pronominal and needs to be bound. But, where the Definiteness Effect is concerned, adjectives can ‘free’ an argument of the verb. \Rightarrow ????

Proposal: an extra assumption concerning Definiteness Effect verbs. Viz, these verbs are like English light verbs (e.g. *take a walk*, *have a shower*) as regards event structure. Then, the adjective is in a ‘deeper’ sense a complement to such verbs.

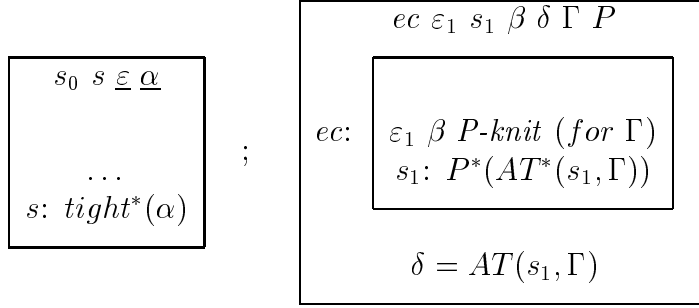
In addition: if the host verb is a creation verb, it is felt to be backgrounded relative to the resultative. (21) requires at least a habitual antecedent (*John likes to knit. He knitted a pullover/one of the pullovers into a tight fit.*) New information: the property contributed by the adjective.

Background: analysis of Definiteness Effect verbs: in (22), P is a pronominal property discourse referent (Zimmermann), Γ is a distinguished argument that can be bound to a Goal, a Possessor or Beneficiary. δ is a quasi-argument, yielded by the functor AT from state- Γ -pairs. The consequent state of the verb says that as the

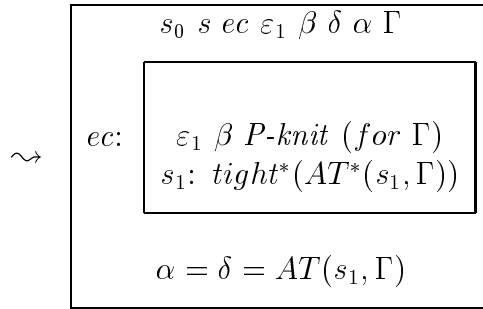
¹In Hungarian, prefixless verbs of creation and verbs of being/becoming available are systematically Definiteness Effect triggers (Szabolcsi [18]). E.g. Hungarian equivalents of *bring*, *put*, *buy*, *take*, *find*, *receive*, *give*, *cut*, *pour*, *eat*, *drink*, *happen*, *write*, *build*, *paint*, *draw* a.s.o.

result of a knitting activity there is something with property P .

(22) *szűk-re* *köt*
narrow knit

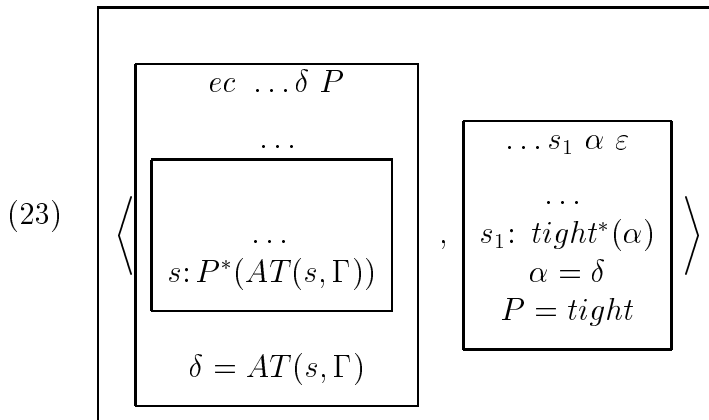


szűk-re köt
knit into a tight fit



The trick: because the event (description) is backgrounded, ec is familiar. δ is existentially closed. If ec is bound or accommodated, so is δ .

Yet another mismatch: from the ‘interface’ point of view, *szűkre köt* is seen as (22). From an information structure point of view, it is seen as (23), with the verb’s DRS being backgrounded/presuppositional.



(19) says that there was something knitted by John, and it became tight. (19) corresponds to a stage of presupposition *computation* (H. Kamp), and it interferes with the anaphora resolution within the complex predicate. So, after the resolution

step one gets the full DRS from (22), with the added information that *ec* is (relatively) familiar, and that the property acquired by δ is tightness.

Aside from some Hungarian-specific peculiarities, (19) corresponds to an ‘English’ type of syntax (*knit(x) ... (become) tight(x)*). In Hungarian it is needed for the cancellation of the Definiteness Effect, and for ‘backgrounding’ the verb’s contribution, although semantic composition (conditioned by Hungarian surface structure) tends to obscure it.

3 Prefixal Resultatives

The Discourse Referents

Attempt at a (more or less) unified analysis of spatial and not-so spatial contributions of prefixes (*whistle out* vs *eat out of house and fortune*).

Like adjectival resultatives, prefixes contribute a precondition state and a consequent state to the entry of the host verb. The individual discourse referent contributed by the prefix (α in (24)) by definition ‘existential’. This accounts for the possibility of having *fel-ugat* lit. up-bark (‘bark awake’), or the combinations in (12). The reason behind this is that prefixes are co-heads, with their own argument structure.

Rough sketch of *fel-* ‘up’, first attempt. Intended for *fel-* + verbs of sound emission (*awaken by barking/ringing the bell, shouting*).

$$(24) \quad \boxed{\begin{array}{l} s_0 \ s \ \underline{\varepsilon} \ \alpha \\ s_0 = PRE(\varepsilon) \\ s = RES(\varepsilon) \\ \dots \\ s_0: \neg UP^*(\alpha) \\ s: UP^*(\alpha) \end{array}}$$

(24) is insufficient, though not for *fel-ugat* ‘bark awake’. The reason: ‘directional’ prefixes have to be linked to an appropriate locative phrase. Otherwise, a Source/Goal location has to be familiar from context. (Not necessarily from *linguistic* context.)

Some refinement, even for the *bark awake* type of combination:

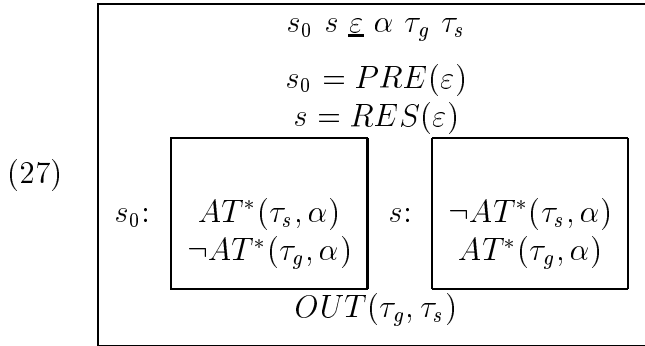
$$(25) \quad \boxed{\begin{array}{l} s_0 \ s \ \underline{\varepsilon} \ \alpha \ \tau \\ s_0 = PRE(\varepsilon) \\ s = RES(\varepsilon) \\ s_0: \neg UP^*(\tau, \alpha) \\ s: UP^*(\tau, \alpha) \end{array}}$$

In (25), α is Theme, and τ is Goal. In the case of *fel-ugat* ‘bark awake’, *fel-csenget* ‘awake by ringing at the door’, *fel-ráz* ‘shake awake’, τ can specify a state of being awake (so, it is more like a property than a location proper).

Generalising to the worst case: prefixes introduce a triple of discourse referents: $\langle Theme, Source, Goal \rangle$. The familiarity of the Source or the Goal is the result of resolution to a familiar reference location. α is dependent on the locational discourse referents, hence its presuppositional nature—when these referents, too, are presuppositional. This in turn hinges on the way $\tau_{s,g}$ are bound: binding may be anaphoric or quantificational.

- (26) a. Ebben a városban mindig ki-fütyülik a politikusokat
 This-in the city-in always out-whistle+Def3Pl the politician-Pl-Acc
 “In this city, politicians are always whistled off (the stage)”
 b. Tavaly minden politikust ki-fütyültek
 Last-year every politician-Acc out-whistled-3Pl
 “Every politician was whistled off (the stage) last year”

Information on the Source τ_s may be yielded by an inference mechanism: if in state s_0 , α is not at τ_g , one may infer that there is a Source location τ_s , and in s_0 , α is AT τ_s . Whatever mechanism yields it, one needs τ_s (i) because of the condition that the Goal τ_g is OUT , relative to some τ_s , and (ii) because when there is a Source phrase in the sentence or in previous context, it needs to be bound to the referent provided by that phrase.



(27) says that the precondition state is of α being at the Source location τ_s , and the consequent state is of α being some Goal location τ_g (and not at the Source). In addition, the Goal is OUT , relative to the Source.

As in the case of *fel* ‘up’, *ki-* can contribute merely a label for a consequent state, whose content is contributed by the host verb. Beside *ki-eszi a vagyonából* ‘eats out of house and fortune’, one also has *ki-vesz* lit. out-take, meaning ‘make out’, ‘see well’, ‘discern’.

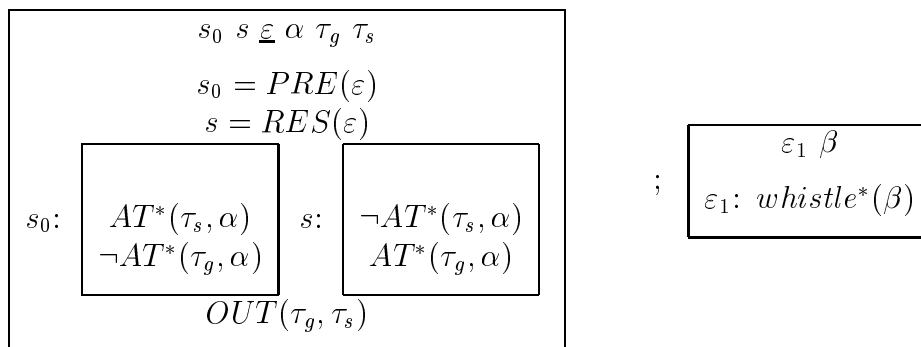
In the case of (12d), repeated here as (28), the Source is in fact the set of John’s possessions, and the Goal is —??? As in the case of *fel-ugat*, $\tau_{s,g}$ are taken to be underspecified, and to lend content to the precondition and consequent states: The precondition state is one of John being in possession of the relevant things. The precondition state says that (as a result of Mary’s eating activities) John is no longer in possession of these things.

- (28) Mari ki-ette Jánost a vagyonából
 Mary out-ate+Def3Sg John-Acc the fortune-Poss3Sg-from
 “Mary ate John out of house and fortune”

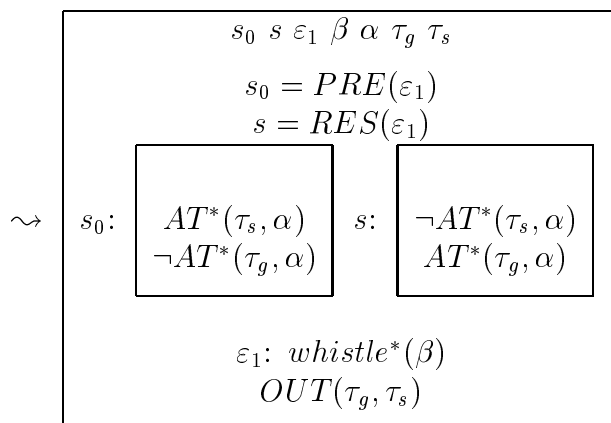
Composition

Composition: as with adjectival resultatives, it is merge constrained by surface syntax.

- (29) *ki-* *fütyül*
 out- whistle



kifütyül
 whistle off



4 Depictives, Conclusions

Depictives

- (30) Marit [*részeg-en látták*]
 Mary-Acc [*drunk-ly saw+Def3Pl*]
 “They saw Mary drunk”

- If drunkenness a property of Mary: *pro* subject may be existential...
- If drunkenness a property of the seers: *pro* subject has to be anaphoric/salient. The reason: the individual discourse referent contributed by the adverb, and a ‘backgrounding’ of the information contributed by the verb.

Another test: the disappearance of the Definiteness Effect with certain verbs:

- (31) a. *János mindenkit talált
John everyone-Acc found
Intended: “John found everyone”
b. (#)János mindenkit [*részeg-en* talált]
John everyone-Acc [*drunk-ly* found]
“John found everyone drunk”

The point with (31b): the Definiteness Effect is cancelled only if drunkenness is the property of the object.

- (32) János mindenkit részegen látott
John everyone-Acc drunk-ly saw
“John saw everyone drunk”

- If drunkenness is a property of the persons seen: the depictive need not be prosodically prominent;
- if drunkenness is a property of John: the depictive needs to be prosodically prominent; then the sentence means *For every person x, John saw x when he was drunk.*

Quasi-specificity, loss of the Definiteness Effect: As with resultatives, the event description contributed by the verb is taken to be backgrounded (relative to the local context of the depictive). A primary representation for (31) would look like (23), with the verb-DRS as presupposition and the depictive’s DRS as assertion.

E.g., in (33b), the component *see Mary* seems to be backgrounded, even though the answer to the *why*-question is usually all-Focus.

- (33) a. Miért szomorúak a fiúk?
Why sad-Pl the boy-Pl
“Why are the boys sad?”
b. Mert *részeg-en* látták Marit,
Because *drunk-ly* saw+Def3Sg Mary-Acc,
c. és nem emlékeznek az arcára
and not remember-3Pl the face-Poss3Sg-onto
“Because they were drunk when they saw Mary, and they
can’t remember her face”

The Status of Merge as Composition

For Hungarian, a simple composition rule seems to be sufficient: merge the DRS-
es contributed by the ‘modifier’ and the verb. Triggering configuration: $[X V]$, or
 $[[X_i V]_{[sct_i NP]]}$. But the underlying semantics may in fact be less syntax-friendly,
because of ‘backgrounding’ effects with certain resultatives and depictives.

‘Backgrounding’ can correspond to presupposition computation. Surface compo-
sition can follow, or interfere with, presupposition justification within the complex
predicate.

Conclusions

- Implicit arguments may vary w.r.t. pronominal and existential status; this is linked to the modifier (adjunct) vs predicate/co-head status of the entries that introduce them;
- Semantic composition: syntactically constrained merge (similar to, but simpler than, Dowty's or Bittner's construction rules).
- Semantic effects that are less syntax-friendly: 'backgrounding' relative to the secondary predicate. This may be strictly local, relative to the context of the secondary predicate, but its effects are visible in the cancellation of the Definiteness Effect.
- Presuppositional within complex predicates (with some effects felt at clause level): the source can be the anchored status of a distinguished discourse referent (prefixal resultatives) or said backgrounding. In fact, these quasi-presuppositional effects are like a reversal of van der Sandt's slogan.

To van der Sandt, presuppositions are like pronouns. Here, pronominal/anchored discourse referents create the effects of presuppositions.

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