

What triggers the Hungarian objective paradigm?

A structural and feature-based account

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Outline

Introduction

- Hungarian verb paradigms
- Current approaches

Improving the theory

- Problems with current approaches
- A hybrid approach: [DEF] in DP

Conclusions and Outlook

Background

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- Two transitive verb paradigms: one depends on a property of the direct object.
- Direct objects are always marked accusative.
- What triggers DOM in Hungarian?

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Two transitive verb paradigms: SUBJ and OBJ

“Subjective” and “objective” paradigms:

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see-**2SG.SUBJ** a dog-ACC
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- “Agreement” with **some property** of the accusative/direct object in (2): definiteness?

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- What’s the common property?

Today’s focus: possessed direct objects.

Examples: possessive structures I

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- Possessors do not have to be spelled out, (6):

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'my dog'

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(6) a kutyá-**m**
the dog-**1SG.PX**
'my dog'

- Dative possessors appear in the *mihi est*-construction:

(7) Mari-nak van kutyá-ja
M.-DAT is dog-3SG.PX
'Mari has a dog'

Possessives: Summary

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Most possessed objects trigger the objective paradigm. How?

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Two main approaches:

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 - Feature is passed on in the structure to higher projections.
 - Challenges the DP hypothesis, makes interpretational predictions.
 - But: [DEF +] **is not** definiteness!

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- Only (11a) triggers the objective paradigm.

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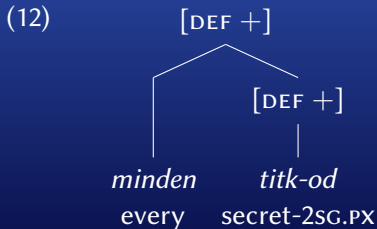
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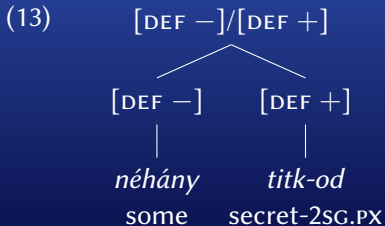
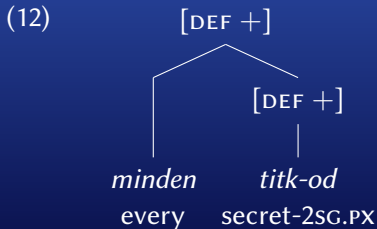
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 - *minden* ‘every’ — no DP vs. *valamennyi* ‘each’ — DP!
 - The quantifiers have the **same** syntactic distribution.

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- Predicts wrong distribution of paradigms w.r.t. possessive structures.

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(14) a. macská-ja
 cat-3SG.PX
 ‘his/her cat’

b. $\lambda x.\lambda y.[:>> [y : \text{CAT}(y) \wedge \text{POSS}(x, y)]]$

(Coppock 2012: 21, emphasis added)

Possessive structures: Problems I

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- (15a) means something like (16):

$$(16) \quad \neg \exists x [\text{CAT}(x) \wedge \text{POSS}(m, x)]$$

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→ Using both [DEF +]/[DEF -] is not necessary.

Possessive structures: *csak*-test

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(19) *Nincs Mari-nak macská-ja*.
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(cf. Bartos 1999, Coppock 2012)

Possessives with the subjective paradigm II

Prediction: (20a) should be much worse if the possessor and the possessum form a constituent.

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→ The syntactic structure does play a role in paradigm choice.

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- What if there’s no modifier at all?

(23) a. Lát-ok valaki-d-et.
 see- **1SG.SUBJ** someone-2SG.PX-ACC
 ‘I see someone of yours.’ (non-specific)

b. Lát-om valaki-d-et.
 see- **1SG.OBJ** someone-2SG.PX-ACC
 ‘I see someone of yours.’ (specific)

(cf. Coppock 2012: 18)

Possessives with the subjective paradigm III

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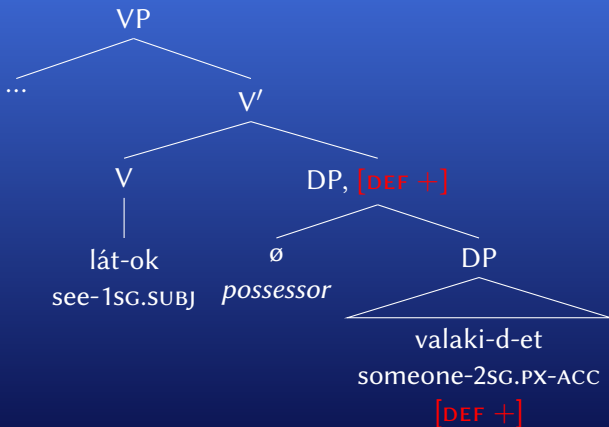
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- Coppock (2012) rules out the subjective paradigm in (23).

Possessives with the subjective paradigm III

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- Coppock's (2012) analysis does not include such structural information (cf. (20)),
- it can not account for all variation in possessive structures (cf. (23)),
- and it makes wrong predictions about presuppositions (cf. (15)).

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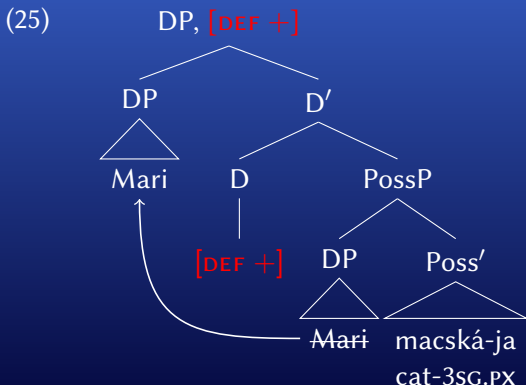
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- Possessors move to DP for feature checking.
- Extracted possessors have to leave through a lower projection, don't pass DP.
- μ_X does not provide semantic content apart from a POSS relation.

Nominative possessors

- Nominative possessors are in SpecDP.
- They make D^0 [DEF +], i.e. the object triggers the objective paradigm.



Dative possessors

If they form a constituent, dative possessors are in a higher SpecDP:

- (26) Pál-nak öt vers-é-t
P.-DAT five poem-3SG.PX-ACC
'Pál's five poems'

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- Coppock (2012) rules these out by principle.

Predictions III

A few more examples:

- (29) Az egri kávé-s-nak két lány-á-t
 the Eger-FROM coffee seller-DAT two girl-3SG.PX-ACC
 ismér-ek.
 know-1SG.SUBJ
 ‘I know two of the coffee seller’s daughters.’
 (folk song, cited in Rácz 1968: 279)
- (30) Petőfi-nek három arckép-é-t ismer-ek.
 P.-DAT three portrait-3SG.PX-ACC know-1SG.SUBJ
 ‘I know three portraits of Petőfi.’
 (János Arany, cited in H. Varga 2010: 49)

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 - Complement clauses: some CP objects trigger the objective paradigm.

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- Connections to differential case marking? Scrambling? Object shift?

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