

CONTROL RESULTATIVES IN HUNGARIAN

Formal semantic analyses of resultative constructions (e.g. *hammer the metal flat*, *cry the handkerchief soggy*) have to confront the problem of concealed causatives ([?]): Usually there is no surface clue that the denotata of the predicates involved stand in a causal relation. A first task for any semantic analysis is therefore to locate the source of this information.

Semantic analyses of resultatives have usually pursued one of the following three strategies:

1. Introduce causal information as a construction rule. In [?] *CAUSE* is introduced as a connective.
2. Alter the entry of the verb. [?] introduces a lexical operation *ARG* so that, for instance, *ARG(schreiben)* yields a function from the description of a writing event to a complex that includes some consequence of that event.
3. Alter the entry of the secondary predicate. According to [?] result adjectives combine with a covert suffix that turns them into a function expecting the description of the causing event.

This contribution intends to accomplish the following:

1. Argue that the third strategy is the right one. New, empirical arguments will be brought forth to supplement Kratzer’s general methodological arguments. These arguments involve English and German resultatives with *PPs*, and special case endings that are obligatory in Hungarian nominal resultatives. These prepositions and case endings can be seen as the overt counterparts of the zero morpheme proposed by Kratzer for English and German.

In German the directional preposition *zu* can be seen as a functional head relating two event descriptions (as in *zum Ritter schlagen*, ‘to hit into knighthood’). Hungarian result nominals are obligatorily marked with one of three case endings. Depictives are also obligatorily marked, with yet another case ending. E.g. *piros-ra* ‘red onto’ is for resultatives, and *piros-an* ‘red-on’ is for depictives. Nouns in resultatives are usually marked with the Translative case, specially reserved for changes of state. The Hungarian counterpart of *zum Ritter schlagen* is, accordingly, *lovag-gá üt* (‘knight-Transl hit’). It is straightforward to analyse Hungarian case endings (in these syntactic contexts) as turning state descriptions into expressions needing to be completed with the description of the causing event.

2. It is proposed that Hungarian nominal resultatives are so-called control resultatives (in the sense of [?]), as far as their semantics is concerned: They share an argument with the verb (the verb’s Patient) and describe the ‘canonical’ consequent state of the transition described by the verb. This explains the unacceptability (at least in the author’s dialect) of examples like *éber-re ugat* (*bark awake*) or *lucskosra sír* (*cry soggy*).¹ English and German nominal resultatives on the other hand are obviously not confined to the control subclass.

As a corollary, ‘raising’ and ECM resultatives in Hungarian are claimed to be conveyed by prefixal constructions: Prefixal resultatives can have arguments not subcategorised for by the verb, and can describe resulting states that are not the host verbs’ ‘canonical’ consequent states. For instance, *bark awake* and *cry soggy* are both rendered with prefixed verbs in Hungarian (*fel-ugat*, lit. ‘up-bark’ and *tele-sír* lit. ‘full-weep’). Prefixes that participate in resultative constructions will be analysed as introducing their own ‘Subject’ variable; their entries say that their Subject is in a state caused by some event.

An interesting consequence of the claim concerning the status of Hungarian nominal resultatives is that they are predicted to lack the ‘subject-oriented’ readings reported in [?] and [?]: The Hungarian counterpart of *kick free* is at least bizarre (*szabad-ra rúg(-dos)*), presumably because the verb offers no argument to share with the adjective.

Another welcome prediction is that Hungarian transitives are not intransitivised in nominal resultatives. This can explain why Hungarian nominal resultatives seem to lack the ‘unintended consequence’ reading of English *paint his nails purple* (on the scenario where painting, say, the walls, results in the Agent’s nails getting paint on them). According to Kratzer such construals in English and German follow from the suppression of the verb’s Theme, and the freedom of the result predicate to introduce new arguments. This does not seem to be possible in Hungarian, precisely because nominal resultatives ‘piggyback’ on the verb’s argument structure.

3. It is argued that resultatives are best analysed in Dynamic Semantics. There are two types of argument for a dynamic analysis. (i) The first concerns the \pm presuppositional or \pm familiar, indexical character of one of the predicates or of certain arguments.
 - a. For instance, Hungarian *el-szeret* lit. ‘away-love’, ‘woo away’, is a presupposition trigger, like many other prefixed verbs. It presupposes a pre-existing relationship for the Theme (broken up because of the Agent’s activities).
 - b. The disappearance of the Definiteness Effect with e.g. verbs of creation (Szabolcsi) indicates that result predicates can ‘interfere’ with \pm novelty restrictions imposed by the verbs they combine with. (The relevant construal of (1b) below is that some tight pullovers have been created.)

- (1) a. *Mari kötött minden pulóvert b. OK: Mari szűkre kötött minden pulóvert
 Int.: ‘Mary knitted every pullover’ ‘Mary knitted every pullover into a tight fit’

¹Fake reflexives can rescue many nominal constructions in Hungarian, as expected. This paper does not offer an account of fake reflexives.

(ii) The second type of argument for a dynamic analysis has to do with complexities arising with ‘Fregean’ methods. ‘Fregean’ analyses (where one of the predicates is a function expecting the other as argument) are either not sufficiently fine-grained, or rely on ad hoc type lifting rules ([?], [?]). These problems have two sources: the varying arity of host verbs and the non-uniform aspectual contribution of result predicates. It is more expedient, it is argued, to resort to a framework where sentence internal composition is like the resolution of cross-sentential anaphora. One way of implementing this is with asymmetric merge ; ([?], [?]). The verb and the secondary predicate are translated as open formulæ, and variables that in ‘Fregean’ analyses are bound by the λ -operator will be rendered as free variables needing to be merged with a constant or a bound variable from another expression.

– Asymmetric merge allows for unifying the information contributed by the two predicates, regardless of the arity of the verb or the aspectual contribution of the result predicate: This predicate sometimes adds a final state to the verb (*hammer the metal flat*), and sometimes it merely modifies the consequent state introduced by the verb (*paint the fence red*). There is also crosslinguistic variation in this regard: verbs of surface contact are telic in English and atelic in Hungarian. In *piros-ra fest* (‘paint red’) the case-marked adjective adds a new state to the construction (which is nevertheless judged by speakers as being a typical result of a painting activity).

In sum, aspectual variation can be handled in a uniform manner with asymmetric merge, without needing to stipulate ambiguities, or the requantification of eventuality arguments.

A sample fragment: $\emptyset(\underline{red})$ is represented as $red(s)(\theta)$; $CAUSE(\underline{e}, s)$ (underlining marks free variables). Hungarian *piros-ra* is $red(s)(\theta)$; $s = Res(\underline{e})$; $\theta = Pat(\underline{e})$. These conditions capture the constraints on control resultatives: The Subject of the case-marked adjective is the same as the Patient of the causing event; s marks the consequent state of the verb, yielded by the function Res (from [?]).

Result prepositions or prefixes have entries similar to result nominals; the difference is that their argument structure is richer, their Subject is not linked to the Patient of the verb, and the condition $CAUSE(e, s)$ is already part of their entry.

Paint is $ec = \langle e, s \rangle$; $paint(e)(\beta)(\alpha)$; $s = Res(e)$; $P(s)(\beta)$: there is an event complex ec with transition e (a painting event) and consequent state s (with Patient β having some property P). Hungarian *fest* is rendered as an activity verb; the event complex ec will be formed with the addition of the result adjective.

Composition is driven by the identification of the free event variable in the entry of the secondary predicate with the event argument of the verb, and the identification of the Subject of the secondary predicate with the Patient argument of the verb, if there is one. In addition a lexical mechanism along the lines of [?] is assumed, in order to handle the demotion or suppression of certain arguments of the verb (as in *tele-merni a tányéért levessel* ‘ladle the plate full with soup’ or *ki-inni a poharat*, ‘drink the glass empty’).

References

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