

# Result states in Hungarian

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## 1 Result states: a proposal

The interpretation of each of the following sentences appears to involve what may be called a *result state*:

- (1) a. A macskám, Tigris, öt napra eltűnt.  
the cat.my Tigris five day.SUBL disappeared  
'My cat, Tigris, disappeared for five days.'
- b. A szomszédkutya, Rex, aki megtalálta, hőssé vált a szememben.  
the neighbor.dog Rex who found.her hero.TRANS turn the eye.my.INES  
'The dog next door, Rex, who found her, turned into a hero in my eyes.'
- (2) a. Egy évre kaptam egy személyi kölcsönt a banktól.  
one year.SUBL received.I a personal loan.ACC the bank.ABL  
'I received a personal loan from the bank for one year.'
- b. A kölcsönből zöldre festettem az összes falamat.  
the loan.ELA green.SUBL painted.I the all wall.my.ACC  
'From the loan I painted all my walls green.'

In (1a), Tigris was out of sight for five days, and her being gone was the result of her disappearing. In (1b), Rex's being a hero was the result of his turning into one. In (2a), I had the loan from the bank for a year, and my having the loan was the result of my receiving it. Finally, in (2b), all my walls were green, which was the result of my painting them that color.

On the present conception, a result state is inherently a relational notion: a state  $s$  is a result state with respect to an event  $e$ , an individual  $x$ , a two-place property  $V$ , and a two-place property  $R$  just in case  $V$  holds of  $e$  and  $x$ ,  $e$  causes  $s$ ,  $e$  immediately precedes  $s$ , and  $R$  holds of  $s$  and  $x$ . To this we should add a “sanity check” to ensure that no result state of type  $R$  with respect to  $x$  is attained earlier in  $e$ . In other words,  $e$  should be the “smallest event” that has a result state of type  $R$  with respect to  $x$ .

- (3)  $\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \begin{array}{l} V(e, x) \wedge \text{cause}(e, s) \wedge e \prec s \wedge R(s, x) \wedge \\ \neg \exists e' \exists s' (e' \sqsubset_{ini} e \wedge V(e', x) \wedge \text{cause}(e', s') \wedge e' \prec s' \wedge R(s', x)) \end{array} \triangleright \text{result state}$

*Remark:*  $\prec$  denotes immediate temporal precedence and  $\sqsubset_{ini}$  stands for initial proper part.

The definition of result state in (3) covers the case where  $V$  and  $R$  are two-place properties. But sometimes we need to handle the case where these correspond to three-place properties between events and two individuals, represented by  $U$  and  $Q$  in (4).

$$(4) \quad \text{result-state}^+(s, e, x, y, U, Q) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \quad \triangleright \text{result state plus} \\ U(e, x, y) \wedge \text{cause}(e, s) \wedge e \prec s \wedge Q(s, x, y) \wedge \\ \neg \exists e' \exists s' (e' \sqsubset_{ini} e \wedge U(e', x, y) \wedge \text{cause}(e', s') \wedge e' \prec s' \wedge Q(s', x, y))$$

Returning to (1) and (2), there are two kinds of examples to contend with: (i) where the result state is overtly expressed (*hőssé válik, zöldre fest*), and (ii) where the result state is covertly expressed (*eltűnik, kap*). Beginning with the latter, it seems plausible to think of certain verbs as lexically expressing the type of result states involved:

$$(5) \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{a. } \text{eltűnik- 'disappear-'} \rightsquigarrow \\ \quad \lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}(s, e, x, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{disappear}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda s'. \text{out-of-sight}(s', x')) \\ \text{b. } \text{kap- 'receive-'} \rightsquigarrow \\ \quad \lambda y \lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}^+(s, e, x, y, \lambda y' \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{receive}(e', x', y'), \\ \quad \lambda y' \lambda x' \lambda s'. \text{have}(s', x', y')) \end{array}$$

In prose, *eltűnik* ‘disappear’ denotes the three-place relation between events  $e$ , states  $s$ , and individuals  $x$  such that  $e$  is a disappearing of  $x$  and  $e$  has the result state  $s$  in which  $x$  is out of sight. Analogously, *kap* ‘receive’ denotes the four-place relation between events  $e$ , states  $s$ , and individuals  $x$  and  $y$  such that  $e$  is a receiving of  $y$  by  $x$  and  $e$  has the result state  $s$  in which  $x$  has  $y$ .

Turning to the first kind of example, where the result state is overtly expressed, here the type of result states is contributed by the verb’s predicate complement:

$$(6) \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{a. } R\text{-v}Á \text{ válik- 'turn- into } R' \rightsquigarrow \\ \quad \lambda R \lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}(s, e, x, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{turn-into}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda e'. R(e', x')) \\ \text{b. } \text{hős 'hero'} \rightsquigarrow \lambda x \lambda s. \text{hero}(s, x) \\ \text{c. } \text{hőssé válik- 'turn- into a hero'} \rightsquigarrow \\ \quad \lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}(s, e, x, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{turn-into}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda s'. \text{hero}(s', x')) \end{array}$$

$$(7) \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{a. } \text{AGENT } R\text{-r}A \text{ fest- 'AGENT paint- } R' \rightsquigarrow \\ \quad \lambda R \lambda y \lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{agent}(e, x) \wedge \text{result-state}(s, e, y, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{paint}(e', x'), R) \\ \text{b. } \text{zöld 'green'} \rightsquigarrow \lambda x \lambda s. \text{green}(s, x) \\ \text{c. } \text{AGENT } \text{zöldre fest- 'AGENT paint- green'} \rightsquigarrow \\ \quad \lambda y \lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{agent}(e, x) \wedge \text{result-state}(s, e, y, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{paint}(e', x'), \\ \quad \lambda x' \lambda s. \text{green}(s, x')) \end{array}$$

## 2 Temporal modifiers ending in *-rA*

A temporal modifier ending in *-rA* may be used to specify the duration of a result state, as seen in (1a) (*öt napra eltűnt* ‘disappeared for five days’) and (2a) (*egy évre kaptam egy személyi kölcsönt* ‘I received a personal loan for a year’). This may be called their *actuality-based* use:

$$(8) \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{a. } \text{öt napra}^a \text{ 'for five days'} \rightsquigarrow \quad \triangleright \text{actuality-based} \\ \quad \lambda W \lambda e. \exists s (W(e, s) \wedge \text{day}(s) \geq 5 \wedge \exists x \exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R))) \end{array}$$

- b. egy évre<sup>a</sup> ‘for a year’  $\rightsquigarrow$  ▷ actuality-based  
 $\lambda W \lambda e. \exists s (W(e, s) \wedge \text{year}(s) \geq 5 \wedge \exists x \exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R)))$

As seen in (8), such temporal modifiers apply to a relation between events  $e$  and states  $s$  and assert that there is such an  $s$  with the specified duration. The third conjunct in each case again serves as a kind of “sanity check” to ensure that  $s$  really is a result state of  $e$ .

The derivation of (1a) is as follows:

- (9) a. eltűnik- ‘disappear-’  $\rightsquigarrow$  (= (5a))  
 $\lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}(s, e, x, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{disappear}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda s'. \text{out-of-sight}(s', x'))$   
 b. Tigris ‘Tigris’  $\rightsquigarrow$  tigris  
 c. Tigris eltűnik- ‘Tigris disappear-’  $\rightsquigarrow$   
 $\lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}(s, e, \text{tigris}, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{disappear}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda s'. \text{out-of-sight}(s', x'))$   
 d. Tigris eltűnik- öt napra<sup>a</sup> ‘Tigris disappear- for five days’  $\rightsquigarrow$   
 $\lambda e. \exists s (\text{result-state}(s, e, \text{tigris}, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{disappear}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda s'. \text{out-of-sight}(s', x')) \wedge$   
 $\text{day}(s) \geq 5 \wedge \exists x \exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R)))$

The event predicate in (9d) denotes the set of events  $e$  such that Tigris disappears in  $e$  and there is a state  $s$  such that  $s$  is a result state of  $e$  in which Tigris is out of sight and  $s$  lasts for at least five days.

## 2.1 The intention-based use

If a temporal modifier ending in  $-rA$  is combined with an agentive verb phrase, it appears that the specified duration of the result state need not actually hold but instead it may only be intended by the agent in question:

- (10) a. Réka harminc percre ment ki a kertbe, de tizenöt perc  
 Réka thirty minute.SUBL went out the garden.ILL but fifteen minute  
 után bejött, amikor elkezdett esni.  
 after in.came when began.it rain.INF  
 ‘Réka went out into the garden for thirty minutes but she came in after fifteen minutes when it began to rain.’  
 b. A tolvajok két hétre bújtak el, de egy hét után a rendőrség  
 the thieves two week.SUBL hid PREV but a week after the police  
 megtalálta őket.  
 found them  
 ‘The thieves hid for two weeks but the police found them after one week.’

In order to account for this reading, the analysis of temporal modifiers ending in  $-rA$  needs to be made more complex by relativizing the specified duration of the result state to what the agent intends. This use may be called their *intention-based* interpretation:

- (11) a. harminc percre<sup>i</sup> ‘for thirty minutes’  $\rightsquigarrow$  ▷ intention-based  
 $\lambda T \lambda x \lambda e. \exists s (T(e, s, x) \wedge \text{agent}(e, x) \wedge$   
 $\exists s' (\text{intend}(s', x, \wedge \exists s'' (\text{minute}(s'') \geq 30 \wedge$   
 $\exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s'', e, x, V, R)))))) \wedge$   
 $\exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R)))$

- b. két hétre<sup>i</sup> ‘for two weeks’  $\rightsquigarrow$  ▷ intention-based  
 $\lambda T \lambda x \lambda e. \exists s (T(e, s, x) \wedge \text{agent}(e, x) \wedge$   
 $\exists s' (\text{intend}(s', x, \wedge \exists s'' (\text{week}(s'') \geq 2 \wedge$   
 $\exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s'', e, x, V, R)))))) \wedge$   
 $\exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R)))$

As shown in (11), the specified duration in each case applies to a result state  $s''$  that is within the scope of the relation *intend* (where the state of intending is designated by  $s'$ ). At the same time, note that there has to be an actual result state  $s$  of  $e$  but  $s$  need not have the duration specified by the temporal modifier.

A partial derivation of the first clause of (10a) is as follows:

- (12) a. AGENT kimegy- a kertbe ‘AGENT go- out into the garden’  $\rightsquigarrow$   
 $\lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}(s, e, x, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{go}(e', x'),$   
 $\lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{out-in-the-garden}(e', x')) \wedge$   
 $\text{agent}(e, x)$
- b. harminc percre<sup>i</sup> megy- ki AGENT a kertbe  $\rightsquigarrow$   
‘go- out into the garden for thirty minutes’  
 $\lambda x \lambda e. \exists s (\text{result-state}(s, e, x, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{go}(e', x'),$   
 $\lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{out-in-the-garden}(e', x')) \wedge$   
 $\text{agent}(e, x) \wedge \exists s' (\text{intend}(s', x, \wedge \exists s'' (\text{minute}(s'') \geq 30 \wedge$   
 $\exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s'', e, x, V, R)))))) \wedge$   
 $\exists V \exists R (\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R)))$

In sum, temporal modifiers ending in *-rA* have two interpretations, the actuality-based use and the intention-based use, both of which may be attributed to an ambiguity of *-rA*.

## 2.2 A third use?

Gyuris (2003, pp. 23–24) claims that temporal modifiers ending in *-rA* have an additional special use, what she calls an “existential use” (*egzisztenciális használat*). Kiefer (2006, fn. 42, p. 232) also mentions this use of these modifiers but calls it instead a “goal adverbial sense” (*célhatározói értelem*). Here are a few examples that are supposed to illustrate this use:

- (13) a. Főztem ebédet három napra. (= Gyuris’s (40a))  
cooked.I lunch.ACC three day.SUBL  
‘I cooked lunch for three days.’
- b. Felverte a sátrat két napra. (= Gyuris’s (40c))  
pitched.he the tent.ACC two day.SUBL  
‘He pitched the tent for two days.’
- c. Bevásároltam egy hónapra. (= Kiefer’s (ii), fn. 42, p. 232)  
did.shopping.I a month.SUBL  
‘I did shopping for a month.’

Unfortunately, neither Gyuris nor Kiefer explains why such examples speak in favor of a distinct use of temporal modifiers ending in *-rA*, and nor does either of them present an analysis of this use, which would have been helpful in trying to settle the matter.

In the absence of a compelling reason to the contrary, the default strategy should be to see whether the two uses of temporal modifiers ending in *-rA* identified so far,

the actuality-based interpretation and the intention-based interpretation, are sufficient to account for such data. According to this strategy, (13b), for example, has an actuality-based interpretation:

- (14) a. felver- ‘pitch’  $\rightsquigarrow$   
 $\lambda y \lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}(s, e, y, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{pitch}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{be-set-up}(e', x'))$   
 b. felver- a sátrat két napra ‘pitch- the tent for two days’  $\rightsquigarrow$   
 $\lambda e. \exists s(\text{result-state}(s, e, \text{the-tent}, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{pitch}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{be-set-up}(e', x')) \wedge$   
 $\text{day}(s) \geq 2 \wedge \exists x \exists V \exists R(\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R)))$

But it may also have an intention-based interpretation:

- (15) a. AGENT felver- a sátrat ‘AGENT pitch- the tent’  $\rightsquigarrow$   
 $\lambda x \lambda s \lambda e. \text{result-state}(s, e, y, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{pitch}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{be-set-up}(e', x')) \wedge$   
 $\text{agent}(e, x)$   
 b. AGENT felver- a sátrat két napra<sup>i</sup> ‘AGENT pitch- the tent for two days’  $\rightsquigarrow$   
 $\lambda x \lambda e. \exists s(\text{result-state}(s, e, y, \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{pitch}(e', x'), \lambda x' \lambda e'. \text{be-set-up}(e', x')) \wedge$   
 $\text{agent}(e, x) \wedge \exists s'(\text{intend}(s', x, \wedge \exists s''(\text{week}(s'') \geq 2 \wedge$   
 $\exists V \exists R(\text{result-state}(s'', e, x, V, R)))) \wedge$   
 $\exists V \exists R(\text{result-state}(s, e, x, V, R)))$

Thus, the present conclusion is that the examples in (13) don’t provide evidence for the postulation of a third use of temporal modifiers ending in *-rA*, *pace* Gyuris and Kiefer.<sup>1</sup>

### 3 Potential empirical problems

Sometimes adding a temporal modifier ending in *-rA* yields an impression of unacceptability. To account for this, Gyuris (2003) and Kiefer (2006) claim that the semantics of such modifiers has to make reference to such notions as “control” and “reversibility.” To quote Kiefer (p. 240): “[A] *-rA* ragos időmódosító akkor alkalmazható, ha az utóállapot vagy a  $\text{KONTROLL}(x, e)$  vagy a  $\text{REV}(e)$  predikátummal egészül ki. [A temporal modifier ending in *-rA* is only applicable if the result state is further characterized by either the predicate  $\text{KONTROLL}(x, e)$  or  $\text{REV}(e)$ .]” Unfortunately, a significant difficulty with this claim is that neither Gyuris (2003) nor Kiefer (2006) clarifies how “control” and “reversibility” are to be understood—they remain wholly unanalyzed notions.

The present view is that no such complication of the *semantics* of temporal modifiers ending in *-rA* is called for: either the unacceptability observed is *pragmatic* in character and may disappear in an appropriate context or there is no result state that may be modified to begin with. I examine three potentially problematic examples here.

#### 3.1 *kivasal* ‘iron (out)’

What is the problem (if there is one) with the following sentence?

- (16) \*Egy órára kivasaltam a ruhámat. (= Gyuris’s (48); judgment hers)  
 an hour.SUBL ironed.I the clothes.my.ACC

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<sup>1</sup>Even if *Főztem ebédet* in (13a) is considered to be an instance of an existential construction (at the same time, it is doubtful that an existential construction is present in (13b)–(13c)), it does not follow that (13a) illustrates a third use of temporal modifiers ending in *-rA*. What such modifiers require is a result state; the source of this result state is immaterial from the perspective of such modifiers.

Intuitively, the result state of an ironing (out) event is a state in which the thing ironed is free of creases or at least has fewer creases than it did at the beginning of the ironing out event. If correct, then there shouldn't be a *semantic* problem with (16) because I may have had reason to think that my clothes would need to be ironed again an hour later. In practice, of course, such a situation is unlikely to arise.

Gyuris (2003, 26–27) disagrees with the intuition that an ironing (out) event results in no or at least fewer creases:

A megoldás kulcsa az, hogy bár a vasalási esemény célja általában az, hogy a kivasalts dolog ne legyen gyűrött, nem minden vasalásra igaz, hogy ez be is következik. Egy vasalási esemény végén ugyanakkor mindig elmondható, hogy az adott dolog ki van vasalva, ami tehát minőségileg más állapot, mint az az állapot, hogy a ruha nem gyűrött. Annak az állapotnak, hogy egy dolog ki van vasalva [...] nem lehet szándékosan véget vetni.

[The key to the solution is that although the goal of an ironing event is generally that the ironed thing not be creased, it's not the case for every ironing that this is the consequence. At the same time, at the end of an ironing event it's always possible to say that the thing in question is ironed out, which is thus qualitatively another state than the state where the clothes are not creased. One can't intentionally put an end to the state where a thing is ironed out.]

Unfortunately, this reasoning isn't as compelling as it may initially seem because of a confounding of ironing (*vasalási*) events with ironing out (*kivasalási*) events. On the contrary, *pace* Gyuris, ironing (*vasalási*) events don't always have a result state in which the thing in question is ironed out (*ki van vasalva*). If we correct this and focus instead on ironing out (*kivasalási*) events, then we might attempt to say that the result states in question are states in which the thing in question is ironed out (*ki van vasalva*), but this claim has real content to the extent to which we can say what such states are like. But now the difficulty is that, according to Gyuris, looking for no or fewer creases won't help because a state in which something is ironed out (*ki van vasalva*) is “qualitatively another state” from one in which that thing is not creased. So what characterizes a state where something is ironed out (*ki van vasalva*)? Unfortunately, answering that it was ironed out (*ki lett vasalva*) won't help either.

What does a well-known dictionary say about the meaning of *kivasal* ‘iron (out)’?

- **kivasal** ts ige **1.** ⟨Ruhafélét⟩ vasalóval kisimít, ill. a kellő formájúra alakít. *Ki-vasalta a zakót.* [...] (*Magyar értelmező kéziszótár*, hetedik, változatlan kiadás, 1987)  
 (⟨Clothes and the like⟩ smooth/straighten out, or shape into the necessary form. *He ironed out the jacket.* [...])

This definition seems to confirm the intuition described at the outset. If correct, we don't have to follow Gyuris (or Kiefer 2006 for that matter, who follows her) in mystifying the result states of ironing (out) (*kivasalási*) events. If a piece of clothing is ironed (out), then it minimally has fewer creases than it had before (ideally, no creases). And, of course, *pace* Gyuris, one can intentionally put an end to this state, e.g., by making creases in the piece of clothing in question. Consequently, there's nothing *semantically* anomalous about (16). In fact, similar sentences can be contextualized with a little effort—consider the following attempt, which sounds more natural than (16):

- (17) Két hetente ki szoktam vasalni az ingeimet, mert két hetente  
 two week.every out used.I iron the shirts.my.ACC because two week.every  
 mindig szükséges. Ma megint két hétre kivastaltam őket, és most  
 always necessary today again two week.SUBL out.ironed.I them.ACC and now  
 örülök, hogy megint két hétre ki vannak vasalva!  
 pleased.am.I COMP again two week.SUBL out are ironed  
 ‘Every two weeks I iron my shirts, because every two weeks it’s always necessary.  
 Today I ironed them for another two weeks and now I’m pleased that they’re  
 ironed for another two weeks!’

### 3.2 *becsuk* ‘shut’ vs *becsap* ‘slam’

The following contrast provides another puzzle:

- (18) a. Réka tíz percre becsukta az ajtót.  
 Réka ten minute.SUBL closed the door.ACC  
 ‘Réka closed the door for ten minutes.’  
 b. #Réka tíz percre becsapta az ajtót.  
 Réka ten minute.SUBL slammed the door.ACC  
 ‘Réka slammed the door for ten minutes.’

Gyuris (p. 29) claims that in the case of *becsap* ‘slam’ the result state is not considered reversible, whereas in the case of *becsuk* ‘close’ it is, which “probably explains” (*valószínűleg megmagyarázza*) the contrast in acceptability between pairs like (18a) and (18b). The difficulty, of course, is that it’s not so clear why the result state of *becsap* ‘slam’ shouldn’t be considered reversible.

A more likely explanation is that *becsap* ‘slam’ doesn’t entail a result state to begin with, in contrast to *becsuk* ‘close’. The meaning of *becsuk* ‘close’ entails that the thing closed is closed, whereas that of *becsap* ‘slam’ doesn’t entail that the thing slammed should be in any particular result state. Most strikingly, a slammed door need not be closed after the slamming event. But if it’s correct that *becsap* ‘slam’ doesn’t imply a result state, then modification by a temporal modifier ending in *-rA* shouldn’t be possible, as desired.

### 3.3 *bebizonyít* ‘prove’

Finally, consider the following unacceptable sentence:

- (19) #Réka két hétre bebizonyította a tételt.  
 Réka two week.SUBL proved the theorem.ACC  
 ‘Réka proved the theorem for two weeks.’

Here the problem is that if you prove a theorem, it is proven forever, i.e., the result state in which the theorem is proven lasts forever. However, the use of *két hétre* ‘for two weeks’ on either of its two readings implicates that the result state in question ended after two weeks. But since this (by assumption) isn’t possible in this case, the use of *két hétre* ‘for two weeks’ yields a contradictory flavor.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>If we are nonetheless forced to interpret (19), it would seem to imply that Réka hadn’t really proven the theorem to begin with.

An alternative explanation for the unacceptability of (19) is that *bebizonyít* ‘prove’ doesn’t entail a result state to begin with. But this is a tricky matter: did the theorem already exist before Réka proved it? If so, then perhaps there is no result state entailed, in which case modification by a temporal modifier ending in *-rA* wouldn’t be possible, as desired.

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