On an unrecognised nonfinite construction in Hungarian

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
complex event nominals nominalisation negative concord negative quantifiers	This paper gives a short overview of the debate on a construction in Hungarian whose properties have classified it as nominal or verbal/clausal. On the basis of a new set of data additional criteria from negative quantifiers and negative concord are proposed to differentiate between the relevant characteristics determining its status.

1. Introduction

This article is the latest instalment in a debate on the nature of a particular construction in Hungarian that goes back to about twenty-five years, and even its immediate precursor is nearly ten years old. It began when on the basis of several types of constructions I proposed in Kenesei (2005) that *-ás/és* "nominalisations" or, in Szabolcsi's (1994) terminology, complex event nominals (CENs) behave as nonfinite clauses in a set of well-defined cases.

First, I will summarise my earlier arguments, and then review and argue against the latest development in this exchange, that is, Laczkó's (2009) views to the contrary. Finally, I will put forward new arguments for regarding these constructions as clauses as evidenced by the set of examples to be presented here.

2. Arguments for the clausal analysis of CENs

According to the arguments in Kenesei (2005), the reflexive and reciprocal anaphors in the clauses containing nonfinite verbs, or more precisely, participles, must find their antecedents in their own clauses in (1a) and

(2a), as against the pronominals in (1b) and (2b). "OP" stands for the phonetically empty operator, i.e., relative pronoun, associated with the noun *versek-et* 'poems-ACC'.

(1) a. A   lányok$_j$ elolvasták a   [[OP fiúk$_i$ által egymáshoz$_i$/magukhoz$_i$
        the girls   read.3PL the   boys by   each.other/themselves.ALL

   írt]   versek-et].
   written poems-ACC
   'The girls$_j$ have read the poems written by the boys$_i$ to each other$_j$/themselves$_i$.'

 b. A   lányok$_i$ elolvasták a [[OP fiúk$_j$ által hozzájuk$_i$ írt] versek-et].
    the girls   read.3PL the   boys by   they.ALL written poems-ACC
    'The girls$_i$ have read the poems written to them$_i$ by the boys$_j$.'

(2) a. A   lányok$_i$ elolvasták az [[OP egymáshoz$_i$/magukhoz$_i$ írt]   versek-et].
        the girls   read.3PL the   each.other/themselves.ALL written poems-ACC
        'The girls$_i$ have read the poems written to each other$_i$/themselves$_i$.'

 b. A   lányok$_i$ elolvasták a   [[OP hozzájuk$_i$ írt]   versek-et].
    the girls   read.3PL the   they.ALL written poems-ACC
    'The girls$_i$ have read the poems written to them$_i$.'

Without any proper analysis one could say that in (2a) the anaphors are bound by the subject *a lányok* 'the girls', but then (2b) could not be grammatical since in a position where the anaphor can be bound by its antecedent in subject no pronominal can be bound by an antecedent in the same subject position. And since according to the only possible construal of (2b) the poems were written by some person(s) different from the girls, it follows from the Binding Principle that the nonfinite clauses in (2a) and (2b) each contain a covert PRO subject, which compels us to posit the following structures for them, respectively.

(3) a. A   lányok$_i$ elolvasták az [[OP PRO$_i$ egymáshoz$_i$/magukhoz$_i$ írt]
        the girls   read.3PL the   each.other/themselves.ALL written
   versek-et].
   poems-ACC
   'The girls$_i$ have read the poems written to each other$_i$/themselves$_i$.'

 b. A   lányok$_i$ elolvasták a   [[OP PRO$_j$ hozzájuk$_i$ írt]   versek-et].
    the girls   read.3PL the   they.ALL written poems-ACC
    'The girls$_i$ have read the poems written to them$_i$.'

Note that in an ordinary possessive noun phrase both the anaphor and the pronominal can be coreferent with an antecedent outside the NP in question, as with the subjects in (4a–b).

(4) a. A fiúk$_i$ látták [egymás$_i$ rajz-á-t].
        the boys saw   each-other picture-POSS-ACC
        'The boys$_i$ saw each other$_i$'s pictures.'

    b. A fiúk$_i$ látták [az ő$_i$ rajz-uk-at].
        the boys saw   the he picture-POSS.PL-ACC
        'The boys$_i$ saw their$_i$ pictures.'

However, in the possessive constructions that contain CENs only anaphors are acceptable. No pronominal coreferent with the subject is tolerated, just as in the examples with nonfinite predicates in (2) and (3).[1]

(5) a. A fiúk$_i$ abbahagyták [egymás$_i$ rajzol-ás-á-t].
        the boys stopped.3PL   each-other$_i$ draw-DEV-POSS-ACC
        'The boys$_i$ stopped drawing each other (lit.: each other's drawing).'

    b. *A fiúk$_i$ abbahagyták [az ő$_i$ rajzol-ás-uk-at].
        the boys stopped.3PL   the he draw-DEV-POSS.PL-ACC
        '*The boys$_i$ stopped drawing them$_i$ (lit.: their drawing).'

In view of the consequences of the Binding Principle this scenario is possible only if the bracketed constructions are not DPs but (nonfinite) clauses, whose subjects are empty pronominals, i.e., PROs, coreferential with the respective subjects of the matrix clauses, cf. (6).

(6) a. A fiúk$_i$ abbahagyták [PRO$_i$ egymás$_i$ rajzol-ás-á-t].
        'The boys$_i$ stopped PRO$_i$ drawing themselves$_i$.'

    b. A fiúk$_i$ abbahagyták [az PRO$_i$ ő$_j$ rajzol-ás-uk-at].
        'The boys$_i$ stopped PRO$_i$ drawing them$_j$.'

Kenesei (2005) lists a number of further arguments, including one that is based on antiagreement in case of a third person plural pronominal possessor.[2] It is a well-known feature of Hungarian that whenever the lexical possessor is plural, the possessor DP is marked for plural and its possessum carries a possessive affix unmarked for number, cf. (7a). When,

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[1] Obviously, in case the pronominal refers to anyone other than the subject, the construction is grammatical.

[2] As in many other Uralic languages, possessive affixes on the possessed nominal (or possessum) agree with the possessor in all persons if the possessor is a pronominal.

however, a third person plural possessor is a pronominal, its possessum, but not the pronominal, is marked for the plurality of the possessor, cf. (7b).

(7) a. [$_{DP}$ a   fiú-k   rajz-a/*-uk]
         the boy-PL picture-POSS/POSS.3PL
      'the boys' picture'

     b. az   ő   rajz-uk
         the s/he picture-POSS.3PL
         'their picture'

When dative possessors are moved out of their possessive DPs, the possessum has two possible possessive markings available: it could be either unmarked or marked for plural. According to den Dikken's (1999) proposal, when the possessum is unmarked for plural, the possessor has been moved and there is a trace left in its original position, see (8a). When, in turn, the possessum is marked for plural, there is no movement, but the possessor is merged in situ and there is a resumptive pronoun in the possessor position inside the DP, see (8b).

(8) a. A   fiúk-nak$_i$ jó   volt [a e_i rajz-a].   *unmarked agreement*
         the boys-DAT good was the picture-POSS
         'The boys' picture was good.'

     b. A   fiúk-nak$_i$ jó   volt [a *pro$_i$* rajz-uk].   *plural agreement*
         the boys-DAT good was the   picture-POSS.3PL
         'The boys' picture was good.'

I claimed in Kenesei (2005) that CENs did not allow for antiagreement, so following den Dikken (1999), I argued that the possessors/subjects of CENs can only occur in matrix clauses via movement, cf. (9a–b).

(9) a. A   problémák-nak$_i$ váratlan   volt [a e_i fel-merül-és-e].
         the problems-DAT   unexpected was the PV-emerge-DEV-POSS
         'The emergence of the problems was unexpected.'

     b. *A problémák-nak$_i$ váratlan volt [a *pro$_i$* fel-merül-és-ük].
                                              PV-emerge-DEV-POSS.3PL

Finally, there was also an argument in Kenesei (2005) based on the fact that negation is prohibited in possessive DPs, cf. (10a), while it is always possible in CENs, see (10b). In other words, CENs are propositional, unlike run-of-the-mill possessive DPs.

(10) a. Láttam [a   fiúk-nak   (*nem) a   rajz-á-t].
          I-saw   the boys-DAT   not   the picture-POSS-ACC
          'I saw the boys' (*not) picture.'

    b. Veszélyes volt [a   fiúk-nak a   le nem rajzol-ás-a].
        dangerous was the fiúk-DAT the PV not draw-DEV-POSS
        '(The) not drawing (of) the boys was dangerous.'

3. Arguments against the clausal nature of CENs

In an article written in the framework of Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG) Laczkó (2009) challenges the alleged nonfinite nature of CENs. Although he acknowledges the relevance of the arguments from the Binding Principle, he claims that simpler answers could be found even in a minimalist approach.[3]

As regards my argument from antiagreement, Laczkó is justified in shedding doubt on my judgment of (9b) since he made a limited survey in which some speakers found examples of this type fully acceptable. I must then adjust my position in this regard and suppose that constructions of this kind license resumptive pronouns as was seen in the possessive DP in (8b).

In discussing my third argument, which was based on negation, Laczkó raises a number of problems. One is based on the occurrence of adjectivalising affixes on negated CENs formed from prefixed verbs, cf. (11), where he makes use of the recent borrowing *szável* 'save' in (11a) and the nonsense verb *ki-csaskol* in (11b) to show that their derivatives are not lexicalised.

(11) a. az el nem szável-és-i   probléma
          the PV not save-DEV-ADJ problem
          'the problem of not saving (something on a computer)'

    b. a   ki nem csaskolás-os   jelenség-ek
        the PV not *csaskol*-DEV-ADJ phenomenon-PL
        'the phenomena of not *kicsaskol*-ing'

Although I have discussed both types of adjectivalisers and shown them to be inflectional affixes, cf. Kenesei (1996; 2014), I did not analyse the

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[3] "It is unquestionable that Kenesei's clausal proposal immediately, simultaneously and elegantly solves both the control and the binding problems posed for either Szabolcsi (1994) or Laczkó (1995). Nevertheless, it seems to me that Szabolcsi's account could be modified easily without invoking the whole complex apparatus of clausal syntactic derivation" (Laczkó 2009, 46).

occurrence of the negative operator in the expressions formed with them. The fact that the negative operator is inserted between the preverb and the head bearing the putative nominaliser affix *-ás/és* points to its incompatibility with their derivation within the lexicon. It may be relevant at this point that another construction type formerly categorised as adjectival has also been proved to be a nonfinite clause in Lipták & Kenesei (2017). While I cannot put forward a full analysis here, I suggest that they are extensions of a vP with an implicit internal argument into a NegP, which then undergoes suffixation by *-ás/és*, followed by syntactic affixation by the adjectivalisers *-i* or -V*s*.

Laczkó's claim that the preverb cannot move behind the verb in constructions with CENs as it does in finite clauses, cf. (12a–b) is not a cogent counterargument since the preverb never moves behind the verb in another type of nonfinite, i.e., participial, clause either, cf. (13a–b).

(12) a. A fiú-t   nem rajzol-t-am   le.
        the boy-ACC not draw-PAST-1SG PV
        'I didn't draw the boy.'

    b. *a   fiú   nem rajzol-ás-a   le
        the boy.NOM not draw-DEV-POSS PV
        'the not drawing of the boy'

(13) a. a [le nem rajzol-t]   fiú
        the PV not draw-PPART boy
        'the boy not drawn'

    b. *a [nem rajzol-t   le] fiú
        the not draw-PPART PV boy

What is demonstrated here is the well-known property of some Hungarian nonfinite clause types that preserve the original verb final or, in general, head final order of constituents in this Uralic language.

Laczkó has a different objection to the nonfinite analysis based on missing items from the left periphery of finite clauses. The prohibition on *is* 'also, even' and *sem* 'neither, (also/even) not' in (14) and (15) illustrates his point.

(14) a. A fiú-t   le is rajzol-t-am.
        the boy-ACC PV also draw-PAST-1SG
        'I even drew the boy.'

   b. *a   fiú   le is rajzol-ás-a
      the boy.NOM PV also draw-DEV-POSS.3SG
      'even drawing the boy'

(15) a. A fiú-t   le sem   rajzol-t-am.
      the boy-ACC PV even.not draw-PAST-1SG
      'I didn't even draw the boy.'

     b. *a   fiú   le sem   rajzol-ás-a
      the boy.NOM PV even.not draw-DEV-POSS.3SG
      'not even drawing the boy'

There are two options we could follow here in countering Laczkó's point. On the one hand, we could demonstrate that constructions with CENs are projected up to NegP but not beyond, and items from the left periphery such as Topics and quantifiers including phrases headed by *is* and *sem* cannot occur in them – although positive or negative Focus is possible. Focus is below NegP as is illustrated in (16b), where *Anglia* 'England' is interpreted as constituent focus.

(16) a. Sikeres   volt [csak Anglia   fel-térképez-és-e].
      successful was only England PV-chart-DEV-POSS.3SG
      'Making a chart only of England was successful.'

     b. Tévedés volt [nem Anglia   fel-térképez-és-e].
      mistake was not England PV-chart-DEV-POSS.3SG
      'Making a chart not of England (but of some other country) was a mistake.'

Note that the quantifier phrases headed by *is* or *sem* are impossible even if the preverb is attached to the verb, cf. (17).

(17) a. *Sikeres   volt [Anglia   is   fel-térképez-és-e].
      successful was England also PV-chart-DEV-POSS.3SG
      Intended meaning: 'Making a chart also of England was successful.'

     b. *Tévedés volt [Anglia   sem   fel-térképez-és-e].
      mistake was England neither PV-chart-DEV-POSS.3SG
      Intended meaning: 'Making a chart neither of England was a mistake.'

On the other hand, we could claim that the alternative construction with a dative possessor can accommodate quantifier phrases headed by *is* and *sem*, especially since it is generally impossible to insert any independent constituent between the unmarked (or nominative) possessor and the possessed nominal. However, since dative possessors, unlike unmarked ones,

can move out of the construction, (18a) is suspect of not being a single constituent, and thereby the dative possessor is understood to be part of a quantifier phrase in the matrix clause, rather than in the embedded one. This is corroborated by (18b), which is ungrammatical since (unlicensed) negation by *sem* cannot follow the matrix predicate, cf. the grammatical (18c) for contrast.

(18) a. Sikeres   volt Angliá-nak$_i$ is   a [e_i fel-térképez-és-e].
         successful was England-DAT also the PV-chart-DEV-POSS
         'Making a chart of England was also successful.'

    b. *Tévedés volt Angliá-nak$_i$ sem   a [e_i fel-térképez-és-e.
        mistake was England-DAT neither the PV-chart-DEV-POSS

    c. *Nem volt tévedés Angliá-nak$_i$ sem   a [e_i fel-térképez-és-e.
        not   was mistake England-DAT neither the PV-chart-DEV-POSS
        'It wasn't a mistake to make a chart of England, either.'

No more of Laczkó's arguments will be discussed here since our purpose was not to enter into a meticulous examination of all arguments for and against but a general overview of the points involved before a new set of phenomena relevant to the issue is presented.

4. New data and analyses

It is well-known that in Hungarian, which is a negative concord language, there has to be a negative operator either c-commanding the negative quantifier in its clause or licensing it by having the negative quantifier in the Spec of the NegP headed by the negative operator.[4]

(19) a. [$_{NegP}$ Nem [$_{TP}$ mondott erről   senki senki-nek   semmi-t   (sem)]].
             not   said-3SG of.this noone noone-DAT nothing-ACC either
         'Noone said anything to anyone about this.'

    b. [$_{NegP}$ Senki$_i$ [$_{NegP}$ senki-nek$_j$ [$_{NegP}$ semmi-t$_k$ [$_{Neg}$ nem] [$_{TP}$ mondott
             noone   noone-DAT   nothing-ACC   not   said-3SG

       e_i e_j e_k erről]]]]].
                 of.this
       'Noone said anything to anyone about this.'

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[4] See, e.g., Puskás (1998; 2000); Tóth (1999); Surányi (2002; 2006); Olsvay (2006); É. Kiss (2008; 2011); Kenesei (2012).

In case the negative quantifier is in a clause different from the one in which the negative operator occurs, the sentence will be ungrammatical, whether the quantifier was licensed in its root position (20a) or the operator in the matrix clause c-commands it in the embedded clause (20b). For contrast, compare the grammatical (20c) in which the negative quantifier moved from the embedded clause is licensed in the matrix clause.

(20) a. *Anna senki-t$_i$ hisz   [hogy e_i nem volt beteg].
         Anna noone-ACC believe.3SG that   not   was sick

      b. *Anna nem hiszi   [hogy senki volt beteg].
         Anna not   believe.3SG that noone was sick

      c. Anna senki-t$_i$ sem hisz   [hogy e_i beteg volt].
         Anna noone-ACC not believe.3SG that   sick   was
         'Anna believes noone to have been sick.'

With the exception of infinitives, which behave ambiguously with respect to the independence of their clauses, as seen, e.g., in Szécsényi (2009), the negative operator is required to license the negative quantifier in its clause, whether or not the clause is finite. In (21a) the scope of negation extends to the embedded clause only. In (21b) the negative operator is in the matrix clause, therefore the infinitival clause marked by brackets does not constitute an independent domain.

(21) a. Anna képes   volt [PRO semmi-t   sem elolvasni].
         Anna capable was   nothing-ACC not read.INF
         'Anna was capable of reading nothing.'

      b. Anna nem volt képes   [PRO elolvasni semmi-t].
         Anna not was capable   read.INF nothing-ACC
         'Anna wasn't capable of reading anything.'

In contrast to infinitivals, participial clauses are acceptable only if the negative quantifier is licensed by the operator in its own clause.

(22) a. [PRO semmi-t   sem észrevéve] Anna belépett a   szobá-ba.
            nothing-ACC not perceiving Anna entered the room-ILL
         'Having perceived nothing, Anna entered the room.'

      b. *Anna nem lépett   a   szobá-ba [PRO semmi-t   észrevéve].
         Anna not entered the room-ILL   nothing-ACC perceiving

(23) a. Anna a [semelyik könyv-et nem olvasó] fiú-t látta.
        Anna the none   book-ACC not reading boy-ACC saw
        'Anna saw the boy reading none of the books.'

    b. *Anna a [semelyik könyv-et olvasó] fiú-t nem látta.
        Anna the none   book-ACC reading boy-ACC not saw

Alberti and Farkas (2017, 828) present a pair of examples relevant to our case, which they do not examine from the aspects discussed here.

(24) a. [DP Semelyik könyv el-olvas-ás-a] sem okoz gond-ot.
          none   book PV-read-DEV-POSS not cause problem-ACC
        'No problem is caused by reading any of the books.'

    b. [NonfinP Semelyik könyv el nem olvas-ás-a] gond-ot okoz.
           none   book PV not read-NONFIN-POSS problem-ACC cause
        'Reading none of the books causes problems.'

This pair of examples corroborates the position first put forward in Kenesei (2005) based originally on Szabolcsi and Laczkó's (1992) and Szabolcsi's (1994) analyses, namely, that constructions headed by verbs suffixed by *-ás/és* belong to two types: they are either plain (possessive) DPs transparent to negative concord as in (24a), or CENs, that is, nonfinite clauses within whose boundaries the requirements of negative concord are satisfied, as in (24b), where the affix in question is therefore glossed as NONFINITE, rather than DEVERBATIVE, as in (24a). Thus while there is a deverbative derivational affix in (24a), the subject of (24b) is a nonfinite clause. The case of (24a) does not differ from that of an ordinary noun phrase containing a negative quantifier, such as (25).

(25) [NegP Semelyik könyv [Neg sem] [TP okoz gond-ot]].
          none   book   not   cause problem-ACC
    'None of the books causes problems.'

Since there is a negative operator in the bracketed construction in (24b) that can license the negative quantifier in that very domain and since negative concord works in the minimal clause in this language, this serves as evidence that the CEN in this case is a nonfinite clause.

Acknowledgements

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