

‘Backward’ A-dependencies in Hungarian

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We have seen a revived interest in the question of the extent of similarity between raising chains and control relations (*Syntax* vol.9 (2006), no.2, special issue on raising and control), and this paper adds a further set of data to the picture, from Hungarian, which I propose to analyse in terms of backward control and backward raising (cf. Polinsky & Potsdam 2006). If this account is on the right track, it lends further support to the control-as-movement approach initiated by O’Neil (1995) and Hornstein (1999).

Hungarian has a construction where a (non-agreeing) infinitival complement clause has an emphatic, overt nominative subject, coreferential with the matrix subject which itself is non-overt (except for some marginal cases where it can be pronounced). Some examples:¹

- (1a) (**ÉN*)^{??} *Csak ÉN* nem vagyok hajlandó [*mindent* *ÉN* csinálni].
I / only I not am willing everything-acc I(nom) do-inf
‘I’m not willing to do everything myself.’
- (1b) (**Viki*/**Ő*) képes volt [*Ő* *menni be elsőnek*].
Vic / she able was she(nom) go-inf in first
‘She was cheeky enough [for it] to [be the case that she] enter first.’
- (1c) (*Tavaly új helyzet állt elő.*) *Elkezdte nem VIKTOR kapni a dicséreteket.*
(last.year new situation stood forth.) pv-began not Victor get-inf the praises-acc
‘(Last year a new situation emerged.) It began to be the case that it was not Victor any more who received the praises.’

The emphatic overt DP is in the embedded clause: it follows, and scopes below, material belonging to that clause (*minden* ‘everything’ in (1a), *nem* ‘not’ in (1c), and triggers V-particle order (*menni be* ‘go-inf in’) in that clause – proving that it occupies the pre-V position there). At the same time, there is a chain-link in the matrix, too, as shown by (2), i.e. an analysis where the matrix V case-marks, and agrees with, the overt DP in the embedded domain in a mere Agree relation won’t do (*mind* ‘all’ is a floating quantifier; *kitartóan* ‘persistently’ is a subject-oriented adverb associated with a clausemate subject).

Further important properties of the construction: (i) the embedded clause must be a complement of the control predicate – CED effects, e.g. (3); (ii) the overt nominative subject of the infinitive is usually a pronoun, not a lexical DP; (iii) the typical matrix predicates are subject control predicates, but some raising verbs can embed such infinitives, too.

- (2a) e_x *mind_x* megpróbáltak [*ŐK_x* *menni be elsőnek*].
all pv-tried-3pl they go-inf in first
‘They all tried to enter first.’
- (2b) e_x *kitartó_x-an* próbált [*Ő_x* *nyerni meg minden futamot*].
persistent-ly tried he win-inf pv every race-acc
‘He persistently tried to be the one who wins each race.’
- (3) * *A kapuhoz siettem* [*ÉN* lépni *be elsőnek*]. – adjunct clause
the gate-to hurried-1sg I step-inf in first-dat
‘I hurried to the gate so that I enter first.’

¹ Emphasis is indicated by *SLANTED CAPITALS*.

Szabolcsi (2005) sketches and refutes several possible analyses. One possibility she considers (but doesn't work out in detail) is that these are cases of *backward control* (cf. Polinsky & Potsdam 2002), best treated in terms of a Hornsteinian movement-based account of control. I will, on the one hand, show that Szabolcsi's sketchy counterarguments to the backward control analysis are not compelling, and that the distribution of these infinitives indicates a movement/chain-type relation between the overt infinitival subjects and their covert 'controllers', hence it is possible and reasonable to maintain that these subjects are partially pronounced lower copies in 'control'-type (or sometimes raising-type) movement chains, whose overtness necessarily follows from the fact that they bear emphasis, hence cannot be left silent, and then (for reasons of economy) the higher copies within their chain will be silenced, unless they are emphatic as well. A key difference between the raising and the control cases is that in the latter case the overt infinitival subject can only be a pronoun, not a full lexical DP ((1a, b) vs. (1c)).

The main points of the proposal:

- these are cases of *obligatory subject control* (OSC), with the *controller covert*, and the *controllee overt* with nominative marking in an infinitival clause ('backward control')
- OSC is an instance of movement chain: the subject of the infinitive checks one θ -feature (but crucially no agr/case) in the lower clause, then raises to the v P-domain of the matrix to check another θ -feature, and then checks agr/case there, too (Hornstein 1999)
- in any chain, pronunciation tends to be minimized, 'up to recoverability' (Pesetsky 1998, Nunes 1999) → default: pronounce the highest copy only, and silence all the others, BUT a more specific case: if a copy bears emphasis, it needs to be pronounced to be able to display it, and the minimization requirement will silence *any other* copies – this conforms to Landau's (2006) P-recoverability theory, i.e., that pure PF factors (e.g., emphasis, rather than any semantic notion like focus) determine the (non-)pronunciation of copies.
- nominative on the controllee: spellout of the case checked by the chain link in the matrix

As for the control-raising difference in the status of the pronounced link, 'backward raising' doesn't really move the DP – such 'raising' is just Agr/case-checking by the matrix T, without A-movement to the matrix clause (though A'-movement, such as long-distance topicalization, is an option), i.e., the overt copy is in fact the highest copy in the chain. But in control chains, there *is* movement to the matrix, i.e., the matrix v whose θ -feature the DP checks does have an EPP-feature; finally, a minimization to pronouncing just ϕ -features (= a pronoun) obtains, in a way similar to resumption as partial pronunciation (Pesetsky 1998).

In the final part of the talk I'll discuss the functional difference between focusing a chain-link in the matrix and in the embedded clause, to further motivate my analysis from a functional perspective.

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