Verbal and Adverbial Properties: An Old Hungarian Participle

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This talk presents an examination of Old Hungarian, especially the *-atta/-ette* participle (henceforth: -AttA):

(1) (ő) ki-mene,   és   lele   egyebeket **állatta-k**
     (he) out-go.PST.3SG and find.PST.3SG others.ACC standing-3PL
     'he went out and found still others standing around' MunichC. 2va (Matthew 20/6)

(2) míg ő   azoknak **beszéllette** ím egy fejedelem lépék
     while he.NOM3SG they.DAT saying   so a   leader   come.PST.3SG
     őhozzá
     him.LOC
     'while he was saying this a leader came'   MunichC. 1rb (Matthew 9/18)

Background: As Hungarian has several participles, the question arises: Are the participles rather verbal or non-verbal? The Modern Hungarian infinitive has been examined from this point of view (Farkas 2020, Alberti 2020). The discussed phenomenon is not present in the modern language, the -AttA disappeared by the 16th century (Károly 1956). Since it was quite rare in its time, very little has been written about it. The relevant literature provides sufficient descriptive information, but lacks modern, formal investigation. The aim of this talk is to present the results of a new, formal analysis. Examining the diverse characteristics of this participle that is not used anymore fills the gap in the current literature on Hungarian. What we know about the -AttA participle from previous analyses is mostly from Károly (1956). The participle appears as an adjunct of the VP; it can serve as a time or state adverbial, always expressing active voice and simultaneity with the finite verb. To define which function it fulfills, we have to take a look at the subject of the participle. In example (1) the participle serves as a state adverbial, while in (2) it serves as a time adverbial. What makes these examples different is that in sentence (1) the subject of the non-finite clause is in the accusative case, meanwhile, in sentence (2) the subject of the participle is in the nominative case. Normalized and annotated codices and texts that contain the participle are available in the Hungarian Generative Diachronic Corpus (Simon 2014). The dataset of my work is based on searches from this corpus.

Verbal-adverbial scale: Some parts of speech that are derived from verbs bear mixed features: verbal and nominal/adjectival/adverbial ones. This phenomenon has been getting increased attention in the literature crosslinguistically (Alexiadou and Rathert (2010); Alexiadou et al. (2011) on English, German, Spanish and Romanian nominals). Enumerating the different properties and testing them one by one shows us in what extent the discussed phenomenon is verbal or not, and we are able to place it on a scale. I also apply tests of Alberti and Laczkó (in press) to see the results of the -AttA participle, and

place it on a verbal-adverbial scale.

This talk answers three questions: **1.** To what extent is this participle verbal and adverbial? **2.** What kind of dependency (control or raising) can be observed between the finite and the adverbial non-finite clause? **3.** What generalisations can we draw regarding the participle's argument structure?

Q1. Enumerating the adverbial and verbal characteristics, I show that the Old Hungarian -AttA participle has more verbal features. These properties of the -AttA are the following: presence and separability of the verbal modifier, the obligatoriness of arguments, accusative case-marked argument. Thus, on a scale between verb and adverbial it is closer to verbs. The only adverbial feature of the participle is that it is an adjunct of the VP.

Q2. Examining example (1) in more detail, we see that the direct object of the VP is coreferential to the subject of the -AttA participle. Such coreferential structures can involve raising or control. According to É. Kiss (2002) typical Hungarian object control predicates are *lát* 'see' and *hall* 'hear'. Looking through the finite verbs of such structures, I observed that most of them contained exactly these verbs, or a synonym, with the same argument structure. The coreference, the accusative case marked subject of the -AttA participle and the presence of control verbs lead us to the conclusion that these are object control structures with a PRO.

Q3. A verbal property was the unchanged argument structure. Having the same arguments as a verb, the -AttA participle also has subjects and objects. Looking at the object and its accusative case, I found that not only marked but also unmarked objects can appear besides the participle. Unmarked objects are inherited from previous stages of Hungarian when it was an SOV language (É. Kiss 2011). Objects without accusative case marking were already rare in Old Hungarian. Marked objects could precede or follow the participle, but unmarked objects could only appear before the participle.

Finally, this paper covers a comparative aspect as well. I ran the tests on the Modern Hungarian *-va/-ve* adverbial participle. It bears the same verbal and adverbial properties as the Old Hungarian -AttA. Although one aspect, that is not part of the verbal–non-verbal scale seems to be a difference: the Modern Hungarian adverb does not function as a time adverbial. Comparing the Old and the Modern Hungarian participles gives new diachronic syntactic aspects to the current literature.

References

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