

Apparent or real? On the complementary distribution of identificational focus and the verbal particle

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1. Introduction

Chapter 2 of this book has argued that in the Hungarian sentence, the primary locus of the marking of event type (or, in a different terminology, the primary locus of the marking of situation aspect) is the immediately preverbal slot, identified as Spec,PredP. This is the canonical position of resultative and terminative particles marking accomplishments and achievements, and this is the canonical position of locative particles marking predicates of existence or spatial configuration in a given location. Chapter 6 has claimed that the Pred head is also the carrier of the viewpoint aspect feature of the sentence. Chapter 7 supported this claim by showing the historical process leading to this situation. Namely, in Old Hungarian, the PredP projection was still dominated by separate AspP and TenseP projections; however, after Spec,PredP came to be generally used as the landing site of verbal particles, the Tense morpheme was lost, the Asp morpheme was reinterpreted as a tense marker, and viewpoint aspect came to be associated with the Pred head.

Interestingly, the immediately preverbal position is also the position of identificational focus. The question this chapter aims to answer is if the complementary distribution of the focus and the particle is apparent or real, and in case it is real, whether it is the consequence of some common features shared by verbal particles and identificational foci.

It will be argued that the verbal particle and the identificational focus share a [+predicative] feature. The identificational focus will be analyzed as a specificational predicate (using the terminology of Higgins (1973) and Huber (2000)). This assumption accounts not only for its syntactic position, but also for its semantic role, i.e., the exhaustive identification associated with it. The proposed analysis also explains further, hitherto inexplicable semantic and syntactic properties of identificational focus constructions. For example, it explains why exhaustivity can be absent in the case of an identificational focus represented by a non-specific noun phrase, and it predicts word order possibilities which previous focus theories assuming a separate FocusP projection could not derive.

The viewpoint aspect feature associated with the Pred head, too, will be shown to have some empirical motivation not only in the case of PredPs harboring a verbal particle, but in the case of PredPs harboring an identificational focus, as well.

The preverbal Spec,PredP position, for which the verbal particle and the identificational focus compete, is the locus of main stress assignment. A further shared feature of preverbal particles and identificational foci follows from the Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle of Reinhart (1995): the filler of Spec,PredP (whether a verbal particle or an identificational focus), or the PredP projection functions as the information focus of the Hungarian sentence.

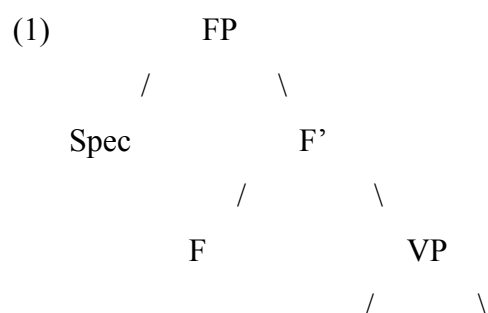
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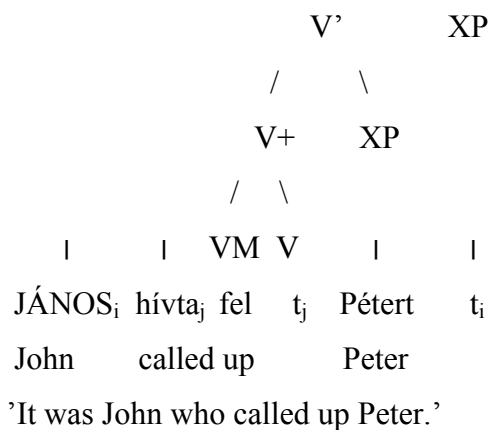
2.1. Early approaches

In the first analysis of Hungarian phrase structure by Brassai (1863-65), the immediately preverbal position was identified as a kind of focus position, and the alternative preverbal presence of the verbal particle and the focus was derived from the assumption that they are alternative fillers of the focus slot. The complementary distribution of the focus and the verbal particle was also maintained in the first generative analyses of Hungarian sentence structure, i.e., in Horvath (1986), and in É. Kiss (1987, 1994). É. Kiss (1994) derived the different interpretations of a preverbal verbal particle and a preverbal focussed argument from their different referential properties. She claimed that focussing expresses identification, which goes together with the exclusion of alternatives only if the focussed constituent denotes a member of a closed set of distinct entities.

2.2. Brody's FP Theory

Brody (1990, 1995) discarded the complementary distribution of verbal particles and foci; he argued that the verbal particle and the identificational focus occupy different positions associated with different interpretations. The verbal particle is base-generated left-adjoined to the verb, whereas the identificational focus sits in the specifier of a functional projection called FocusP (abbreviated as FP or FocP). The focus is immediately followed by the verb as a consequence of V-to-F movement across the verbal particle:





Brody (1995) also reformulated his focus theory in the Minimalist framework. In Minimalism, movement is always a „last resort”, triggered by the need of a constituent to have its uninterpretable morphological feature checked. The morphological feature involved is claimed to be a [+F] feature, which figures as the head of the FP projection, and also appears on the Tense head. To have its [+F] feature checked, the Tense (or, in the case of a strong Tense, the Tense+V complex) must move into F, stranding the verbal particle. The [+F] feature of the head of FP must be checked in a specifier–head configuration by a phrase carrying the feature [+f], attracted into Spec,FP.

A number of recent theories have questioned various aspects of Brody’s approach. As Szendrői (2003) points out, Brody’s theory cannot predict in a principled way that in the case of verb focussing, e.g. in the case of (2), the particle is not stranded:

(2) Péter be-VITTE a levelet, nem be -DOBTA.

Peter in took the letter not in threw(-it-he)

‘John took in the letter, he did not throw it in.’

Horvath (2000) criticizes, on the one hand, the cross-linguistic predictions of Brody’s focus theory. According to Brody (1990, 1995), the FP projection is also present in languages with no overt focus movement. In such languages, e.g. in English, the [+F] feature of the head of FP is claimed to be weak, triggering movement into Spec,FP only at LF. If the prosodic focus of e.g. the English sentence ends up in LF in the same position as the structural focus of the Hungarian sentence, they are expected to be associated with the same type of interpretation in LF; in fact, however, the English prosodic focus lacks the exhaustivity of the Hungarian structural focus.

Horvath (2000) also points out a problematic aspect of Brody's account of Hungarian focus facts. The [+f] feature is sometimes associated with a subconstituent of the Hungarian focus phrase which cannot license pied-piping. According to Webelhuth (1992), a modifier, for example, is not a pied piper. That is, if a modifier has a feature to be checked in the specifier of a functional projection, e.g. it has a wh-feature to be checked in Spec,CP, the modifier cannot move there on its own (because of violating Subjacency), and it cannot take along the modified phrase, either. The claim that modifiers cannot pied-pipe is also confirmed by the following facts of Hungarian:

(3)a. *A filmszínésznő, [néhány **akiről** írt könyvet] láttam a polcon
 the actress some who-about written book-ACC saw-I the shelf-on
 'The actress some books written about whom I saw on the shelf.'

b. *[Néhány **kiről** írt könyvet] láttál a polcon?
 some who-about written book-ACC saw-you the shelf-on
 'Some books written about whom did you see on the shelf?'

Whereas a [+wh] modifier cannot pied-pipe the noun phrase containing it into Spec,CP or Spec,FP, the very same modifier seems to licence pied-piping into Spec,FP when associated with a [+f] feature:

(4) [Néhány MARILYN MONROE-RÓL írt könyvet] láttam a polcon.
 some Marilyn Monroe-about written book saw-I the shelf-on
 'It was some books written ABOUT MARILYN MONROE that I saw on the shelf.'

In view of the different grammaticality of (3a,b) and (4), it seems doubtful that it is indeed the [+f] feature of *Marilyn Monroe-ról* 'about Marilyn Monroe' that triggers the movement of the maximal noun phrase in (4).

Horvath (2004) also presents an argument against the V-to-F movement assumed by Brody. The argument is based on the following ellipsis facts:

(5)a. KIT hívott meg?
 whom invited-he PRT
 'Who did he invite?'

b. PÉTERT.

Peter-ACC

c. Azt mondta, hogy PÉTERT.

it-ACC said-he that Peter-ACC

‘[He said that he invited] Peter.’

The answers in (5) involve sluicing, which is claimed by Horvath to consist in the deletion of a maximal projection. In Brody’s framework, however, the V-initial string is an intermediate F’ projection, which is not a possible target of deletion. (A somewhat different analysis of this type of examples will be provided in section 3.)

É. Kiss (2003) raises both syntactic and semantic problems in connection with Brody’s proposal. The syntactic problems are the following:

Brody’s theory predicts that in a focus construction, the verbal particle immediately follows the verb raised to F. In fact, any number of constituents can intervene between the verb and the particle, i.e., (6a) and (6b) are equally grammatical:

(6)a. JÁNOS vezett **össze** Évával.

John fell out Eve-with

‘It was John who fell out with Eve.’

b. JÁNOS vezett Évával **össze**.

It is also unclear how negation can be handled in Brody’s framework. If particle stranding is evidence of V movement, then predicate negation involves V-to-Neg movement:

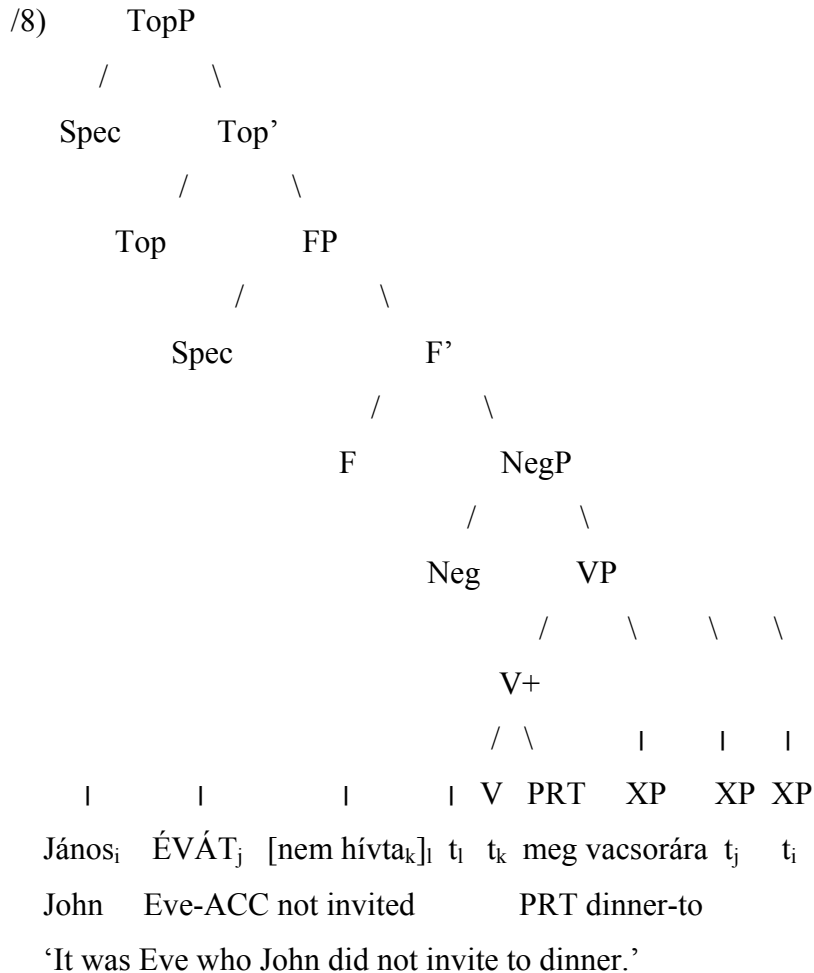
(7) János nem vezett_i össze t_i Évával.

John not fell out Eve-with

‘John did not fall out with Eve.’

The string in (7) suggests that the negative particle sits in Spec,NegP, and the V occupies the empty Neg position. In the presence of a focus constituent, however, the V required to move to F also takes the negative particle along. This is only possible if the negative particle

originally occupies the Neg position, then the V is right-adjoined to Neg, and, finally, the Neg+V complex is raised to F. The problematic step is the right-adjunction of the V to Neg, instead of the left-adjunction typical of head movement.²



A further problem of the framework is that a NegP can be inserted both above VP and above FP, but the Neg head attracts the V only in the former case. If NegP dominates FP, the verb is stranded in F position. The different behavior of the lower and the higher Neg heads seems unmotivated. Compare:

(9)a. János **nem hívta** meg Évát vacsorára.

John not invited PRT Eve dinner-to

'John didn't invite Eve to dinner.'

b. János **nem ÉVÁT hívta** meg vacsorára.

'It was not Eve who John invited to dinner.'

A semantic problem pointed out by É. Kiss (2003) has also been raised in a somewhat different form by Wedgwood (2002). They both argue that the constituent moved into the Spec,FP position of the Hungarian sentence is not always associated with an exhaustive interpretation. Wedgwood's examples involve a modified numerally quantified noun phrase, e.g.:

- (10) TÖBB MINT HAT DIÁKUNK értette félre a kérdést.
more than six student-our understood astray the question
'It was more than six students of ours that misunderstood the question.'

Because of the lack of exhaustivity, Szabolcsi (1997) places modified numerally quantified noun phrases into a preverbal position other than Spec,FP (called PredOp by Szabolcsi). Wedgwood demonstrates that the preverbal constituent in (10) does, in fact, occupy the same position that exhaustive foci occupy. He claims that exhaustivity is not part of the truth-conditional semantics associated with the FP projection; it involves no features and/or operators; it derives from inferential pragmatics relying on the context. An exhaustive answer is the optimal answer when something new is asserted in a restricted context, and is therefore always expected. An exhaustive answer may have different contextual effects depending on whether it merely establishes new assumptions, or also eliminates existing ones. Numerals do exhaustively identify a numeral from among a set of numerals - merely in such cases, the exclusion of alternative numerals is pragmatically trivial (unless there is a specific, contextually given numeral to be contradicted).¹ Wedgwood's proposal actually does not clearly discard the FP projection, although it does refer to the possibility of a semantically underspecified preverbal position hosting alternatively a verbal particle or a focus. Of course, if FP is maintained, his findings raise the question what kind of an A-bar position Spec,FP is; what motivates movement into it.

É. Kiss (2003) presents indefinite foci that do not require an exhaustive interpretation, for example:

- (11) A betörő EGY ARANY NYAKLÁNCOT ÉS EGY EZÜST ZSEBÓRÁT talált
the burglar a golden necklace and a silver pocket-watch found
a lakásban.
the apartment-in

‘The burglar found A GOLDEN NECKLACE AND A SILER POCKET-WATCH in the apartment.’

According to the exhaustivity test of Szabolcsi (1981), (11) is not exhaustive – because (12) is a logical consequence of (11):

(12) A betörő EGY ARANY NYAKLÁNCOT talált a lakásban.
the burglar a golden necklace found the apartment-in
‘The burglar found A GOLDEN NECKLACE in the apartment.’

Interestingly, an indefinite focus assumes an obligatorily exhaustive reading if the sentence contains a verbal particle. Compare with (11):

(13) A betörő EGY ARANY NYAKLÁNCOT ÉS EGY EZÜST ZSEBÓRÁT talált meg
the burglar a golden necklace and a silver pocket-watch found PRT
a lakásban.
the apartment-in
‘It was a golden necklace and a silver pocket-watch that the burglar found in the apartment.’

(13) and (14) cannot be true simultaneously in the same world, hence their foci are exhaustive:

(14) A betörő EGY ARANY NYAKLÁNCOT talált meg a lakásban.
the burglar a golden necklace found PRT the apartment-in
‘It was a golden necklace that the burglar found in the apartment.’

The objects in (13) and (14) are [+specific] in the sense of Enç (1991); they have a partitive reading; e.g. (13) means ‘Of the jewels, the burglar found a golden necklace and a silver pocket watch in the apartment’. As was made clear in Chapter 2.1, the verbal particle, a secondary predicate predicated of the theme, requires that the theme argument functioning as its subject be [+specific]. That is, a focussed constituent is understood as exhaustive if it is [+specific]. A focussed constituent with a [+/-specific] feature, like that in (11) or (12), need not be exhaustive (although the exhaustive interpretation is always possible). At the same

time, it is not the case that a [-specific] focus (e.g. a focussed bare plural) is necessarily non-exhaustive; it is [+/-exhaustive], e.g.:

- (15) A betörő ARANY NYAKLÁNCOKAT talált a lakásban.
the burglar golden necklaces found the apartment-in
'The burglar found GOLDEN NECKLACES in the apartment./It was golden necklaces that the burglar found in the apartment.'

In Brody's framework, a focussed constituent is always associated with the same [+f] feature, i.e., the theory cannot predict the [+exhaustive] or [+/-exhaustive] nature of a focus.

2.3. Szendrői's Theory of Focussing as Stress-driven Movement

From time to time, languages with no visible focus movement inspire focus theories in which focus is a pragmatic notion encoded in prosody. A recent theory of this type, by Reinhart (1995), has been adapted by Szendrői (2003) to Hungarian. The key element of Reinhart's theory is the following principle:

(16) *Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle*

The focus set of a clause consists of the constituents containing the main stress of the clause as determined by the regular stress rule of the given language.

Szendrői's version of the theory is based on the claim that in Hungarian main stress falls on the left edge of the maximal extended projection of the V. (Topics are exempt from stress assignment because they are preposed by adjunction, which renders them extrametrical.) In Szendrői's view, focus movement to Spec,FP is stress-driven movement: it is triggered by the Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle, i.e., it serves the purpose of the focussed constituent occupying the position where main stress is assigned. This solution is exempt from several stipulations necessary for Brody's analysis to work. Namely, it need not be stipulated that the [+F] feature of the head of FP is strong in order to account for the overtness of focus movement; movement for stress cannot but be overt. It need not be stipulated, either, that Tense also has a [+F] feature in need of checking in order to account for V movement to F; the V must move so as to license the head position of FP, in other words, to activate a functional projection above VP. In fact, Szendrői need not even stipulate a [+F] feature; she merely needs a functional projection capable of extending the VP. It also falls out that verb

focussing does not trigger V-to-F movement. The complex verb is base-generated in the leftmost position of the VP – hence it need not move in order to receive main stress. Szendrői’s theory of focus movement for stress also explains why focus movement is movement to the left in Hungarian; and why it cannot be iterated.

Horvath (2004) refutes important elements of Szendrői’s theory – though she accepts the relevance of Reinhart’s Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle in Hungarian. Horvath criticizes Szendrői for both conceptual and empirical reasons. She points out that in Szendrői’s framework, syntax must look ahead into prosody, and must find out what the prosodic structure is about to be like. Namely, V-to-F movement is performed in syntax only if stress-driven focus movement will take place, and movement to Spec,FP is triggered only if the constituent to receive main stress occupies a position other than the leftmost position of the extended VP. That is, it must be clear in syntax where the left edge of IntP, the locus of main stress, is about to be.

Among the empirical problems, Horvath mentions that the preverbal focus position is not necessarily the position of main stress. Universal quantifiers and *is* phrases can bear main stress, nevertheless, they cannot appear in the preverbal focus slot - see (17a,b). They can, however, precede the preverbal focus position, in which case the focussed constituent can be completely destressed. This is what happens to the focussed *Marit* ‘Mary-ACC’ in (17c,d).

(17)a. *MINDEN fiú kérte fel Marit táncolni, nemcsak a barátja.

every boy asked PRT Mary to.dance not-only her friend

‘It was every boy who asked Mary for a dance, not only her friend (did so).’

b. *PÉTER IS kérte fel Marit táncolni, nemcsak a barátja.

Peter too asked PRT Mary to.dance not-only her friend

‘It was Peter, too, who asked Mary for a dance, not only her friend (did so).’

c. MINDEN fiú Marit kérte fel táncolni, nemcsak a barátja.

every boy Mary-ACC asked PRT to.dance not-only her friend

‘EVERY boy asked MARY for a dance, not only her friend (did so).’

b. PÉTER IS Marit kérte fel táncolni, nemcsak a barátja.

Peter too Mary-ACC asked PRT to-dance not-only her friend

‘PETER, TOO, asked MARY for a dance, not only her friend (did so).’

Whereas these types of stressed quantified elements cannot appear in the immediately preverbal main stress position, they can stand postverbally, unlike e.g. a focus modified by *csak*. Compare:

(18)a. Mari el -késett még AZ ESKÜVŐJÉRŐL is.
Mary PRT missed even her wedding also
'Mary was late even FOR HER WEDDING.'

cf.

b. *Mari el -késett CSAK A FOGADÁSRÓL.
Mary PRT missed only the reception
'It was only the reception that Mary was late for.'

c. *Mari CSAK A FOGADÁSRÓL el-késett.

d. Mari CSAK A FOGADÁSRÓL késett el.

Szendrői's theory cannot derive focus movement into the unstressed preverbal position in (17), and, in general, it cannot predict the distribution of grammaticality in (17)–(18).

The Reinhart–Szendrői theory does not exclude the possibility of an *in situ* focus. The requirement of Stress–Focus Correspondence can be observed not only by focus movement into the main stress position, but also by stress shift to the constituent to be focussed. What Szendrői's theory cannot predict is why preverbal and postverbal foci differ with respect to exhaustivity, why a preverbal focus, like that in (19b), is exhaustive, and why a postverbal focus, e.g. that in (19c), is not.

(19)a. KIKET hívott már meg Anna?
who-PL-ACC invited already PRT Anna
'Who has Ann invited yet?'

b. KATIT ÉS PÉTERT hívta meg.
Kati-ACC and Peter-ACC invited-she PRT
'It is Kati and Peter that she has invited.'

c. Meg-hívta KATIT és PÉTERT.

‘She has invited KATI and PETER.’

Although Szendrői assumes that her theory correctly predicts there to be no verb movement in the case of V-focus, Horvath (2004) points out that, in fact, the theory predicts V movement and particle stranding for cases in which the particle is presupposed and only the V conveys new information. That is, Szendrői’s theory would derive the ungrammatical (20b) instead of the grammatical (20a).

(20)a. *ÁT -UGRANI volt nehéz t ezen a kerítésen, nem ÁT -MÁSZNI.*
across jump was hard this the fence-on not across climb
‘It was to jump across this fence, and not to climb across it that was hard.’

b. **UGRANI volt nehéz át t ezen a kerítésen, nem MÁSZNI át.*

Horvath argues that (20b) is out because focus movement is phrasal movement.

Horvath’s argument against V-to-F movement, based on the sluicing facts in (5), also applies to Szendrői’s theory. Consider example (21): if sluicing is XP-deletion, as is assumed by Horvath, (21a) should be grammatical. It is not; its grammatical variant is (21b).

(21) *KI ugrotta át a kerítést?*
Who jumped across the fence?

a. **PÉTER ugrotta.*
Peter jumped
‘Peter did.’

b. *PÉTER.*
Peter

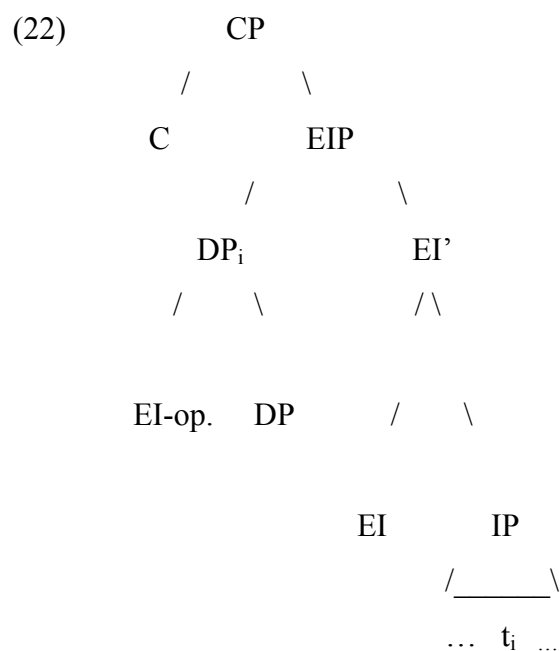
2.4. *The Focus Theory of Horvath (2000, 2004)*

Horvath’s theory of focus aims to assimilate Hungarian structural focus to the notion of focus valid crosslinguistically, manifest in main stress interpreted as ‘new, non-presupposed information’. She attains this goal by divorcing exhaustive identification from focus. She claims that Hungarian has „grammaticalized” the notion of exhaustive identification. The

Hungarian sentence contains a quantificational, phonologically null Exhaustive Identification (EI) operator. The EI feature, projecting a clausal functional head, is strong, thereby it attracts a constituent with an EI-operator feature into Spec,EIP. The EI operator – entering into a checking relation with the strong feature of EI – is merged into the structure as the specifier of a DP (or PP, VP). This invisible EI-operator is assumed to appear in the specifier position of an XP because specifiers are pied-pipers; thus under this assumption it falls out that EI-movement pied-pipes the whole phrase whose specifier the EI operator occurs in.

Focus, on the other hand, is claimed by Horvath (2000, 2004) not to be encoded syntactically; it is claimed to be a stress-based interface phenomenon universally. Horvath (2004) adopts Reinhart’s (1995) Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle, and she assumes – in accordance with Szendrői (2003) – that the position of main stress is at the left edge of the extended VP. The relation of the EI-operator to Focus is indirect, a case of „association with focus”: the EI operator requires the presence of prosodic focus within its c-command domain.

This is the structure that Horvath (2000, 2004) assigns to a Hungarian „focus-construction”:



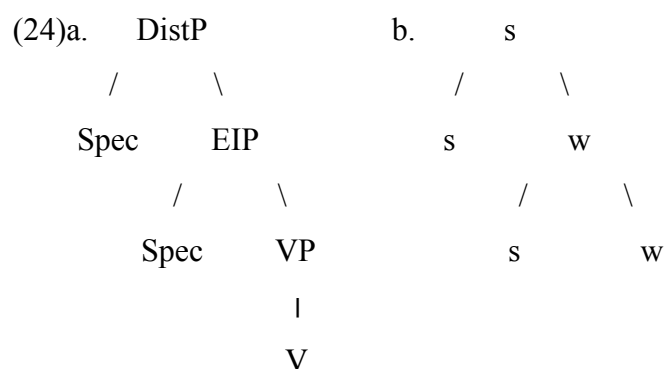
The proposed structure eliminates all the problems brought up by Horvath against Brody’s and Szendrői’s theories. Thus it explains the different behavior of the „focussing” particles *csak* ‘only’ and *is* ‘also’, *még...is* ‘even’. *Csak*-phrases are marked as [+EI], hence they will land in Spec,EIP. The semantics of (*még*)...*is* phrases, on the other hand, is incompatible with the semantics of exhaustive identification, hence they are [-EI], excluded from Spec,EIP. On

the other hand, both *csak* and (*még*)...*is* are focussing operators in Hungarian, as well, requiring a prosodic focus in their c-command domain.³

Horvath's theory also explains why only a preverbal focus is exhaustive, why a postverbal is not. Her theory – she claims – can also accommodate the cases in which the preverbal constituent, though expressing exhaustive identification, is not focussed prosodically. Consider again her example:

(23) MINDEN fiú Marit kérte fel táncolni.
 every boy Mary-ACC asked PRT to.dance
 'EVERY boy asked MARY for a dance,'

Here *Marit* occupies Spec,EIP, therefore it expresses exhaustive identification; the main stress marking the focus, on the other hand, is on the leftmost phonological word of the universal quantifier in Spec,DistP. In fact, (23) is problematic for Horvath's theory, as the EI operator in Spec,EIP does not c-command the focussed MINDEN FIÚ (see also footnote 2). Horvath solves this problem by the assumption of a stress shift or stress deletion. For me, stress deletion seems more likely. I assume that every maximal projection extending the VP requires the assignment of a 'strong' stress, and the stacking of 'strong' constituents on the left periphery – shown in (24b) – may trigger stress reduction on one or the other of the constituents originally assigned a 'strong' stress.



The stress pattern in (25a), corresponding to (24b), and the two stress patterns derivable from it by means of stress deletion are equally grammatical:

(25)a. MINDEN fiú MARIT kérte fel táncolni.
 b. MINDEN fiú Marit kérte fel táncolni.

c. Minden fiú MARIT kérte fel táncolni.

Horvath argues that movement to Spec,EIP is a subtype of Q-Raising, which is overt in Hungarian.

Horvath's theory eliminates many of the problems pointed out in Brody's and Szendrői's theories; however, it does not eliminate all of them, and it also raises a new question. If focussing is the movement of a phrase containing an Exhaustive Identification operator into Spec,EIP, one would not expect question–answer pairs of the following type:

(26)a. KIT hívtál meg?
whom invited-you PRT
'Who did you invite?'

b. Többek között PÉTERT (hívtam meg).
among others Peter-ACC (invited-I PRT)
'Peter, among others.'

Why should *Pétert* in (26b) be simultaneously supplied with an EI operator, and with a phrase cancelling the EI operator? How can the [+exhaustive] feature of a phrase moved to Spec,EIP in order to check the [+exhaustive] feature of the EI head be cancelled?

The constituents that land in Spec,FP in Brody's theory all land in Spec,EIP in Horvath's framework – so the problem why preverbal non-specific indefinites do not obligatorily express exhaustive identification is even more disturbing for Horvath's theory than it is for Brody's approach; after all, it is phrases supplied with an EI-operator, sitting in Spec,EIP that lack exhaustive interpretation.

Horvath's focus/EI theory also leaves important questions open. She does not clarify what kind of internal structure she assigns to the IP. The possibility of V-to-EI movement across the particle is excluded, and so is the possibility of analyzing the EI-phrase and the verbal particle as alternative fillers of the same slot. It remains unclear how the reverse, V particle order arises in the presence of a constituent in Spec,EIP (let alone the order V XP particle).

3. The Proposal

The proposal to be put forth – some elements of which were presented in É. Kiss (2003) and (2004) – has three main ingredients, which can be assessed independently of each other.

Namely:

- (i) It is argued that the Hungarian structural focus is a predicate predicated of the open proposition constituted by the rest of the sentence. It functions as a specificational predicate, referentially specifying the set denoted by the subject of predication. Exhaustivity is a property associated with specificational predicates. This proposal predicts the semantic interpretation of Hungarian focus more precisely than previous proposals, also explaining the occasional lack of exhaustivity.
- (ii) It is argued that the focus and the verbal particle are alternative fillers of the same preverbal position identified as Spec,PredP. This proposal also handles syntactic facts that could not be accounted for in the framework of the FP theory.
- (iii) The Reinhart (1995)–Szendrői (2003) approach to information focus is adopted, and Reinhart’s Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle is maintained. It is assumed that primary stress is assigned to the leftmost element of the extended projection of the VP, i.e., to the constituent in Spec,PredP, or in lack of a PredP projection, to the V.⁴ Hence it is the constituent in Spec,PredP (or the whole PredP projection) that functions as the information focus of the sentence.

3.1. *Identificational Focussing is Predication*

The core of the idea that the Hungarian preverbal focus is a predicate is to be found in Szabolcsi (1981), who noticed that a referring expression in focus position – and only in focus position – can be interpreted predicatively. Observe her examples:

- (27)a. [_{Focus} A BARÁTNŐMET_i] hívtam meg, nem A MINISZTER FELESÉGÉT_{i/j}.
my friend-ACC invited-I PRT not the minister’s wife-ACC
‘It was my friend and not the minister’s wife who I invited.’
- b. [_{Topic} A barát_imet_i] meg-hívtam, a miniszter feleségét_j nem.
‘My friend, I invited, the minister’s wife, I didn’t.’
- c. Meg hívtam a barát_imet_i, de nem hívtam meg a miniszter feleségét_j.
‘I invited my friend, but I did not invite the minister’s wife.’

In the case of (27a), *a barát_imet_i* ‘my friend’ and *a miniszter feleségét_j* ‘the minister’s wife’ can be understood to predicate two properties of the same individual. In the case of (27b) and

(27c), in which the same noun phrases are in positions other than the preverbal slot, such an interpretation is impossible, the two noun phrases are understood to refer to different persons.

É. Kiss (1998) claims that the English cleft constituent, unlike the English focus-moved constituent and the English focus *in situ*, is an equivalent of the Hungarian structural focus, sharing its semantic features and its key syntactic properties. This claim can also be extended to the pseudo-cleft constituent. Notice that both the English cleft constituent and the English pseudo-cleft constituent are also predicates syntactically (in a different terminology, they are predicate complements to the copula):

(28)a. It was MY FRIEND who I invited.

b. Who I invited was MY FRIEND.

Higgins's description of the English pseudo-cleft construction (1973) is based on a detailed analysis of nominal predicates. Higgins distinguishes three types of them, illustrated in (29):

(29)a. John is a teacher.

b. That is Mary Brown.

c. The winner is the Hungarian team.

The predicate (or predicate complement) of (29a) is a **predicational** predicate; it predicates a property about a referential subject. A predicational predicate is usually represented by an indefinite noun phrase or an adjective phrase. The predicate of (29b) is an **identificational** predicate; its function is to teach the name of a referential subject. (29c) contains a **specificational** predicate. (29c) can also formally be distinguished from (29b): in (29c), the order of the subject and the predicate can be reversed. In the sentence type represented by (29c), neither the subject, nor the predicate is referential. In Higgins's metaphorical terminology, the subject functions as the superscript of a table, the heading of a list, and the predicate specifies what makes up the list. Or, putting it differently, the subject of predication delimits a domain, and the specificational predicate identifies the members of that domain. A specificational predicate is claimed by Higgins to imply exhaustivity, which, however, can be cancelled. This is what happens in (30):

(30) What I bought was a pen and a pencil, among other things.

That is, although the specificational predicate serves to list the members of the subject set exhaustively, the listing can be broken off – provided the fact of interruption is explicitly indicated.

The subject of a specificational predicate is associated with an existential presupposition. When the specificational predicate is negated, the existence of the domain delimited by the subject is not questioned; merely the given specification is denied. Thereby a different specification is implied, i.e., a continuation with a *but* phrase of the negated predicate is expected:

(31) What I bought was not a pen and a pencil (but a rubber and a ruler).

Higgins (1973) argues that pseudo-cleft sentences are specificational sentences. Their *What...* clause functions as the subject of predication, and the predicate complement to the copula functions as the specificational predicate. With the subject presupposed, the predicate functions as the focus of the sentence. The list reading and the exhaustivity of the predicate are claimed to be implications of the specificational function.

Huber (2000) analyzes Swedish and German cleft sentences in the framework of Higgins's theory of specification. In Huber's terminology, the subject of a specificational sentence denotes a set, which the predicate characterizes through another set, by listing the individuals that make it up. A specificational predicate implies that its specification of the individuals that make up the set denoted by the subject is exhaustive, that is, other alternatives are excluded. The subject of predication is associated with an existential presupposition because only the content of an existing set can be listed.

The semantic characterization of specificational predicates exactly fits Hungarian identificational foci, as well; therefore, I conclude that the so-called identificational focus of Hungarian is a type of specificational predicate.

The specificational analysis of Hungarian structural focus is exempt from all the semantic problems raised by other focus theories. In the framework of Szendrői (2003), it remains unclear why a preverbal focus implies exhaustive identification, unlike a postverbal one. In this framework, on the other hand, exhaustive identification is not a function of main stress; it is associated with a constituent in predicate position predicated of the VP. Crucially, a postverbal stressed constituent is not in predicate position; it sits among the arguments.

In the framework of Horvath (2000, 2004), the exhaustive identification interpretation of a preverbal constituent follows from the Exhaustive Interpretation operator in its specifier.

It remains unclear how the EI feature of a constituent supplied with an EI operator can be cancelled with a *többek között* 'among others' phrase – while it is needed to check the uninterpretable EI feature of the head of the EIP projection. In the framework of the specificational predicate analysis of identificational focus, on the other hand, exhaustivity is not an operator; it is not asserted; it is merely implied. This solution is also more economical than Horvath's theory; it does not introduce a new operator and a new projection into grammar, but only employs means which are needed for independent reasons.

None of the previous theories of focus have been able to predict the optionality of exhaustive interpretation in the case of non-specific foci. In the present framework, also this problem receives a natural explanation.

Chapter 1 argued that the verbal particle and the bare nominal complement are alternative fillers of the same preverbal predicative position. Whereas the verbal particle is a secondary predicate predicated of the theme argument, the bare nominal complement is a secondary predicate predicated of the implicit internal argument. For example:

(32)a. János **meg**-vette a könyvet a gyerekeknek.

John PRT bought the book the children-for
'John bought the book for the children.'

b. János **könyvet** vett a gyerekeknek.

John book-ACC bought the children-for
'John bought some book(s) for the children.'

The bare nominal complement, like that in (32b), is a predicational predicate. (32b) expresses that what John bought for the children is of the kind 'book', without referring to the number of books he bought. That is, (32b) can be paraphrased as follows:

(33) John bought x for the children and x is of the kind 'book'.

Let us assume that the landing site of the identificational focus/specificational predicate is the Spec,PredP position that can also be filled by the bare nominal complement. Then a bare nominal complement moved to Spec,PredP is, in fact, ambiguous; it can be understood either as a predicational element (predicated of the theme argument), or as a specificational element (predicated of the open sentence constituted by the rest of the sentence). In the latter case, it

implies exhaustive listing. This is, indeed, what we find. (32b) can mean, on the one hand, that ‘John bought something for the children, and it is of the kind book’; and on the other hand, it can also mean that ‘what John bought for the children is of the kind book’. The latter reading is exhaustive, implying that John bought nothing but book(s).

When the constituent in Spec,PredP is a definite or a specific indefinite noun phrase, the reading under which it is a predicational predicate, predicated of the implicit internal argument, is not available; the specificational, exhaustive interpretation is obligatory:

(34)a. János A *HÁBORÚ ÉS BÉKÉT* vette meg a gyerekeknek.

John the War and Peace bought PRT the children-for
 ‘It was *War and Peace* that John bought for the children.’

b. János egy orosz szótárt vett meg a gyerekeknek.

John a Russian dictionary bought PRT the children-for
 ‘It was a Russian dictionary that John bought for the children.’

If, on the other hand, the preverbal constituent is an indefinite noun phrase allowing either a specific or a non-specific interpretation, the non-specific reading will always be ambiguous between a predicational and a specificational reading. This is the case in (35), where there is no verbal particle to enforce the specific reading of the theme. (The stressing of the postverbal argument *a gyerekeknek* helps to elicit the predicational reading, whereas its destressing helps to elicit the specificational reading – even if there is no strict correlation between destressing and exhaustivity.)

(35) János egy orosz szótárt vett a gyerekeknek.

John a Russian dictionary-ACC bought the children-for
 ‘John bought the children A RUSSIAN DICTIONARY.’

That is, the proposed analysis correctly predicts the presence or absence of exhaustivity in the various cases of Hungarian focus constructions.

Notice that in the proposed framework, the specificational predicate status is always assigned to the maximal phrase in the preverbal slot, therefore, the pied-piping problems noted by Horvath (2000, 2004) in connection with Brody’s theory do not arise.⁵

3.2. *The focus, the verbal particle and the bare nominal are alternative fillers of Spec,PredP*

The proposed analysis categorizes not only verbal particles and bare nominals, but also identificational foci as predicative elements. This categorization allows us to return to the assumption of early focus theories according to which the verbal particle, the bare nominal complement, and the identificational focus are alternative fillers of the same preverbal position, analyzed in Chapter 1 as Spec,PredP. At the same time, the assumption of their complementary distribution is by no means a necessary consequence of the specificational predicate analysis of structural focus. The structural focus could be reinterpreted as a specificational predicate also in a Brody-style structure. Nevertheless, this section will survey the consequences of a syntactic structure which analyzes the verbal particle, the bare nominal complement, and the structural focus as alternative fillers of the same Spec,PredP position.

In fact, the structures assigned to a ‘verbal particle/bare nominal, V, XP*’ string and an ‘identificational focus, V, XP*’ string are not completely identical in this framework, either. The structures assumed must reflect the fact that the coordination and ellipsis possibilities of the V-initial string vary depending on whether it follows a particle/bare nominal complement or a focus. Compare:

(36)a. János [**ki** [nyitotta az ajtót]] és [**ki** [vette a leveleket a postaládából]] →
John out opened the door and out took the letters the letter-box-from
‘John opened the door and took the letters out of the letter-box.’

b.*János [**ki** [nyitotta az ajtót]] és [vette a leveleket a postaládából]]

(37)a.János [**kezet** [fogott Zsuzsával]] és [**kezet** [rázott Péterrel]] →
John hand-ACC clasped Susan-with and hand-ACC shook Peter-with
‘John clasped hands with Susan and shook hands with Peter.’

b.*János [**kezet** [fogott Zsuzsával]] és [rázott Péterrel]]

(38)a.[PÉTERNEK [írt levelet az anyja]] és [PÉTERNEK [küldött csomagot az apja]] →
Peter-DAT wrote letter his mother and Peter-DAT sent parcel-ACC his father
‘It was to Peter that his mother wrote a letter and it was to Peter that his father sent a parcel.’

b. [PÉTERNEK [írt levelet az anyja] és [küldött csomagot az apja]]

That is, the V-initial string is a possible target of coordination only if it follows a focus. This fact falls out if we assume V-to-Pred movement in the presence of a verbal particle or bare nominal in Spec,PredP, but no V-movement in the presence of a focus:

(39)a. [_{TopP} János [_{PredP} ki [_{Pred'} nyitotta_i [_{VP} t_i az ajtót]]]]
John out opened the door

b. [_{TopP} János [_{PredP} kezét [_{Pred'} fogott_i [_{VP} t_i Zsuzsával]]]]
John hand-ACC clasped Susan-with

c. [_{PredP} PÉTERNEK [_{VP} írt levelet az anyja]]]
Peter-DAT wrote letter his mother

The facts of ellipsis are slightly more complex, but they also indicate an asymmetry between the focus and the verbal particle/bare nominal. In the examples in (40)-(42), the questions under (a) are given two different elliptical answers under (b) and (c).

(40)a. Ki -nyitotta János az ajtót?
out opened John the door-ACC
'Did John open the door?'

b. Ki -nyitotta.
'He did.'

c. Ki.
'He did.'

(41)a. Kezét fogott János Zsuzsával?
hand-ACC clasped John Susan-with
'Did John clasp hands with Susan?'

b. Kezét fogott.

‘He did.’

c. ?Kezet.

‘He did.’

(42)a. PÉTERNEK írt az anyja levelet?

Peter-DAT wrote his mother letter

‘Was it to Peter that his mother wrote a letter?’

b. *PÉTERNEK írt.

‘It was.’

c. PÉTERNEK.

‘It was.’

If ellipsis, like syntactic operations, could only target maximal projections, the grammaticality of (40b) and (41b), and the ungrammaticality of (42b) would follow from the structures in (39). The grammaticality of (42c) would also be correctly predicted. What would remain unclear is why (40c) and (41c) are also possible. Ellipsis, however, is not a syntactic rule; it is operative in PF. Let us assume that PF rules are less strictly constrained; thus ellipsis can also target intermediate constituents. Under this assumption, the distribution of grammaticality in (40)-(42) is predicted.

The next question to answer is why V-to-Pred movement takes place only if Spec,PredP is filled by a verbal particle or a bare nominal; why no V-to-Pred movement is triggered in the presence of an identificational focus. I assume that the head of PredP attracts a V in all cases, having its [+Pred] feature checked by it. Whereas the head of a PredP with a verbal particle or a bare nominal in its specifier is filled by the lexical verb, the head of a PredP with a focus in its specifier is filled by an abstract, lexically null copula. The latter hypothesis can be substantiated by semantic and crosslinguistic morphological considerations. Recall that an identificational focus is a non-verbal predicate predicated of the VP. In languages like English, a non-verbal predicate of this type is spelled out as a complement to the copula, as happens in a cleft or a pseudo-cleft construction. In many languages with a focus marker – e.g. Hausa, or Sumerian (see Hartmann (2002) and Ch. Huber (1999)) – the focus marking morpheme is identical (or cognate) with the copula. I assume that the copula is

sitting invisibly in the Pred position of the Hungarian focus construction, as well. The assumption that the two types of Pred heads dominate different types of verbs also allows us to associate partially different interpretations with them.

We can also derive the fact that the movement of a verbal particle or a bare nominal into Spec,PredP is essentially obligatory, unless Spec,PredP is filled by an identificational focus, in which case the particle/bare nominal is left in situ. I assume that the [+pred] feature of the two types of Pred heads is further specified; it has either a *predicational* or a *specificational* value. A head marked as [+specificational pred] can obviously be checked only by a constituent with a matching [+specificational pred] feature. This feature is either lexically given (as in the case of wh-phrases, *only*-phrases, and monoton decreasing quantifiers like *kevés x* 'few x', *ritkán* 'rarely', etc.), or is freely assigned in the numeration. The verbal particle and the bare nominal are lexically marked as [+predicational pred], hence they are attracted into the specifier of a [+predicational pred] head.

Recall that Chapter XX argued that the evolution of Old Hungarian sentence structure into Modern Hungarian involved the loss of the tense marker, and the reinterpretation of the viewpoint aspect marking morpheme as a tense suffix. What presumably happened was that the TP projection in the [_{TP} T [_{AspP} Asp [_{PredP} Pred [_{VP} V...]]]] sequence was dropped, and the AspP projection came to be interpreted as a TP. This process took place parallel with the appearance of telicizing verbal particles in the language. It would be plausible to assume that viewpoint aspect came to be associated with the PredP projection hosting the particle, i.e., that [+/-perfective] has been added to the the feature specification of the head of PredP.

The assumption that the head of the projection hosting the focus also carries the viewpoint aspect feature of the sentence might seem counter-intuitive at first site. In fact, however, focussing does affect the aspectual meaning of the predicate – as is clear from Chapter 10. Consider the following example:

- (43)a. Május óta KOVÁCS PROFESSZOR kezeli Jánost. (Azelőtt Kovács professzor és
May since Kovács professor treats John before Kovács professor and
Szabó doktor kezelte.)
Szabó doctor treated-him
'Since May it has been professor Kovács who treats John. (Before that time, professor
Kovács and doctor Szabó treated him.)

The time adverbial giving the reference time in (43) applies to the specificational predicate. (Professor Kovács has been treating János for a period longer than a year. What has been going on for a year is that he is the exclusive member of the set of those treating János.)

The proposed syntactic structure not only correctly predicts the coordination and ellipsis possibilities of focus constructions, but is also exempt from the syntactic problems raised by Brody's FP theory. Unlike structure (1), the proposed framework does not predict an immediately postverbal position for the verbal particle. In the Hungarian sentence, the order of postverbal constituents is free. Hence, if the verbal particle in a focus construction is not assumed to occupy the specifier of a functional projection, it is predicted – correctly – to appear in a random order postverbally. Thus in the proposed framework, none of the following word order variants is unexpected:

(44)a. JÁNOS vezett tegnap Évával **össze**.

John fell yesterday Eve-with out

'It was John who fell out with Eve yesterday.'

b. JÁNOS vezett tegnap **össze** Évával.

c. JÁNOS vezett **össze** tegnap Évával.

In the framework of the FP theory assuming structure (1), a focussed verb is expected to undergo V-to-F movement; in fact, however, it stays in situ. In the current proposal, focussing is phrasal movement into Spec,PredP, hence the possibility of V-focussing does not even arise. A V can only be set into an explicit contrast – by the juxtaposition of a parallel sentence with a different V, as happens in (2) and in (20a).

The current proposal also provides a framework for the description of negation that is exempt from the problems mentioned in connection with (8). I assume that NegP can be merged into the sentence either above the VP layer or above the PredP layer of the predicate phrase. No V-movement is triggered, so the negative particle will be adjacent to the verb only in the former case, given that the Spec,VP position intervening between them is empty (see É. Kiss 2002:27):

(45)a. János [_{NegP} **nem** [_{VP} **hívta** meg Évát vacsorára]]

John not invited PRT Eve dinner-to

'John did not invite Eve to dinner.'

b. János [_{NegP} **nem** [_{PredP} ÉVÁT hívta meg vacsorára]]

‘It was not Eve who John invited to dinner.’

c. János [_{NegP} **nem** ÉVÁT [_{NegP} **nem** [_{VP} hívta meg vacsorára]]]

‘It was not Eve who John did not invite to dinner.’

The V-to-Pred movement assumed in the case of particle verbs and bare nominal plus V complexes would be blocked by an intervening negative particle; therefore such constructions are correctly ruled out. (46a) is ungrammatical because the V-to-Pred movement has not been performed, and (46b) is ungrammatical because the V has been moved non-locally, across a non-empty Neg head. The sentence can only be saved if no PredP is generated, as in (45a). (The unchecked [+pred] feature of the verbal particle/bare nominal is interpretable, hence it causes no harm.)

(46)a. *János [_{PredP} meg [_{NegP} nem [_{VP} hívta Évát]]]

John PRT not invited Eve

b. *János [_{PredP} meg-hívta [_{NegP} nem [_{VP} t Évát]]]

The fact that a head marked as [+predicational pred] cannot be merged with a NegP means that a focusless sentence with a negated VP has no PredP projection at all. The question is which head viewpoint aspect is associated with in such cases. A potential answer is that such sentences are not marked for viewpoint aspect. Alternatively we could assume that the Neg head functions as the carrier of viewpoint. (For further discussion of this issue, see chapters 6 and 10). Or else, AspP can only be collapsed with a PredP, and if no PredP is generated, it remains a distinct (albeit phonologically null) projection. This might be the case with verbs taking neither a particle, nor a bare nominal complement, as well.

3.3. The Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle elicits the information focus interpretation of the filler of Spec, PredP

As has been argued by Varga (2002), Hunyadi (2002), É. Kiss (1988), Szendrői (2003) etc., the target of main stress assignment in the Hungarian sentence is the leftmost major category of the comment, i.e., the left edge of the logical predicate. If the logical predicate is represented by the VP, the V bears the main stress (unless it is a negated VP, in which case

the stress is shifted to the negative particle). If it is represented by a PredP, the target of main stress assignment is Spec,PredP (unless it is a negated PredP, in which case the main stress is again shifted to the negative particle). As required by the Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle of Reinhart (1995) (adopted to Hungarian by Szendrői (2003)), the bearer of main stress is interpreted as the information focus of the sentence. That is, the verbal particle, the bare nominal complement, and the so-called identificational focus are attracted to Spec,PredP as the carriers of the [+Pred] feature, and they assume focus interpretation secondarily, as a consequence of the Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle.

4. Summary

This chapter has aimed to disentangle and explain the similarities and the differences in the syntactic behavior of the focus and the verbal particle/bare nominal. It has been claimed that what underlies the shared syntactic properties of foci and verbal particles/bare nominals is a functional similarity. Not only the verbal particle and the bare nominal are predicates predicated of the (explicit or implicit) theme argument of the verb, but the identificational focus is also a predicate expressing specification, predicated of the open proposition constituted by the VP. The exhaustivity associated with the Hungarian structural focus has been shown to be an implication of specificational predication. It has been argued that the focus, the verbal particle and the bare nominal are alternative fillers of the same Spec,PredP position, and their Pred head is also the carrier of a viewpoint aspect feature. Since the main stress in the Hungarian sentence falls on the left edge of PredP, the filler of Spec,PredP – whether it be a verbal particle, a bare nominal complement, or an identificational focus – also represents the information focus of the sentence, in accordance with the Stress–Focus Correspondence Principle. The proposal eliminates several theoretical and empirical (semantic and syntactic) problems of previous focus theories.

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Notes

1 For an analysis of numerally quantified foci, see also É. Kiss (2001) and Surányi (2002b), (2004).

2 A theory of negation along these lines was proposed by Olsvay (2000). For arguments against the derivation in (8), and for an alternative proposal, see Surányi (2002a,b).

3 In fact, there are counterexamples to this claim. Horvath herself discusses the following counterexample in a different context:

- (i) A KERÍTÉSEN másztunk **csak** át *t*.
the fence-across climbed only across
'We only climbed across the FENCE.'

It is unclear how the claim that *csak* must c-command the focus can be extended to this case.

4 If we assume, contrary to Szendrői (2003), that Q-Raising is adjunction to the maximal extended projection of the V, then we can formulate a stress rule which assigns primary stress to the leftmost element of every layer of the maximal extended projection of the V. That is, in the case of a Quantifier, Focus, V.... string, both the quantifier and the focus receive primary stresses – one of which can undergo destressing.

5 Sentences of the following type would require a special treatment in every type of focus theory:

- (i) A VENDÉG ment el szállodába, vagy A HÁZIGAZDA aludt a földön?
the guest went off hotel-to or the host slept the floor-on
'Was it the guest who went to a hotel, or was it the host who slept on the floor?'

In the framework proposed in this paper, sentences of this type are exceptional in that their subject of predication is not associated with an existential presupposition, e.g. in the case of the first clause of (i) there is no one who went to a hotel. I assume that in such cases it is not the constituent in Spec,PredP but the whole PredP that functions as a specificational predicate. The subject of predication, associated with an existential presupposition, is implicit; it corresponds roughly to 'What happened', i.e., the meaning of (i) could be paraphrased as follows:

(ii) Was it that the guest went to a hotel, or that the host slept on the floor, what happened?