THE RELATIVE CYCLE IN HUNGARIAN DECLARATIVES

0. The problem
Modern Hungarian hogy ‘that’:

● introduces finite declarative content clauses – located in higher C (cf. Rizzi 1997)
● appears as parts of certain complex complementisers (e.g. merthogy ‘because that’)

↔ Old and Middle Hungarian:

● hogy had various other functions (e.g. comparative complementiser)
● reverse order of complex complementisers also existed (e.g. hogymert ‘that because’)
● hogy also appeared in relative clauses (e.g. hogy ki ‘that who’)
● meaning of hogy in combinations: transparency

→ proposal:

● hogy developed via the relative cycle
● hogy became a general marker of subordination in Old and Middle Hungarian

1. The data
● functions of hogy ‘that’ present in Old, Middle and Modern Hungarian

– simple embedded declaratives:

(1) Láttam, (hogy) esik az eső.
   saw-I-Decl. that rains-Decl. the rain
   ‘I saw it was raining.’

– embedded imperatives:

(2) Azt mondták, (hogy) menjek Portóba.
    that-Acc. said-they-Decl. that go-I-Subj. Porto-III.
    ‘They told me to go to Porto.’

– embedded wh-interrogatives (hogy+interrogative pronoun):

(3) Azt kérdeztem, (hogy) mikor indulsz.
    that-Acc. asked-I-Decl. that when leave-you-Decl.
    ‘I asked when you were to leave.’
– clauses of purpose:

(4) Elmentem, **hogy** vegyek kenyeret.
    went-1-Decl. that buy-1-Subj. bread-Acc.
    ‘I went to buy some bread.’

– resultatives (úgy+hogy, olyan+hogy ‘so that’):

(5) Mari úgy elesett, **hogy** két hétig kórházban volt.
    Mary so fell-she-Decl. that two weeks.for hospital-ine. was-she-Decl.
    ‘Mary fell so badly that she spent two weeks in hospital.’

● new function: embedded yes/no questions (with -e particle):

(6) Azt kérdeztem, (**hogy**) éhes vagy-e.
    that-Acc. asked-1-Decl. that hungry are-you-Decl.PARTICLE
    ‘I asked whether you were hungry.’

● obsolete functions:

– introducing comparative subclauses (**hogynem** ‘that not’):

(7) Mert iob hog megfog’dofuā algukmég’ vrat **hog né**
    because better that caught-Past.Part. bless-we-Subj.PREV Lord-Acc. that not
    mēghal’l’ōc
die-we-Subj.
    ‘because it is better that we should bless the Lord caught than die’ (BécsiK. 25)

– introducing embedded conditionals:

(8) inkab iob volna ő nēki, **hog** eg ̣amar tēreh kottētnec ő
    rather better be-it-Cond. he him-Dat. that a donkey burden bound-it.Cond. his
    ūnaka kōriōl
neck-Poss.3Sg. around
    ‘it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck’ (MünchK. 45va)

● combinations in Modern Hungarian with other complementisers:

    _minthogy_ ‘than that’, _merthogy_ ‘because that’, _hogyha_ ‘that if’

● historical combinations (besides the ones above):

    _hogymint_ ‘that than’, _hogymert_ ‘that because’, _hahogy_ ‘if that’
small corpus analysis: the Gospel of Mark in 3 translations

Munich Codex (1466) – Old Hungarian

György Káldi’s translation (1626) – Middle Hungarian

Káldi-Neovulgata (1997) – Modern Hungarian

altogether: 255 locuses

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2. Grammaticalisation and the relative cycle

relative cycle (cf. van Gelderen 2009; Roberts–Roussou 2003):

– a pronoun becomes first an operator moving to [Spec; CP]

– subsequently this operator is reanalysed as the head of that CP

further possibility: reanalysis from lower C to higher C

(for English *that* see van Gelderen 2009)

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both steps motivated by economy (cf. van Gelderen 2004):

● Head Preference Principle

● Late Merge Principle
3. Simplex complementisers

development of other complementisers: by way of the relative cycle

\[ ha \text{ ‘if’}, mint \text{ ‘than’} \text{ and } mert \text{ ‘because’} \]

● originally pronouns, which came to be operators

(11) furícfte muflia|| etetý ýmletí. ug hug ana fçiluttet.
bathes washes feeds breastfeeds so how mother child-Acc.-Poss.3Sg.
‘she bathes, washes, feeds and breastfeeds him as a mother does her child’ (KT.)

chronology:

● functional split for hogy and ha took place before the Old Hungarian period
→ position: ha always in the higher C head

hogy typically a higher C head and rarely a lower one

● for mint and mert: split only during the Old and Middle Hungarian periods
→ position: mint and mert either operators in the lower [Spec; CP] or in the lower C head

4. Multiple complementisers

two complementisers in one Left Periphery allowed in Old/Middle Hungarian

higher C + lower C ← higher C + operator

(12) edesseget erze nagýoban hogýmint annak elotte
sweetness-Acc. felt-(s)he greater that.than that-Dat. before-Poss.3Sg.
‘(s)he felt sweetness even more than before’ (LázK. 140)

structure:

(13) \[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{CP} \\
C' \\
C \\
hogy \ \text{mint}
\end{array} \quad \leftrightarrow \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{CP} \\
C' \\
C \\
hogy
\end{array} \]

fixed word orders:

hogy typically in the upper C head

→ hogymint ‘that than’, hogymert ‘that because’

with ha: ha in the upper C head
5. Complex complementisers

movement of the lower C head to the upper one: adjunction results in the reverse order

← Linear Correspondence Axiom, cf. Kayne (1994)

(14) semi nagob nem mondathatik: mint hogh legon istenek ania 
nothing greater not say-Pass.Cond.3.Sg. than that be-Subj.3.Sg God-Dat. mother 
‘nothing can be said to be greater than that she be the mother of God’ (TihK. 143)

structure:

(15) CP

C

C

CP

mint, hogy

C

C

CP

... 

minthogy

C

C

Ø

... 

grammaticalization: complex complementisers base-generated as such

← economy: base-generation preferred over movement

→ minthogy ‘than that’, mertogy ‘because that’

Modern Hungarian: does not allow two separate C heads

→ reverse order combinations preserved

→ original C+C combinations are extinct

6. The position of hogy

underlying order: typically of the form hogy+X

← hogy typically in the higher C head

→ generally combinations of the form X+hogy remain in the language

exception: combinations of hogy and ha ‘if’

underlying order: ha+hogy
evidence: intervening elements possible:

(16) Ha késen hogy el nyugot az nap, hamar esőt váry
    if late that PREV set-3.Sg. the sun soon rain-Acc. expect-Imp.2.Sg.
    ‘if the sun has set late, expect rain soon’ (Cis. G3)

explanation:

ha invariably in the higher C head → hogy could only be base-generated in the lower C head

but: movement preferred for hogy

→ reverse order (hogyha) more frequent even in Old and Middle Hungarian

7. Relative clauses

relative clauses containing hogy + a relative operator

possible in Old and especially in Middle Hungarian (cf. Galambos 1907)

(17) olÿaat tezok raýtad  bog kýtol felz
    such do you that who fear
    ‘I will do such on you that you fear’

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8. Further combinations

negative-like Mood heads:

→ hogynemmint ‘that not than’, hogysemmint ‘that neither than’

(19) az mentól alsobýkban is tob angýal uagon honnemmýnth az napnak feneben
    the more down-Ine. also more angel is that.not than the sun-Dat. light-Poss.
    ‘there are more angels in the basest one of them than in the sun’s light’ (SándK. 1v)
9. Functions of hogy

recall:

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original specific functions: comparative, partly also conditional
● change in Old Hungarian: mint ‘than’ appeared in the subclause (cf. Bácskai-Atkári 2011)
● hogy losing the function of marking comparative Force

loss of specific functions ⇔ hogy became the marker of subordination

Modern Hungarian: extension to embedded yes/no questions

subordination: increase in the number of finite clauses

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extension: hogy appeared in other clauses functioning as a general subordinator head

→ combinations, relative clauses
● appearance in a wide range of clauses: conditionals, clauses of reason, relative clauses
● the meaning of a combination hogy+X or X+hogy did not initially differ from the meaning of X on its own

later: other complementisers becoming (higher C) subordinators too

→ hogy no longer used as a general declarative marker

**Conclusion**

hogy developed via the relative cycle

relative cycle can be extended to other C heads

combinations dependent on the timing of the relative cycle

hogy: general subordinator head

**References**


