

Obligatorily possessed gerunds in Old Hungarian

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1. Introduction

Basic problem: Old Hungarian (896–1526 A.D.) had a gerund that employed the non-finite ending *-t*. This gerund obligatorily bore possessive morphology, while regular nouns could also be unpossessed.

- (1) es ok a heg-rol le-zall-att-oc-ban ...
and they the mountain-delat down-come-t-2pl-iness
‘and they, while coming down the mountain, ...’ (1466, Munich Codex 101)

How can we encode in the grammar that the *-t* gerund must be possessed?

2. The Old Hungarian *-t* gerund

2.1. External distribution: nouny

-t gerunds are obligatorily possessed, their morphology is identical to that of possessed nouns.

regular nouns with an R-expression possessor:

- (2) noun > possessedness marker > plural > case
(3) gonossag-nak **zaw-a-ý-ra**
evil-dat word-poss-pl-sublat
‘on (hearing) words of evil’ (before 1494, Festetics Codex 66)

-t gerunds with an R-expression subject:

- (4) verb > possessedness marker > case (gerunds cannot be pluralized)
(5) minden-ok-nek **lat-t-a-ra**
every-pl-dat see-t-poss-sublat
‘while everyone saw’ (early 16th c; Lázár Codex 33v)

regular nouns with a with pronominal possessor:

- (6) noun > possessedness marker > plural > possessive agreement > case marker
(7) een **wth-a-ý-m-ath**
my way-poss-pl-1sg-acc
‘my ways’ (Festetics Codex 5)

With a first or second person possessor of a singular noun, the possessedness marker and the possessive agreement are fused (or to put it another way, the former suffix is dropped)

- (8) een ýmadsag-om-ath
 my prayer-1sg-acc
 ‘my prayer’ (before 1494, Festetics Codex 89)

-t gerunds with a pronominal subject: as the gerund cannot be pluralized, the possessedness marker and the agreement are always fused

- (9) verb > -t non-finite ending > possessive agreement > case marker
 (10) háromzèr taga-č-meg [èngem-èt esmèr-**t-ed-èt**]
 three.times deny-2sg-perf I-acc know-gerund-2sg-acc
 ‘you deny your knowing me thre times’ (1466, Munich Codex 81 va)

The gerund is fully productive: different possessive suffixes are possible

1st singular

- (11) **mong-ac** ɔ zúu-ok-bèn [ɔ menden gonossag-ok-rol **meg-èmlèkez-t-em-èt**]
 say-3pl their heart-3pl-iness their every sin-3pl-delat perf-remember-t-1sg-acc
 ‘they say in their heart that I remember every evil deed of theirs’
 (mid-15th c; Vienna Codex 189)

2nd plural

- (12) Ne zegyenl-etek [alamyzna-ert **ment-ett-ek-et**]
 not ashamed-3pl alms-finalis go-t-pl-acc
 ‘do not be ashamed of going for alms’ (c. 1440, Jókai Codex 81-82)

The gerund is fully productive: different case endings are possible

Nominative (zero morpheme)

- (13) the wer-ud hull-oth-ya
 your blood-2sg drop-t-poss
 ‘the falling of your blood’ (1192-1195, Lamentations of Mary 10)

Dative

- (14) [poncius pilatus Iudea-ban **biolkot-t-a-nac**] idè-ie-bèn
 pontius pilate Iudea-iness govern-t-poss-dat time-poss-iness
 ‘during the reign of Pontius Pilate in Iudea’ (1466, Munich Codex 56vb)

Inessive (‘in’)

- (15) vetkez-t-em [hyt-em-nek tyzenket agazat-ya-t nem **tart-at-om-ba**]
 sin-pst-1sg faith-1sg-dat twelve branch-poss-acc not keep-t-1sg-iness
 ‘I have sinned in not adherering to my faith’s twelve branches’
 (early 16th c; Virginia Codex 7r)

Sublative ('onto')

- (16) minden-*ok*-nek **lat-t-a-ra**
every-pl-dat see-t-poss-sublat
'while everyone saw' (early 16th c; Lázár Codex 33v)

2.2. Internal structure: verby

The subject of *-t* gerunds can coreferential with a main-clause argument (controlled PRO).

- (17) tud-om, **alut-t-om** sem leszen
know-1sg sleep-t1sg not will.be
'I know that I won't have any sleep' (1530, Level 95)

-t gerunds can also co-occur with an overt DP that supplies a subject with independent reference. These are either Nominative or Dative marked.

- (18) meg-akar-ia *n*omoret-ani **èn** ièlèn **vol-t-om-ban**
perf-want-3sg cripple-inf my present be-t-1sg-iness
'he wants to cripple him in my presence' (mid-15th c; Vienna Codex 64)
- (19) hall-ott-ac **o-nèk-i** è ièlènseg **te-t-è-∅-t**
hear-pst-3pl he-dat-3sg this deed do-t-poss-3sg-acc
'they heard of his doing this deed' (1466, Munich Codex 98vb)

Apart from a subject, a *-t* gerund can be modified by an object, adverbs, and negation.

subject and adverb

- (20) meg-akar-ia *n*omoret-ani [**èn** ièlèn **vol-t-om-ban**]
perf-want-3sg cripple-inf my present be-t-1sg-iness
'he wants to cripple him in my presence' (mid-15th c; Vienna Codex 64)

object, adverb, negation

- (21) vetkeztem ... [en erzekenseg-*y*-m-et io-ra nem b^yr-t-om-ba.]
sin-pst-1sg my sensibility-poss.pl-1sg-acc good-sublat not hold-t-1sg-iness
'I have sinned in not using my sensibility for good' (early 16th c; Virginia Codex 2v)

3. Previous analysis

Tóth (2011) argues that *-t* gerunds involve a nominalizing head Nom, which takes an extended verbal projection as its complement. It nominalizes its complement, allowing it to be embedded under nominal functional projections. I will adopt this idea.

- (22) [_{NomP} *-t* [_{clause} ...]]

Tóth (2011) argues that the Nominative DP of (17) and the Dative DP of (18) are in the subject position of the nominalized clause.

- (23) [_{NomP} *-t* [_{TP} DP(Nom/Dat) [_{VP} ...]]]

So their structure is

- (24) meg-akar-ia nõmoreit-ani [_{TP} **èn** [ièlèn **vol-t-om-ban**]]
perf-want-3sg cripple-inf my present be-t-1sg-iness
'he wants to cripple him in my presence' (mid-15th c; Vienna Codex 64)
- (25) hall-ott-ac [_{TP} **o-nèk-i** [è ièlènseg **te-t-è-ø-t**]]
hear-pst-3pl he-dat-3sg this deed do-t-poss-3sg-acc
'they heard of his doing this deed' (1466, Munich Codex 98vb)

Problems:

1. why do these nominalized clauses need to be possessed? Ordinary nouns and other types of deverbal nominalizations can be unpossessed:

unpossessed regular noun

- (26) az angyal
the angel
'the angel' (1521, Könyvecse 2v)

unpossessed *-ás/és* nominalization

- (27) Az ysten nep-e-th ... hala **ad-as-ra** ynt-y az profeta
the god people-poss-acc thanks give-nom-sublat warn-3sg the prophet
'the prophet warns God's people to give thanks'
(late 15th – early 16th c; Apor Codex 12)

2. Old Hungarian has non-finite (infinitival) clauses with Dative subjects and non-finite (participial) clauses with Nominative subjects, but no (other) non-finite has a subject that is optionally Dative or Nominative

infinitival Dative subject

- (28) (ke)kel-ala [**ew zerzet-e-nek** nagÿ fokaſſag-ban terÿed-nÿ]
must-pst his holy.orders-poss-dat big multitude-iness spread-acc
'his order had to spread among many people(s)' (c. 1440, Jókai Codex 13)

participial Nominative subject

- (29) [**zent Clara** zerz-et-e *pron_i*] kener-ek-ett_i
holy Clara procure-t-3sg bread-pl-acc
'the loaves of bread procured by Saint Clara' (c. 1440, Jókai Codex 75)

4. Analysis

4.1. The status of the DP providing independent reference

The type of nominal in Old and modern Hungarian that is optionally Nominative or Dative marked is the possessor.

- (30) vr-onk ihūs neu-e-ben
 lord-1sg Jesus name-poss-iness
 ‘in the name of Jesus our Lord’ (1516, Gömöry codex 119r) Nominative possessor
- (31) vr Jefuſ-nak new-e-ben
 lord Jesus-dat name-poss-iness
 ‘in the name of the Lord Jesus’ (1516-1519, Jordánszky Codex 773) Dative possessor

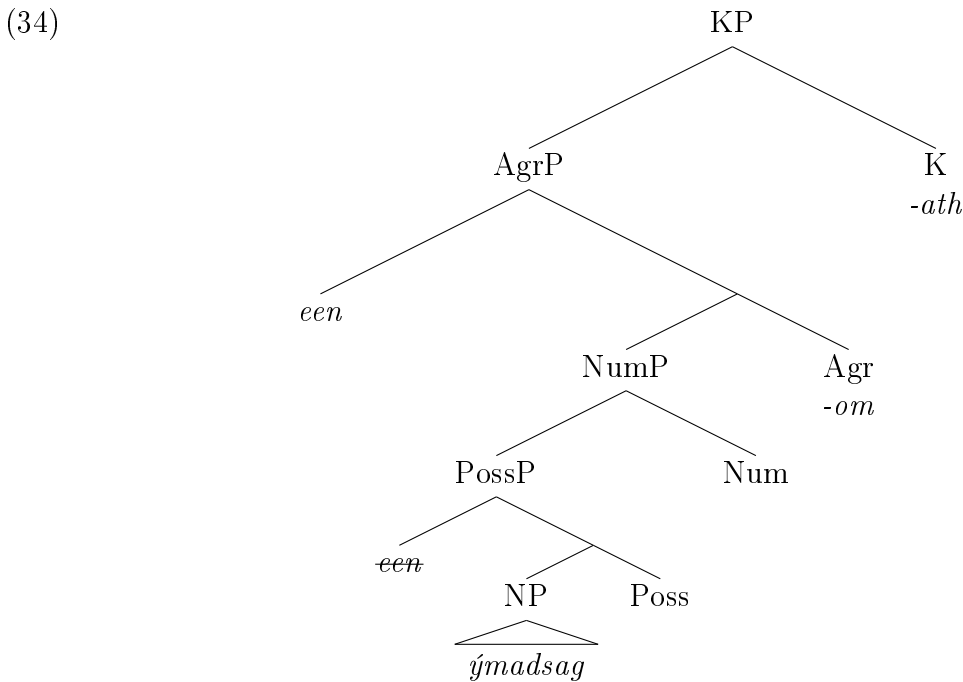
The DP providing independent reference is marked like a regular possessor, and the *-t* gerund is obligatorily marked like a possessed noun.

Proposal: I suggest that these DPs are represented in the structure as possessors of the nominalization rather than as subjects internal to the nominalized clause. The clausal subject is always PRO.

- (32) [_{POSSP} DP(Nom/Dat) [_{NOMP} *-t* [_{TP} PRO [_{VP} ...]]]]

The structure of possessed nouns:

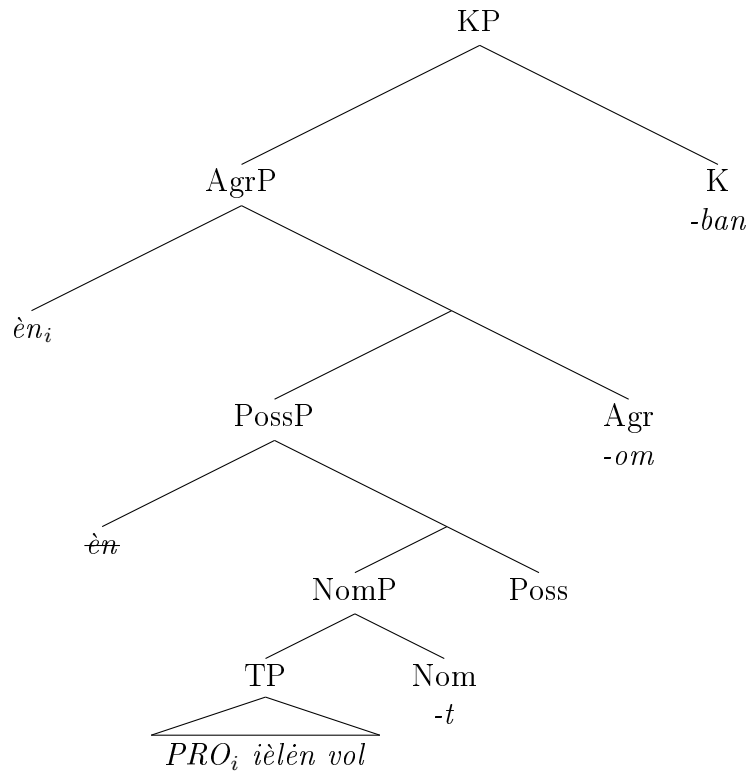
- (33) een ýmadsag-om-ath
 my prayer-1sg-acc
 ‘my prayer’ (before 1494, Festetics Codex 89)



The structure of *-t* gerunds, Nominative possessor:

- (35) meg-akar-ia nómorit-ani [èn ièlèn vol-t-om-ban]
 perf-want-3sg cripple-inf my present be-t-1sg-iness
 ‘he wants to cripple him in my presence’ (mid-15th c; Vienna Codex 64)

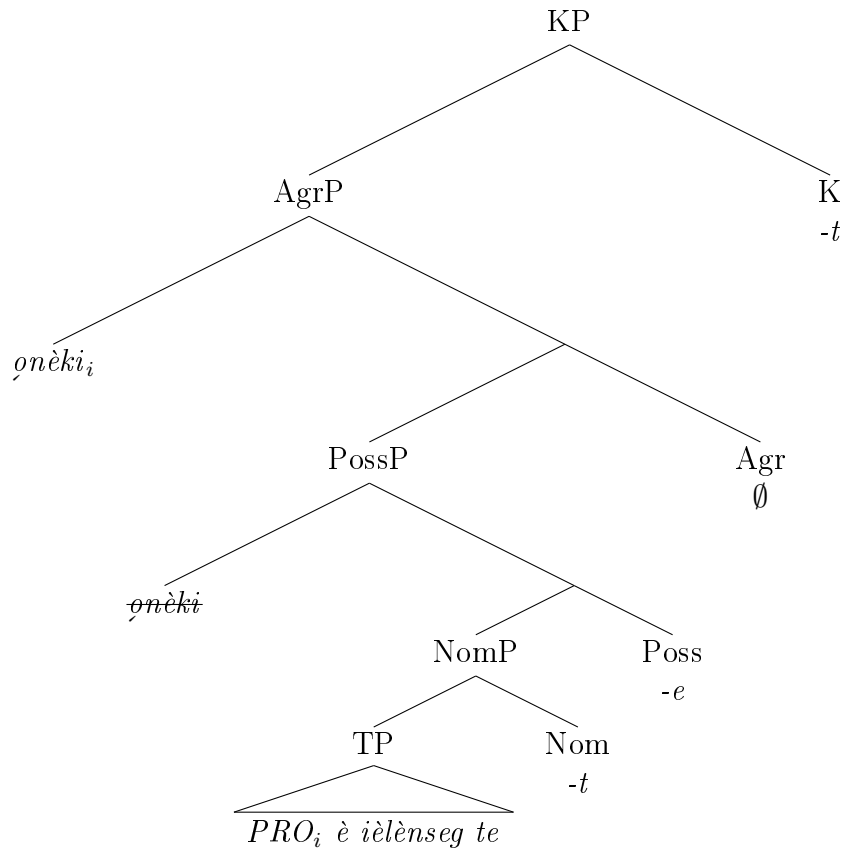
(36)



The structure of *-t* gerunds, Dative possessor:

- (37) hall-ott-ac [_{TP} **o-nèk-i** [è ièlènseg **te-t-è-∅-t**]]
 hear-pst-3pl he-dat-3sg this deed do-t-poss-3sg-acc
 ‘they heard of his doing this deed’ (1466, Munich Codex 98vb)

(38)



What about *-t* gerunds that Tóth, too, analyzed as having a PRO subject (i.e gerunds coreferent with a matrix argument)?

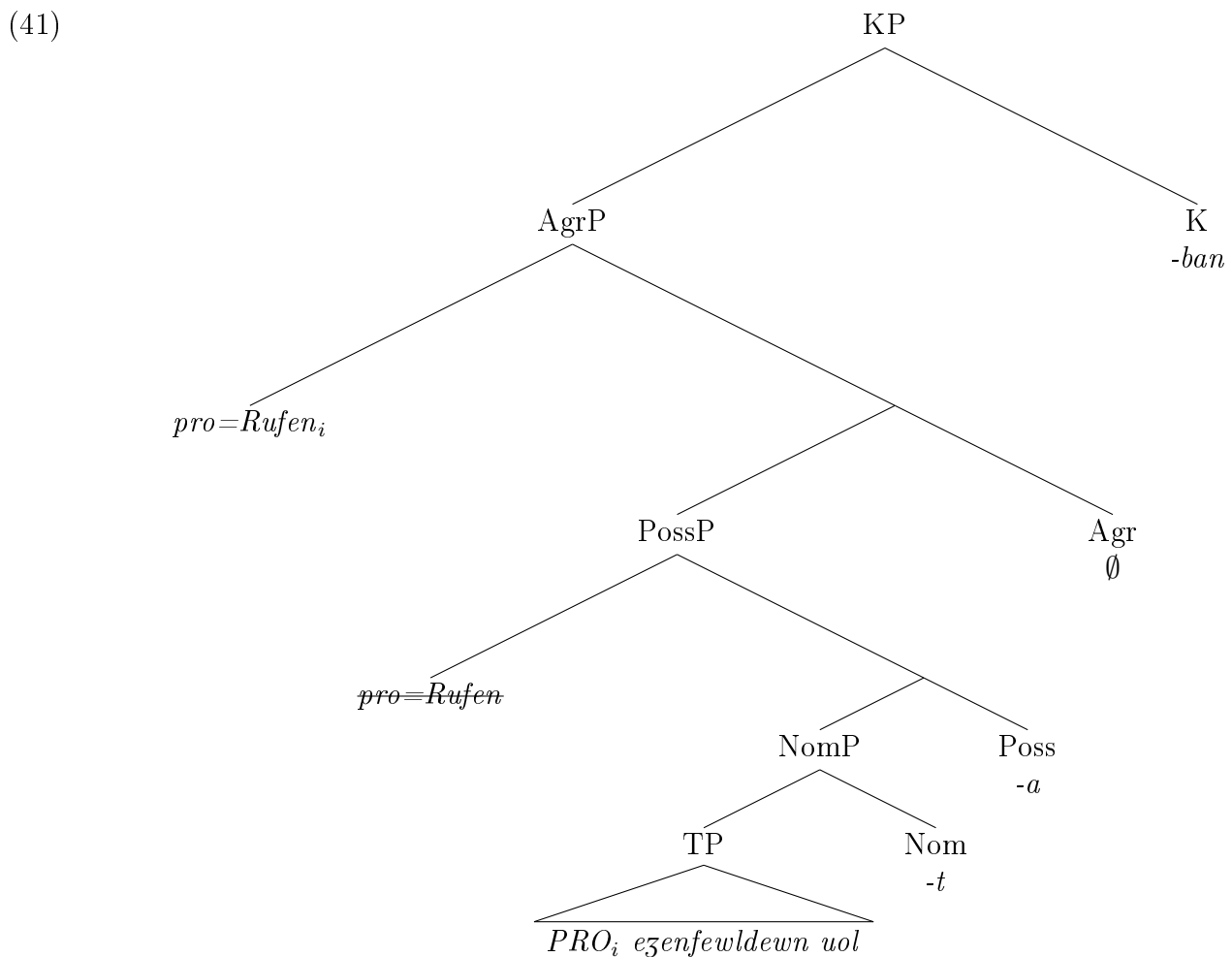
coreference with a *pro*-dropped subject

- (39) *haromzèr taga-č-meǵ [èngem-èt esmèr-t-ed-èt]*
 three.times deny-2sg-perf I-acc know-gerund-2sg-acc
 ‘you deny your knowing me thre times’ (1466, Munich Codex 81 va)

coreference with the object

- (40) *frater Rufen-t nem-ketel-t-e zent-nek-lenÿ [eǵ-en-fewld-ewn uol-t-a-ban]*
 father Rufen-acc not-doubt-pst-3sg saint-dat-be.inf this-sup-earth-sup be-t-poss-iness
 ‘he did not doubt that father Rufen was a saint already on this earth’
 (c. 1440, Jókai Codex 69)

Given the presence of the possessive morphology, I suggest that these clauses contain a *pro*-dropped possessor that is accidentally coreferent with the relevant matrix argument.



This way *-t* gerunds have a unified structure regardless of the presence or absence of an overt DP providing a referentially independent subject.

Pro-drop of possessors in common in Old Hungaian (as well as contemporary Hungarian):¹

- (42) Az ki-k tanóság-ra nev-ed-ben ad-at-nak
 that who-pl testimony-sublat name-2sg-iness give-pass-3pl
 ‘those who are sent to give testimony in your name’
 (1529, Lavs Sancti Nicolai Pontificis 2/5)

4.2. Representing obligatory possession

I assume with den Dikken (1999, 2006) that possession involves a predication structure, represented by a Rel(ator)P.

Rel⁰ has 2 arguments: the predicate and the subject of predication. Den Dikken argues that one of these is in the complement, the other is the specifier of Rel⁰, and both configurations shown below exist:

- (43) [_{RelP} subject [_{Rel'} Rel⁰ predicate]]

- (44) [_{RelP} predicate [_{Rel'} Rel⁰ subject]]

Proposal: the *-t* nominalizer is a Rel⁰ head. Its 2 arguments are the clause to be nominalized, and the possessor.

This derives the obligatory presence of the possessor and the possessive morphology, as Rel⁰'s arguments are obligatory.

The structure of *-t* gerunds: *-t* both nominalizes its complement and includes it into a predicative relation with the possessor.

- (45) [_{RelP} subject [_{Rel'} Rel⁰ predicate]]

- (46) [_{RelP} possessor [_{Rel'} Rel⁰(*-t*) clause]]

Other nominalizing heads, e.g. *-ás/és* nominalizations: these are not Relators, so they simply nominalize their complement without introducing the predicative relationship and the possessor.

- (47) Az ysten nep-e-th ... hala **ad-as-ra** ynt-y az profeta
 the god people-poss-acc thanks give-nom-sublat warn-3sg the prophet
 ‘the prophet warns God’s people to give thanks’ (late 15th – early 16th c; Apor Codex 12)

5. Conclusions

The basic problem of Old Hungarian *-t* gerunds: obligatorily possessed.

I argued that *-t* is a Relator type of nominalizer head. Its 2 arguments are the clause to be nominalized and the possessor.

I argued that the Nominative/Dative DP that provides a subject with independent reference is a possessor in DP rather than a subject in the clause.

¹Compare (42) to the following overt possessors:

Nominative possessor

- (i) te nev-ed-ben
 your name-2sg-iness
 ‘in your name’
 (1529, Lavs Sancti Nicolai Pontificis 2/7)

Dative possessor

- (ii) te-nek-ed New-ed
 you-dat-2sg name-2sg
 ‘your name’
 (1526-1528, Székelyudvarhelyi Codex 29 v)

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