

THE OLD HUNGARIAN SUFFIX *-(n)kéd*:
QUANTIFIERS AND PLURACTIONAL READINGS

This paper reports findings from Old Hungarian (OH) records (11th–16th century) relating to the distributive suffix *-(n)kéd*, and provides a first semantic analysis of this morpheme. The main motivation for discussing this suffix is that its behaviour may offer new insights concerning the structuring of the logical space populated by quantifiers (over times/events), distributivity operators and pluractional adverbials. Also, *-n-kéd* gives us a window into that stage of Hungarian (before extant records) when the language was head-final, and quantification was predominantly A-quantification.

The suffix *-(n)kéd* is remarkable because, depending on the common noun it attaches to, the interpretation of the output ranges from a full-blown adverb of quantification to a pluractional adverbial. *Kor-on-kéd* (*kor*: ‘time’) is comparable to English *always* or to MH *mindig*: With states, it could yield one uninterrupted state, as in (1); with event readings, sentences with *koronkéd* yield tripartite structures, familiar from the literature on *always* (cf. (2) and (3)). *Ajtónkéd* (*ajtó*: ‘door’) is pluractional *from door to door*. *Fejenkéd* (*fej*: ‘head’), *egyenkéd* (*egy*: ‘one’) were distributivity operators: They could form one complex with *mind* ‘all’, and did not impose strict temporal succession (cf. (5)–(6)).

- (1) De **koronkeed** dagalyosok voltatok mywlthá foghwa ysmertelek
‘But you’ve always been full of yourselves, ever since I’ve known you’ (Jordánszky C. 220; 1516–1519)
- (2) **valamy** zyletendyk hym nemzeth, **azth koronkeed** wr ystenuék aldozzad
‘whatever male issue is (first) born, that should always be sacrificed to God’ (Jordánszky C. 233)
- (3) **koronkeed** bykath aldozyeek hŵ byneyerth es kosth ystennek dyczeeretyre
‘Whenever Aaron sacrifices something for his sins it should be a bull, and whenever he sacrifices something in praise of God, it should be a ram. (Jordánszky C. 99)’
- (4) ha zomeidnek welagat el weztendöd: zikseg neköd **aitonked** koldulnod:
‘If you lose your eyesight you’ll have to go begging from door to door’ (Tihanyi C. 55r; 1530–32)
- (5) Igon meltosagossok: merth istennek **mynd fejenkeed** leanÿ es fÿäÿ
‘They are venerable, since each and every one of them is the son or daughter of God’ (Sándor C. 1v; before 1525)
- (6) Heten vadnak, Mel’eket az ȝ At’ok az ȝrdȝg **mind egenkét** kazdagon el hazasÿta
‘They are seven in number, and their father the devil has married off richly each and every one of them’ (Székelyudvarhely C. 95 r–v; 1526–28)

Sketch of analysis: In all its uses, *-n-kéd* is taken to introduce (*i*) a set of

eventualities and (ii) a bijection mapping the atomic events of ‘its’ eventualities onto the set contributed by the N it combines with. (Cf. functional analyses proposed by Boolos or Rothstein.) Depending on the aspectual class of the matrix verb, *-n-kéd*-eventualities can form a linearly ordered sequence, but may also form a temporally unordered collection of states/situations, as in (5). Note also that *-n-kéd* introduces no *thematic* restrictions on its N argument (cf. (4), where *ajtónkéd* adds a spatiotemporal path to the contribution of *koldul* ‘beg’). Distributivity operators with *-n-kéd* (cf. (6)) are predicted to be event-distributive: (6) may mean that all marriage events involve a unique daughter of the devil’s. Interaction with *mind* ‘all’ can mean that the inverse of the original function, itself a bijection, is to be employed, yielding a participant-distributive reading.

Koronkéd ‘always’ could mimic a propositional quantifier, complete with tripartite structure, because *kor* ‘time’ was in fact an incomplete description, with its own, independent event argument. (I.e. *kor* is interpreted as ‘the time(s) when something holds/happens’). The combined effect of *kor* and suffix was ‘At all times/events s.t. φ , there is a time/event s.t. ψ ’. A similar account, with some fine-tuning, could be given for *naponkéd* lit. ‘day-DIST’ (not shown in this abstract), which, unlike *koronkéd*, hesitated between ‘high’, quantifier and ‘low’, pluractional status.

The range of readings with OH *-n-kéd* extends from ‘high’ propositional quantifiers to ‘low’ pluractional adverbials. The data can be said to form two natural classes: distributivity markers appear to form one class with pluractional adverbials, and this class is quite clearly distinct from universal expressions such as *koronkéd* ‘always’ (pace the case of *naponkéd* ‘every day’, ‘daily’).

The ‘evolution’ of *-n-kéd* offers two observations on meaning change. (i) MH no longer has OH-style, universal *koronkéd*. Two structurally identical adverbs (e.g. *időnként* ‘time-DIST, ‘from time to time’) are plural existentials. We propose that the core functional semantics of *-n-ként* adverbials has remained unchanged; the existential reading of MH *időnként* follows from a (pragmatic) change in calculating the domain of the relevant function (and relating this domain to the discourse universe).

(ii) MH *-n-ként* can express a dependency between (bearers of) θ -roles: Whereas OH *fejenkéd* (head-DIST) was a plain distributivity operator acceptable in stative sentences with intransitive verbs (contra the predictions in Rothstein), MH *fejenként* means ‘per capita’, and expresses a dependency between (bearers of) θ -roles.

In this paper a functional dependency of a particular kind has been proposed, to mimic the effects of a universal quantifier. Interactions with the noun that the suffix combined with have been responsible for variations in the status of the output. A functional account has the added advantage of leaving room for semantic change: the emergence or the loss of functional dependencies between θ -roles, or the emergence of existential readings.

Selected References: \oplus Beck, S. 2012: Pluractional Comparisons. *L&P*. \oplus Beck, S.-v.Stechow, A. 2007: Pluractional Adverbials. *JSem*. \oplus Boolos, G. 1981: For Every

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