

The devil is in the details: Verb Modifiers in 16th-century Hungarian

Aims and claims: This paper examines diachronic changes in the word order properties of verb modifiers (VMs) in Hungarian and focuses on 16th-century data as compared to the Old Hungarian stage and present day Hungarian. We claim that the preverbal VM position is mostly generalized for all types of VMs at this age, i.e., verbal particles, bare objects, primary and secondary non-verbal predicates are overwhelmingly preverbal in neutral sentences. However, there are two groups of VMs that are systematically different, namely, directional (goal) complements of motion verbs and infinitival complements of auxiliary-like verbs (esp. *akar* ‘want’, but also to some extent *kell* ‘must, need’ and *fog* ‘will’). We argue that these systematic exceptions can be explained if we take into account the particular properties of these phrases in that stage of the grammar. Motion verbs are involved in two separate ways when they do not exhibit VM-V order: they are either in atelic/imperfective contexts or they can be telic without a lexicalized VM, where today we would often find a particle. This latter property is related to Hungarian becoming more satellite-framed as its aspectual and event structure changes. Auxiliary-like verbs seem to be less stress-avoiding, which is likely due to their being less auxiliary-like in Middle Hungarian, e.g. *akar* ‘want’ can easily bear the main stress in its clause in various examples. As an outlook, we will contrast the patterns of the position of the verb modifier and the verb in neutral sentences to the patterns in negative sentences.

Background and data: It has been shown that Old Hungarian VMs exhibit a more varied word order pattern in neutral sentences than what we see today: verbal particles are the most consistent in being preverbal neutrally, while e.g. directional (goal) complements are relatively often postverbal still (see Hegedűs 2018 on data from the Munich Codex [1466], checking 500 VMs in neutral sentences). This has been analyzed as a change that results in the generalized preverbal position of all predicative phrases as well as non-referential arguments as a means to form complex predicates in over syntax.

In extending the empirical domain to a speech-related register that can hardly display interference-phenomena in word order, we look at neutral sentences in 16th-century data from the Old and Middle Hungarian Corpus of informal language use and take stock of the distribution of verbal particles, bare objects, directional complements of motion verbs, non-verbal (nominal, adjectival and locative) predicates in copular sentences, dative-marked secondary predicates (with *consider*-type verbs) and infinitival complements of the most frequent stress-avoiding auxiliary-like verbs. Our findings show that verbal particles, bare objects, and primary and secondary non-verbal predicates are overwhelmingly preverbal in neutral sentences; however, directional complements of motion verbs (1)-(2) and infinitival complements of auxiliary-like verbs (3)-(4) are sometimes postverbal even in seemingly neutral sentences.

(1) Onnant el-menvén **ment Bodonc-ra,** és csakhamar utána
there.from away-gone went Bodonc-sub and soon after
nagy kőeső lett.
big hailstorm became
‘Leaving that place, she went to Bodonc and soon after there was a big hailstorm’

(2) **Megyén Vásárhely-re,** onnét soha meg nem jöve,
went Vásárhely-sub there.from never prt not came
a pénz is odamarada.
the money too there.to-stayed

‘(S)he went to Vásárhely, never came back from there, and the money was left there too.’

(3) **Akarnám** értenem, mit végeztél.
want.cond.1sg understand.inf.1sg what finish.past.2sg
'I would want to understand what you managed to get done.'

(4) **kell** kegyelmed előtt magamat **mentenem**.
must your.highness before self.1sg.acc plead.inf.1sg
'I must excuse myself in front of your highness.'

Proposal: Building on Hegedűs' (2018) findings in Old Hungarian, we propose that by the 16th century, we see further progress in the the process by which the preverbal position of VMs gets generalized to all currently observable categories. In fact, the only remarkable exceptions are in two groups and they are due to (i) the different lexicalization of telicity with motion verbs, and (ii) the different lexical properties of auxiliary-like verbs, which allows them to bear stress and does not force them to undergo restructuring with their infinitival complement. In the other cases, VMs move to their preverbal functional position. The decisive difference between the 'regular, modern' and the 'less regular, archaic' behavior of VMs cannot be drawn along the lines of the semantic content of the VM itself since verbal particles and goal complements are generally assumed to encode very similar meanings (namely, an end-point, telicity), still they behave differently to some extent. Therefore, we assume that the semantic properties of VMs and the motivation for their movement are essentially the same as today. We subscribe to a two-step analysis of VM movement, based on Surányi's (2009a,b) proposal but in the case of neutral sentences the crucial part is that the VM moves to the position where it forms a complex predicate with the verb, and this takes place with most VMs uniformly, except for the two groups as mentioned above. In those cases, the VM position is not lexicalized: (i) motion verbs rely less on a lexical telicity marker at this stage, (ii) verbs like *akar* or *kell* are not necessarily restructuring verbs and, relatedly, can bear stress in the surface position so raising their complement is less frequent.

The complications of negation: The patterns that appear in negative sentences can partly be accounted for on the basis of VM placement in neutral sentences. In the case of verbal particles and bare nominal objects, the dominant variant displaying the VM - NEG - V order is derivable through their near obligatory VM movement, with assuming head-adjunction of the negative element to the V (É. Kiss 2014). The marginal NEG - V - VM variant, the rate of which is almost identical in the case of these two VM types, is also explicable by assuming a pragmatically driven, optional movement of the negated V to a higher functional position (NegP). Concerning stress-avoiding verbs, these occur almost exclusively in a NEG - V - INF pattern, which is also derivable from their properties seen in neutral sentences (in their case, the presence or absence of optional movement yields the same surface order). A problem that will require further consideration is the exceptional distribution of negative patterns occurring with non-verbal predicates in copular sentences, which regularly show VM movement in neutral sentences similarly to verbal particles and nominal objects.

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