

## Cognitive schemes as semantic determinants of verb particle usage – the case of *el-*

Verb particle usage can be described in terms of a) the factors determining whether a verb particle is applied in a clause, b) the syntactic position in which it appears, and c) the choice of the particle from the group of synonymous particles. There are various factors pertaining to nearly all linguistic levels determining the usage of verb particles in Hungarian that have been investigated in a series of approaches in former literature. These include the discourse level (discourse old vs. discourse new as well as specific vs. non-specific indefinite direct objects as referents<sup>1</sup>), predication semantics (predication type; aspect; the presence of a semantically contentful verb specifier in the sentence<sup>2</sup>), verb semantics (event structure<sup>3</sup>, specific semantics e.g. verbs denoting ‘creation and consumption’<sup>4</sup>, the original denotative meaning of the particle and that of the complex ‘particle + verb’, and the evaluative meaning<sup>5</sup>), as well as the general idiomatic character<sup>6</sup> and lexicalized meanings of the complex ‘particle + verb’.<sup>7</sup> Also, systematic relations among alternative verb particles may play a role in the choice of a particular verb particle (“concurrence of forms”<sup>8</sup>). In diachronic perspective, both language internal factors like grammaticalization, metaphorization, expansion of cognitive schemes, as well as language external factors like contact with other languages or regional varieties may play a role. In addition, also sociological factors like prestige and image of a certain language variety may have an impact on the choice of verb particles.

The present paper aims at explaining the usage of the Hungarian verb particle *el-* in a cognitive framework, complementing relevant descriptions made so far<sup>9</sup>. Besides several instances of lexicalized forms, the semantics of the ‘particle + verb’ units may be conceived both compositional and dynamic, and described in terms of a basic cognitive scheme. The actual meaning arises in such a way that certain elements of the scheme are activated according to the semantics of the core verb. The scheme includes the elements ‘origin’, ‘domain related to the origin’, ‘object’, ‘path’, ‘target point’ and ‘target domain’,<sup>10</sup> as well as ‘vantage point’ and ‘perspective’, which may but must not coincide.<sup>11</sup> The activated scheme elements correlate with the verb arguments. Also, an attempt is made for an explanation of inconsistencies between the schemes proposed and some of the usages.

Verbal particles have grammaticalized from directional postpositions and adverbs; the share of those of locative origin is minimal. The directional semantics is consistent with event structures that include a durative phase: spatial movement can be conceived as change of position and be projected for time relations involving a certain moment of change. Therefore, we propose cognitive schemes corresponding to basic ontological dimensions of change, such as movement; change in state, property, or status; stopping, ceasing or depletion. Within these dimensions, metaphoric processes may occur, such as

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<sup>1</sup> É. Kiss

<sup>2</sup> Kiefer, É. Kiss

<sup>3</sup> Budenz, Soltész, Kiefer-Honti, Andor, Fazakas, Tolcsvay Nagy, Ladányi, Szili, É.Kiss, Kardos, Gyarmathy

<sup>4</sup> É. Kiss

<sup>5</sup> Szilágyi N.

<sup>6</sup> Kolehmainen

<sup>7</sup> Cf. such specific meanings as *akad* vs. *beakad*, *elakad*, *kiakad*, *megakad*, whereby *akad* ‘occur’ as a creation verb doesn’t go with a particle even in perfective sentences.

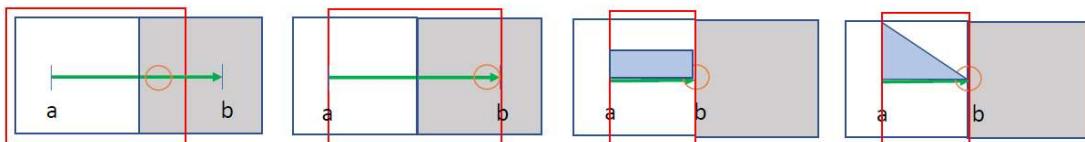
<sup>8</sup> Ladányi

<sup>9</sup> Budenz, Soltész, Andor, Fazakas, Tolcsvai Nagy

<sup>10</sup> E.g. origin (and path) (*elindul*), path (*elvan*), end point (*elvállal*), path and end point (telicity) (*elolvás*).

<sup>11</sup> As for *el-*, the perspective may be related with the origin (*elmegy*, *elgurul*, *eldob*), with the end point (*eljön*, *elkap*) but also, with a point that is external to object and path (*elszakad*, *elszakít*).

transposition in temporal, mental and psychic states, and social space. Based on scheme elements activated, the following table shows some usages of *el-* that can be grouped together. This model is consistent with current formal semantic descriptions that apply a scalar model on progressivity and (im)perfectivity.



from domain 'near' into domain 'far'	starting from origin following path reaching end point	stopping or ceasing (event or phenomenon), depletion (substance)	
i. movement, also metaph. <i>elmegy, eldob; elalszik</i>	a. movement; <i>elmegy ...ig, elsétál ...ig,</i>	iii. event, phenomenon <i>eláll, elhallgat, elül,</i>	<i>elcsendesedik,</i>
ii.b change in state, property, or status <i>elolvad, elvörösödik, elriad, elszegényedik</i>		b. path: verbal dimension, performance <i>elolvas, elmond, eljátszik, elénekel</i>	b. substance <i>elfogy, elapad, elkölt</i>
c. 'perceivable (visible)' > 'not perceivable (not visible)' <i>elrejt(őzik), elrak, elás, elsüllyed, elnyel</i>		<i>elvarr, elfest, elken, elkavar</i>	
d. become / make unusable <i>elromlik, elír</i>			

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