

Clausal Expletives and the Referentiality of CP

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In this paper, we propose a uniform account of the syntactic/semantic properties of clausal expletive constructions including declarative object clauses and Partial Movement (PM: a.k.a. *wh*-expletive construction – see Fanselow 2006) in Hungarian. Neutral clausal complement constructions exhibit two patterns in Hungarian. Following de Cuba (2007), we take the contrast in the availability of *azt* in (1) to reflect the syntactic difference illustrated in (2).

- (1) (a) Péter (**azt*) sajnálja hogy havazik.
Peter Dem-ACC regrets C snows
 “Peter is sorry that it’s snowing.”
- (b) Péter *azt* mondta (hogy) havazik.
Peter Dem-ACC said C snows
 “Peter said that it’s snowing.”

- (2) (a) = (1a) V [CP] (b) = (1b) V [_{cP} *azt* [CP]]

We analyze *azt* as an expletive for *cP* which raises to represent the clause in the preverbal position. We tie this syntactic contrast not to the factivity of the selecting predicate, but to the referentiality of the complement clause, with non-referential *cP* syntactically more complex than referential CP (in the spirit of McCloskey 2005).

- (3) CP: [V [CP]]: a referential entity denoting a proposition without illocutionary force.
cP: [V [*cP* [CP]]]: a non-referential semantic object denoting a speech act.

When the embedded clause is contrastively focused, the construction obligatorily features *azt* in the preverbal focus position, regardless of the verb type.

- (4) (a) Péter *AZT* sajnálja hogy havazik.
Peter Dem-ACC regrets C snows
 “What Peter regrets is that it’s snowing.”
- (b) Péter *AZT* mondta hogy havazik.
Peter Dem-ACC said C snows
 “What Peter said is that it’s snowing.”

Although (1b) and (4b) have the same surface string, we crucially claim that they differ structurally as well as semantically, with *AZT* in (4a-b) an expletive of CP (5a), and *azt* in (1b) an expletive of *cP* (5b) (capitals denote contrastive focus interpretation).

- (5) (a) = (4) V [_{CP} *AZT*] (b) = (1b) V [_{cP} *azt* [CP]]

We discuss semantic/syntactic effects of *cP*/CP with different verb types, showing that combinations unexpected under factivity-based analyses are widely attested.

This analysis opens interesting possibilities for an account of PM in Hungarian. We argue that factive islands (shown to be universal by Szabolcsi & Zwarts 1993) are a sub-case of the general requirement that only referential *wh*-expressions may be construed inside a (referential) CP. In Hungarian, unlike English, both factive and non-factive embedded clauses disallow the extraction of a non-referential *wh*-phrase (6a). However, PM is available when the complement clause is non-referential (a *cP* in our terms), as in (6b). Parallel to our analysis of *azt*, we claim that *mit* in (6b) is a *wh*-expletive (see Horváth 1997) that, like *azt*, represents *cP* and raises to take matrix scope.

- (6) Hungarian – extraction of a non-specific *WH* is out with either verb class:

- (a) *Hogyan_i gondolod/sajnálod, hogy Péter viselkedett *t_i*?
how you-think/you-resent C Peter behaved
 “How do you think/*resent that Peter behaved?”
- (b) Mit gondolsz, hogy hogyan_i viselkedett Péter *t_i*?
what-Acc you-think Comp how behaved Peter
 ‘How do you think Peter behaved?’

(7a-b) show that long-distance *wh*-extraction and PM differ in interpretation; (7a) involves a presupposed CP from which a specific *wh*-phrase extracts, while no such presuppositions are involved in PM (7b), where *mit* signals the presence of *cP*.

(7) **LD-extraction (CP) vs. WH-expletive construction (cP) for a specific WH:**

(a) Kivel_i **gondolod** hogy találkoztam *t_i*?
who-with you-think C I-met
 “Who do you think I met?” (context: you have accused me of meeting someone)

(a’) [FP kivel_i gondolod [CP hogy találkoztam *t_i*]]

(b) Mit **gondolsz**, (hogy) kivel_i találkoztam *t_i*?
what-ACC you-think C who-with I-met
 “Guess who I met yesterday” (out of the blue context)

(b’) [FP mit_i gondolsz [cP *t_i* [CP hogy [FP kivel_j találkoztam [VP *t_j*]]]]]

(7a) involves extraction out of CP (see (7a’)), so the open proposition [I met x] is contextually given (D-linked). Support for the structure in (7b’) comes from verbs that optionally take an adverbial (rather than object) clause as declarative complement, shown by the use of *úgy* (“so”) rather than *azt* as the clausal expletive. We show that *úgy* also originates in Spec,cP, and that PM with this set of verbs can feature *hogy* (“how”) as the *wh*-expletive (8b), providing justification for a parallel treatment of the declarative and PM structures.

(8) (a) János **úgy** tudja/érzi/mondja, hogy Mari utálja.
John so knows/feels/said C Mary hates
 “John knows/feels/said that Mary hates him.”

(b) **Hogy** tudja/érzi/mondja János, hogy ki utálja?
how knows/feels/says John C who hates
 “Who does John know/feel/say hates him?”

While one dialect of Hungarian only allows the *wh*-expletive to be generated in Spec,cP, we discuss another dialect that also allows these constructions with factive verbs (9a). In our account this means that *MIT* in this dialect can be associated with CP (hence a specificity requirement on the embedded *wh*-phrase in (9a) – in contrast with (6b)). The infelicity of the answer in (9b) shows that the object clause is part of the presupposition in (9a). Here *mit* patterns with “which” in English in not permitting “nothing” as an answer (since “which” – unlike “what” – is specific, just like *mit* when it is associated with CP on our account).

(9) (a) % **MIT** sajnál János, hogy kivel randizik Mari?
what-Acc regrets John C who-with dates Mary
 “Who does John regret that Mary is dating?”

(b) # Semmit. Nem is ismeri Marit.
nothing-Acc Neg prt knows Mary-Acc
 “Nothing. (i.e. “Nobody.”) He doesn’t even know Mary.”

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