

Clausal Expletives and the Referentiality of CP

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1. Introduction and outline

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. The talk is organized as follows.

Part 1: The referentiality of CP and the cP/CP distinction

What we see as two misconceptions in much of the literature on sentential embedding:

Misconception 1:

Complements of factive verbs are structurally more complex than complements of non-factive verbs, as in Kiparsky & Kiparsky (1971). This idea challenged in: de Cuba 2007; Haegeman 2006, 2007, 2008; McCloskey 2005; a.o.

Misconception 2:

Factivity is a concept that is active in syntax, and it determines structural properties of the embedded clause. This idea challenged in: Hooper & Thompson 1973; Cattell 1978; Hegarty 1992; a.o. (Alternatives: ‘givenness’ vs. ‘novelty’; ‘assertion’; etc.)

Our account of the syntactic/semantic properties of object clauses builds on the following claims:

- (i) There are in fact two types of finite clauses (“more complex” and “less complex”) but the choice between these does not correspond one-to-one to the semantic class (i.e. factivity) of the selecting verb. The complexity of clauses reflects their semantic type.
- (ii) The distinction between “more complex” and “less complex” embedded clauses comes down to the **referentiality** of the clause itself (i.e. a property whose syntactic relevance is well-established in other domains). We propose the following two structures (to be explained and refined below):

Referential CP:	V	[CP]
Non-referential cP:	V	[cP [CP]]

- (iii) While true factive verbs are semantically incompatible with a speech act (cP) complement, non-factives can take either cP or CP. The choice of complement, as expected, has syntactic and semantic consequences that follow from the referentiality account.

We demonstrate the validity of the above claims through a discussion of the syntax and semantics of clausal expletives in the realm of sentential embedding constructions in Hungarian.

Part 2: ‘Factive islands’ and the *wh*-expletive construction

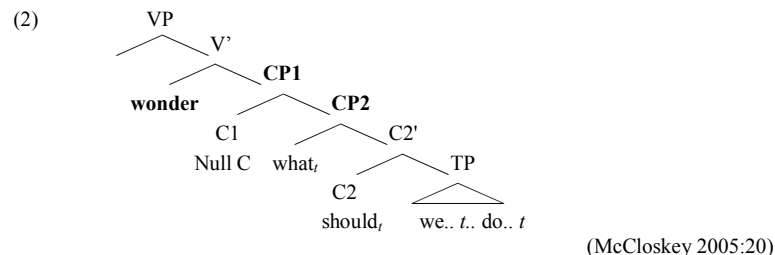
- (i) We argue that factive islands (shown to be universal by Szabolcsi & Zwarts 1993; a.o.) are a sub-case of the general requirement that only referential *wh*-expressions may be construed inside a (referential) CP (or a referential phrase in general, cf. Fiengo & Higginbotham 1981).
- (ii) We show that the semantic and syntactic patterns exhibited by *wh*-extraction and *wh*-expletive constructions in English and Hungarian follow directly from the claim that the crucial distinction between the two types of clausal complement comes down to referentiality.

2. The referentiality of CP and the cP/CP distinction

2.1 Object clauses come in two sizes: non-factives (typically) more complex

McCloskey 2005: Embedded T-to-C movement (subj aux inversion) can occur under non-factive *wonder* but not under factive *found out*.

- (1) a. I wonder what should we do. [Irish English]
- b. *I found out how did they get into the building.



McCloskey (2005:30):

- The complement of ‘wonder’ is a different semantic object from the complement of a ‘find out’.
- The difference in semantic complexity (which, roughly, comes down to Krifka’s (1999) concept of ‘speech acts’ vs. ‘sentence radicals’) corresponds to syntactic structure - the more complex structure (both semantically and syntactically) properly contains the simpler one. (Hence, the complement of a non-factive predicate is more complex, contra Kiparsky & Kiparsky 1971).
- The difference between an object clause embedded under a factive and one embedded under a non-factive (or, in fact, a matrix sentence) is found in the additional layer of CP structure, the locus of illocutionary force.

> **Same point:** embedded V2 in Mainland Scandinavian (‘CP-recursion’ analyses)

Q: What is the dividing line between ‘more complex’ and ‘less complex’ clausal complements?

Our answer (more detail in de Cuba & Ürögdi forthcoming): **referentiality** of the complement clause:

- (3) **CP:** a referential entity that denotes a proposition without illocutionary force (a sentence radical in the sense of Krifka 1999), a semantic object encoding a proposition without a necessary commitment to its truth) about which the complex sentence makes an assertion.
- cP:** a non-referential semantic object denoting a speech act, which adds an unresolved proposition or an open question to the context. A cP properly contains a CP both syntactically and semantically. When a verb takes a cP as its complement, the information focus of the complex sentence is the cP.

Prediction: syntactic differences do not correspond to factivity.

2.2 Hungarian – The distribution of the clausal expletive ‘azt’

In a neutral sentence, the clausal expletive ‘azt’ appears only with non-factive complements:

- (4) 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’

Our analysis: ‘azt’ is a clausal expletive that appears whenever the embedded clause is required to move up to the matrix clause but cannot do so (due to independent restrictions)

The structures of (4) are as follows:

- (4a’) [TP *sajnálja*_j [PredP t_j [VP t_j [CP ...]]]]
- (4b’) [TP *azt*_i *mondta*_j [PredP t_i t_j [VP t_j [cP t_i ... [CP ...]]]]]]

• **Support for the referentiality contrast between CP=(4a) and cP=(4b):**

In Hungarian, non-referential expressions are generally required to leave the VP: ‘*postverbal argument positions [in Hungarian] are reserved for referential expressions*’ because ‘*arguments of the verb can be legitimized in one of two ways. In the unmarked case they have referential legitimacy [...] Non-referential expressions can be legitimized by obtaining predicative legitimacy in the assertive part (i.e., the operator field) of the predicate.*’ (citation from Kiss 2004:29-30, who credits Alberti 1997):

- (5) *János keringőt táncolt.* / **János táncolt keringőt*
John waltz- Acc danced John danced waltz-Acc
‘John was waltzing’ (example from Kiss 2004)

> In a neutral sentence, ‘azt’ only appears when the complement is cP since, in Hungarian, non-referential complements must be associated with the **preverbal position** (which roughly corresponds to **information focus** and bears **main sentence stress**).

> CP, being referential, is not subject to the requirement of movement to the preverbal position, hence the expletive ‘azt’ is not needed in a neutral context in (4a).

• **Contrastively focused complement clauses**

When the **embedded clause is contrastively focused**, the construction obligatorily features *azt* in Spec of FocP¹, regardless of the verb type. (We use CAPS to signify contrastive focus.)

- (6) (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.”

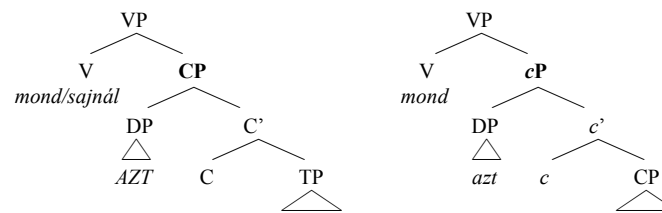
> Contrastive focus on the complement clause means picking out a proposition from a set of alternatives (contextually given or introduced explicitly via the contrast). Therefore, **only referential CP can be contrastively focused**. (Speech acts/matrix sentences cannot be contrastively focused.)

> Contrastive focus on the embedded CP obtains when ‘azt’ is generated in Spec,CP (rather than Spec,cP) and is thus interpreted referentially (rather than predicatively) in the preverbal position.

> The expletive thus inherits the referentiality of the clause it is associated with.

> This is achieved via Spec-Head agreement for [referentiality], given the following structures:

- (7) a. Contrastive AZT (6a,b) b. Non-contrastive azt (4b)



• **Implication of (7a): non-factives can take CP (not only cP) as complement**

¹ Both the ‘information focus’ position hosting non-referential elements (cf. ‘azt’ in (4b)) and the ‘contrastive focus’ position are left-adjacent to the tensed verb in Hungarian. These two surface positions are arguably different; this is irrelevant for us.

Non-factives can take cP or CP complements, while factives can only take CP:

- (8) a. *Péter AZT sajnálja, hogy havazik.*
 Peter Dem-Acc said Comp snows
 (i) *‘Peter regrets that it’s snowing’ (non-contrastive)
 (ii) ‘What Peter regrets is that it’s snowing’ (contrastive)
 b. *Péter azt/AZT mondta, hogy havazik.*
 Peter Dem-Acc said Comp snows
 (i) ‘Peter said that it’s snowing’ (non-contrastive)
 (ii) ‘What Peter said is that it’s snowing’ (contrastive)

> The obligatory contrastive interpretation in (8a) shows that the associate of ‘azt’ is a CP (not a cP).
 > In (8b) a non-contrastive interpretation is possible when the associate of ‘azt’ is non-referential cP.

- **The possibility for non-factives to select CP is available in neutral contexts also**

‘Factivity’ does not correctly predict the complement type cP or CP:

Even in a neutral context, ‘azt’ (i.e. cP) is optional under most non-factives:

- (9) **Context:** *Marinak hirtelen rengeteg pénze lett, de senki nem tudta, honnan.*
 ‘All of a sudden, Mary ended up with a lot of money but nobody knew how’
 a. *János azt állította, (hogy) Mari megnyerte a lottót.*
 John Dem-Acc claimed Comp Mary won the lottery-Acc
 ‘John claimed that Mary won the lottery’
 b. *János állította, hogy Mari megnyerte a lottót.*
 John claimed Comp Mary won the lottery-Acc
 ‘John claimed that Mary won the lottery’

The **complement is not presupposed** in either (9a) or (9b).

> (9a): the embedded clause = information focus of the sentence.
 > (9b): the matrix verb = information focus. The embedded proposition behaves like a referring expression about which the complex sentence makes an assertion.
 > Thus, **presupposition ≠ referentiality** > ‘factivity’ does not predict the presence of cP.

Note: The distinction does not correlate with contextual givenness either (9b can also be novel).²

² Due to time constraints, we cannot discuss the relationship between referentiality and givenness in this talk. We refer those interested in this question to de Cuba & Úrögdi (forthcoming), as well as to recent and on-going work on the syntax-prosody interface in these constructions (Úrögdi & Ishihara 2008). In these works, it is established that (a) givenness and referentiality do not go hand in hand (there are contexts where a referential CP can be used even if it contains entirely novel information), and (b) prosody, which presumably mirrors syntactic structure, does not show the effects of factivity at all if syntactic structure is otherwise kept constant (based on the structures proposed here and in our previous work), but prosody does show the effect of givenness independently of referentiality (so, for example, referential CPs show different prosodic patterns depending on whether or not they are contextually novel or given). In our view, ‘factivity’ belongs in lexical semantics, ‘givenness’ in pragmatics, and only ‘referentiality’ is active in syntax. Therefore, we do not expect to see syntactic effects of presupposition or givenness, all other factors being equal. Unfortunately, we cannot argue for these points here in detail.

2.3 Evidence for the referentiality of CP (as opposed to cP)

Do-so replacement:

Do-so replacement targets VP, while *it*-replacement works for referential arguments:

- (10) a. Bill tried the cake, and John did [_{VP} so] too
 b. Bill tried the cake, and John tried [_{DP} it] too

Under a non-factive ‘that Bill had done it’ can be replaced with ‘so’ (just like the VP ‘tried the cake’ in (10)), or with ‘it’. However, only ‘it’ is available under the factive predicate:

- (11) a. John supposed [that Bill had done it], and Mary supposed [it/so] too
 b. John regretted [that Bill had done it], and Mary regretted [it/*so] too
 (Kiparsky & Kiparsky 1971:362)

> ‘so’ can replace non-referential cP (11a), while the pro-form ‘it’ can be substituted for referential CP.

> non-factives are compatible with either cP or CP, so either substitution is fine

It-clefts:

Den Dikken 2008 (citing Reeve 2007): only referential clefted XPs are compatible with ‘which’:

- (12) a. It’s [this book] which I want to read. (referential)
 b. *It’s [a doctor] which I want to become. (predicative, non-referential)

Factive complements are acceptable with ‘which’, non-factives are not:

- (13) a. It’s [that John didn’t show up] which I resent. (referential CP)
 b. *It’s [that John didn’t show up] which I believe. (non-referential cP)

> the embedded CP in (13a) patterns with referential DPs (rather than predicative elements)

Kwa (Collins 1994, Aboh 2005): factive clauses are formally relative clauses

Albanian (Kallulli 2006, forthcoming): a clitic pronoun normally associated with referential DPs shows up with factive embedded clauses³

Interim summary:

> clauses come in two varieties: referential CP and non-referential cP
 > referentiality is the relevant factor for predicting syntactic differences

³ It should be noted that Kallulli draws very different conclusions from the Albanian data than we do. We cannot discuss this issue here, noting only that the conditioning feature of the clausal associate of the clitic appears to be referentiality.

3. Factive islands and the *wh*-expletive construction

- **This section:** we use the [referentiality] contrast to predict *wh*-extraction/*wh*-expletive patterns

3.1 Factive islands: English and Hungarian

- (14) a. How_i do you think (that) Peter behaved t_i?
 b. *How_i do you regret that Peter behaved t_i?

Hungarian: extraction of a non-referential *wh*-phrase from both factive and non-factive complement clauses is equally degraded:

- (15) a. ***Hogyan** gondolod, hogy viselkedtél?
 how you-think C you-behaved
 Intended: 'How do you think that you behaved?'
 b. ***Hogyan** sajnálsz, hogy viselkedtél?
 how you-regret C you-behaved
 Intended: 'How do you regret that you behaved?'

Extraction of a referential argument *wh*-phrase is acceptable from either type of complement.

- (16) *Kivel* mondta/sajnálja János, hogy beszélt a partin?
 who-with said/regrets John Comp he-spoke the party-at
 '(Of the guests) who did John say/does John regret that he spoke to at the party?'

> Factives and non-factives pattern together for extraction – unexpected on factivity-based theories.

Wh-expletive construction: there is a contrast between factives and non-factives.

- (17) a. **Mit** gondolsz, (hogy) kivel beszéltél?
 what-Acc you-think Comp who-with you-spoke
 'Who do you think that you spoke to?'
 b. **Mit** gondolsz (hogy) hogyan viselkedtél?
 what-ACC you-think C how you-behaved
 'How do you think you behaved?'
 (18) a. **Mit** sajnálsz, hogy kivel beszéltél?
 what-Acc you-regret Comp who-with you-spoke
 'Who do you regret that you spoke to?'
 b. ***Mit** sajnálsz, hogy hogyan viselkedtél?
 what-Acc you-regret Comp how you-behaved
 Intended: 'How do you regret that you behaved?'

Generalization:

> **referentiality of embedded *wh*-phrase:**

- must be referential in CP (18b); can be non-referential in cP (17b)
- universal semantic restriction on non-referential variables in weak islands (cf. Szabolcsi & Zwarts 1993)

> **referentiality of the *wh*-expletive** (our account):

- no referentiality restriction in (17a)
- must be referentially interpreted in (18a)⁴

- **Wh-expletive constructions with CP enforce a referential interpretation on 'mit':**

- (19) a. *Mit* sajnál János, hogy kivel randizott Mari?
 what-Acc regrets John C who-with dated Mary
 'Who does John regret that Mary has dated?'
 b. # *Semmit.* *Nem is ismeri Marit*
 nothing-Acc Neg prt knows Mary-Acc
 'Nothing. (i.e. 'Nobody.') He doesn't even know Mary'⁵
 (20) a. *Mit* mondott János, hogy kivel randizott Mari?
 what-Acc said John C who-with dated Mary
 'Who did John say that Mary has dated?'
 b. *Semmit.* *Nem is ismeri Marit*
 nothing-Acc Neg prt knows Mary-Acc
 'Nothing. (i.e. 'Nobody.') He doesn't even know Mary'

> in (19) the existence of an answer is presupposed, given the referentiality of CP

3.2 Our proposal

'Mit' is a clausal expletive just like 'azt' and is subject to the same conditions.⁶ The restrictions applying to the relevant constructions – extraction and *wh*-expletive structures – fall out of the simple syntax we assume here (cP vs. CP) and the proposed referential property of CP.

- (21) a. (=16) [_{TP} *Kivel_i mondta_j* ... [_{VP} t_j [_{CP} t_i *hogy* ... t_i]]]
 b. (=17) [_{TP} *Mit_i gondolsz_j* ... [_{VP} t_j [_{CP} t_i [_{CP} *hogy* [_{TP} *kivel_k* ... t_k]]]]]
 c. (=18a) [_{TP} *Mit_i sajnálsz_j* ... [_{VP} t_j [_{CP} t_i *hogy* [_{TP} *kivel_k* ... t_k]]]]]

> Given the Spec-Head agreement for [referentiality] proposed earlier, Spec,CP is never available to non-referential elements (base-generated or extracted from below).

⁴ Horvath (1997) reports data such as (18b) as grammatical, and uses it as an argument for the type of *wh*-expletive structure which we, in fact, adopt from here work (see below). Note that an example like (18b) is unlikely to be grammatical in any language, given the apparently universal ban on non-referential variables construed inside a weak island (cf. Szabolcsi & Zwarts (1993). Our informants report this example ungrammatical with a non-referential *wh*-expression. Even (18a), which features a referential *wh*-expression, is not acceptable for all speakers, a detail which we abstract away from here.

⁵ Test from Horvath (1997:561), although used in a different context and with different results.

⁶ Cf. Horvath 1997 for the idea that *wh*-expletive constructions do not involve a chain between the embedded *wh*-phrase and the expletive but only between the embedded CP and the expletive.

• **General restriction on extraction out of referential expressions:**

Fiengo & Higginbotham (1981): observe that a variable generally cannot be bound from outside a referential DP (hence the ban on subextraction from referential DPs). It seems to be the case that such extraction also improves for referential extractees (see 22c)⁷:

- (22) a. Who did you see a picture of?
 b. * Who did you see the picture of?
 c. ? Which movie star did you see the (latest) picture of?

Complement/Language	Hungarian	English
Referential CP	- extraction of [+ref] wh OK (16) or - wh-expletive (mit) also possible but must be interpreted referentially (18)	- extraction of [+ref] wh OK (weak island; formerly known as 'factive island') (14b)
Non-referential cP	- no referentiality restriction on the embedded wh-phrase - no extraction possible - wh-expletive (mit) possible and is interpreted non-referentially (17)	- extraction possible without referentiality restriction (cP provides an escape hatch) (14a)

3.3 CP vs. cP: resolved vs. open questions

Prediction:

Non-factives can embed open questions, while factives do not.

- (23) a. Speaker A: *Mit gondolsz, hogy Mari kivel randizik?*
 what you-think Comp Mary who-with dates?
 'Who do you think Mary is dating?'
 Speaker B: *Péterrel.*
 Peter-with
 'Peter'
- b. Speaker A: *Mit sajnálsz, hogy Mari kivel randizik?*
 what you-regret Comp Mary who-with dates?
 'Who do you regret that Mary is dating?'
 Speaker B: *Azt, hogy Péterrel (randizik). / *Péterrel.*
 Dem-Acc Comp Peter-with dates Peter-with
 'That (she is dating) Peter'

> (23a) involves a cP (an open question) so B can answer this question.

> (23b) is asking: which proposition of the form [Mary dates x] does B regret? Thus, the answer must identify the *proposition* by filling in the variable.

Prediction:

Long-distance (LD) extraction (in Hungarian) always happens out of CP, not cP. A non-factive taking a cP complement (>wh-expletive construction) and a CP complement (> extraction) should have different interpretation.

(24) **LD-extraction (CP) vs. WH-expletive construction (cP) for a referential 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') $[_{FP} mit_i gondolsz [_{cP} t_i [_{CP} hogy [_{FP} kivel_j találkoztam [_{VP} t_j]]]]]$

> (24a) involves extraction out of CP (see (24a')), so the speaker is asking: *for which x do you hold the belief that [I met x]?* (24b) is possible out-of-the-blue because cP denotes an open, unresolved question.

3.4 Parallel treatment of clausal expletives and wh-expletives: additional evidence

Some non-factive and semi-factive verbs can take 'úgy' ('so') rather than 'azt' as the clausal expletive:

- (25) *János úgy tudja/érzi/mondja, hogy Mari gyorsan tanul.*
 John so knows/feels/said C Mary quickly learns
 "John knows/feels/said that Mary learns quickly."

'Úgy' cannot be contrastively focused, so it cannot be associated with CP (vs. 'azt' in (6)):

- (26) **János ÚGY tudja/érzi/mondja, hogy Mari gyorsan tanul (nem úgy, hogy...)*
 John so knows/feels/says C Mary quickly learns Neg so Comp...
 Intended: 'What János knows/feels/said is that Mary learns quickly (not that...).'

> contrastive focusing implicated referentiality (picking out a proposition from the context set of relevant alternatives) so the inability to be focused means: 'úgy' cannot be generated in CP

Wh-expletive constructions with 'úgy' are not subject to a referentiality restriction:

- (27) Speaker A: **Hogy** tudja/érzi/mondja János, hogy hogyan tanul Mary?
 how knows/feels/says John C how learns Mary
 'How does John know/feel/say that Mary learns?'
 Speaker B: *Sehogy. (Nem is ismeri Marit.)*
 No-how. Neg even knows Mary
 'He has no knowledge/feeling etc. about this. He doesn't even know Mary.'

⁷ Thanks to Marcel den Dikken (p.c.) for pointing out this parallelism to us.

4. Summary and extensions

- We have shown that by appealing to the property of referentiality, we can make predictions about the syntactic structure of CPs without reference to lexical semantics.
- We have proposed factive islands are a sub-case of the general requirement that only referential *wh*-expressions may be construed inside a referential phrases.
- We showed that the semantic and syntactic patterns exhibited by *wh*-extraction and *wh*-expletive constructions in English and Hungarian follow directly from the claim that the crucial distinction between the two types of clausal complement comes down to referentiality.

In general, the structural parallelism between DP and CP (which has received a lot of attention in the literature) in this domain is certainly worth exploration. There are many recent works that converge on this point, including Aboh's (2005) work on Kwa factives (which are shown to be 'event relatives') and Haegeman's (2008) recent account (which argues that factive embedded clauses involve an operator chain in the left periphery, much akin to den Dikken's (2006) idea about referential DPs).

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