

# Control, covert modality, and recovery strategies in Hungarian

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I argue that what seem to be monoclausal sentences with only postverbal focus in Hungarian (1) have a biclausal underlying structure, which resembles the backward control construction in (2) discussed extensively in Szabolcsi (2009).

- (1) *Nem esz-ek csak én leves-t.*  
not eat-1SG only I.NOM soup-ACC  
'I am not **willing to/going to** be the only one who eats soup.'
- (2) *(Péter) nem akart [csak ő men-ni bus-szal]*  
Peter not want-PST.3SG only he/she-NOM go-INF bus-with  
'Peter didn't want to be the only one to take the bus.'

One of Szabolcsi's arguments for assuming that the focused DP is in the left periphery of the infinitival clause is based on the claim that postverbal focus in Hungarian is contingent on the presence of a preverbal focus, and, since in sentence (2) there is no preverbal focus present in the finite clause, the focused DP must belong to the preverbal domain of the infinitive. In order to identify the domain the focused DP in (1) can be in the left periphery of, I propose the following underlying representation:

- (3) [CP [NegP not eat<sub>i</sub> -1SG [Mod<sub>vol</sub>P t<sub>i</sub> [CP [FocP only I<sub>j</sub> t<sub>i</sub>] ... [vP t<sub>j</sub> t<sub>i</sub> soup]]]]]

Arguments for this come from general properties of Hungarian including Szabolcsi's argument and the modal interpretation of the sentence indicated in (1). The sentence-type in (1) has ordering restrictions in the postverbal domain unexpected in Hungarian with its freedom of postverbal word order elsewhere. This observation also suggests that we are dealing with a more structured domain after the matrix verb, which I argue to be a non-finite clause with a left periphery whose verb has undergone movement to the matrix clause to support a zero bound volitional modal.

The proposed analysis accounts for lesser understood properties of at least two further patterns of Hungarian as well: (i) circumstantial modality root infinitives with finite properties (Bartos 2002); (ii) modal existential *wh*-constructions (Šimik 2011).

**References:** • Bartos, H. 2002. Root infinitives. In I. Kenesei & S. Péter (eds.), *Approaches to Hungarian* 8. 13–38. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó. • Šimik, R. 2011. *Modal existential wh-constructions*. Utrecht: LOT. • Szabolcsi, A. 2009. Overt nominative subjects in infinitival complements in Hungarian. In M. den Dikken & R. Vago (eds.), *Approaches to Hungarian* 11. 251–276. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.