

3RD PERSON ANAPHORA IN HUNGARIAN

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In this paper I sum up the main questions of 3rd person anaphora in the Hungarian language in a theoretical framework of Cognitive Grammar. The textual relation between the antecedent and the anaphora is interpreted by the notions of prominence and conceptual reference point, in the case of two potential antecedents coreference is also dealt with by the notion of perspective. In the second part of the paper I argue that perspective has a definite role in a special case of anaphora resolution with two potential antecedents in Hungarian.

Anaphora is a universal phenomenon in language, both in sentences and in discourses. Anaphora is a unit in the sentence or in the discourse that refers back to an earlier unit in the sentence or in the discourse and by that it refers to an earlier mentioned entity, event, time or space. The earlier unit referred to is the antecedent. Thus, anaphora can be understood only in relation to its antecedent.

(1) Peter took the dog for a walk. Then he visited his parents.

In example (1) *he* and *his* in the second sentence refers back to *Peter* in the first sentence, i.e., these pronouns can be understood only in relation to their antecedent *Peter*, since the name Peter refers to an entity, namely a person in the world familiar to the speaker and the hearer. How this relation is construed and resolved, is a long debated question in linguistics and psychology. In the following paper I sum up the most important features of 3rd person anaphora in Hungarian discourse.

From the vast number of theories on anaphora (coreference in general, both in syntax and discourse) I take Cognitive Grammar as the theoretical frame. As van Hoek (1995: 313) points out, referring to earlier works as well as to Langacker's,

... full noun phrases (names and descriptive phrases) are used when a referent is not highly accessible within the immediate context. Pronouns, in contrast, are used when a referent is easily retrievable within the immediate context.

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In van Hoek's interpretation contexts are defined as conceptual reference points, i.e., "local topics," prominent elements used to contextualize other elements. Thus, the difference between full noun phrases and pronouns forms a constraint on co-reference including full noun phrases.

A full noun phrase [...] cannot appear in the dominion of a corresponding (i.e., co-referential) reference point.

Van Hoek concentrates on the semantic factors of 'core' data (both on syntactic and discourse level). I do not want here to compare the theoretical frame of Langacker and van Hoek with those who posit topic continuity (Givón 1983), discourse topic and discourse focus (see, e.g., Sanford–Garrod 1981, Pause 1991, Müsseler 1995, Garrod 1995), in general with the different ideas on foregrounding (Chafe 1976), but it has to be emphasized that all current theories on anaphora are based in some way on the foreground–background distinction and the cognitive semantic approaches of nouns.

The Hungarian language has two important characteristics which determine the possible forms and realizations of anaphora. First, it has a very rich morphologic system, i.e., on verbs number, person, tense and mood, on nouns number and case are indicated by inflectional morphemes. Thus the zero + inflection realization of a nominal (i.e., in certain discourse and sentence positions an entity is represented by zero + inflection; e.g., only a personal ending, i.e., number and person on a verb represents the agent) occurs frequently. Second, the topic–comment distribution, therefore word order plays an outstanding role in the basic structure of Hungarian sentence (cf. É. Kiss 1995).

In Hungarian discourse (both narrative and dialogic) anaphoric 3rd person referents within one sentence or in consecutive sentences can be mentioned by a) 3rd person personal pronoun (*ő* 'she/he'),

(2) Péter hazament. Ő már befejezte munkáját.

'Peter went home. He already finished his work [others not].'

b) by the distal demonstrative pronoun (*az* 'that') or

(3) Péter megtalálta a szemüvegét. Azt kereste órákig.

'Peter found his glasses. He hadn't found it for hours.'

c) by zero + inflection (i.e., in that case person and number is indicated by the inflectional suffix of the verb or the possessive suffix of a noun), and

(4) Péter hazament. Ø Már befejezte munkáját.

'Peter went home. He already finished his work.'

d) by full noun phrases identical with or other than the antecedent (not to be dealt with here).

(5) II. Erzsébet megkezdte római látogatását. A királynő ma reggel érkezett Olaszországba.

'Elizabeth II started her visit in Rome. The Queen arrived in Italy this morning.'

It has to be noted that the distal demonstrative pronoun *az* 'that' has a proximate pair *ez* "this," but this pronoun has a relevant function only as an endophoric anaphora (cf. Halliday–Hasan 1976: 33) referring to larger, paragraph-size parts of the text in Hungarian.

(All Hungarian examples are interpreted in the most literate way in English, but since inflection or other features unfamiliar to English syntax do not play any role in the present paper, the translations are in sentence form, too, except where detailed morpheme to morpheme translation is needed. Underlining indicates coreferential pairs.)

In the first sentence of (2) *Péter* is the most prominent element, this noun is the reference point that contextualizes the other elements. Since *ő* 'he' is stressed, it is in sentence focus position. *Péter* as a full noun is lowly accessible antecedent, *ő* as a pronoun is highly accessible anaphora within the same context, both are subjects, agents and topics, thus they are in coreferential relation. Example (4) is quite similar to (2), the main difference is that in the second sentence the \emptyset + inflection form of the anaphora is absolute highly accessible (that's why it is zero), it is topic in the sentence; and both *Péter* and the \emptyset + inflection anaphora are subjects, agents and topics, thus they are in coreferential relation. Example (3) is another case: the antecedent *szemüvegét* is object ("direct object": 'a pair of glasses + acc. '), patient and part of the comment, the anaphora is the demonstrative pronoun *az* + acc, patient, and focus. In (3) *szemüvegét* is not the most prominent element. It is contextualized by *Péter*, but it is lowly accessible, while the *azt* anaphora is highly accessible within the same context, so the coreferential relation is construed.

Analysing further the above examples, more characteristics of anaphora in Hungarian can be stated. Since Hungarian is a "discourse configurational language" (cf. É. Kiss 1995a, 1995b) a)–d) varieties of 3rd person anaphora are possible in different types of sentences according to the topic, comment or focus position of the antecedent and the anaphora.

1 If in the previous sentence there is one potential antecedent in the position of subject, topic and agent or experient and it is human, and the anaphora is in stressed subject and focus position, the anaphora is a 3rd person personal pronoun (*ő* 'she/he'), like in example (2).

2 If in the previous sentence there is one potential antecedent in the position of subject, topic and agent or experient and it is human, and the anaphora is in unstressed subject and topic position, the anaphora is \emptyset + inflection (in this case the simple iteration of the noun is excluded), like in example (4).

3 If the only possible antecedent is inanimate in the position of subject, topic and agent or experient, the anaphora in stressed subject position can be a 3rd person demonstrative pronoun (*az*, 'that') or in unstressed subject position it is \emptyset + inflection (in this case the simple iteration of the noun is excluded), like in example (3).

Thus in the case of one possible antecedent it can be assumed that the referent of the personal pronoun is animate, that of the demonstrative pronoun is inanimate, while \emptyset + inflection can be both. The most expected coreferential relation in Hungarian is the one with the absolute highly accessible \emptyset + inflection anaphora with one potential human antecedent, both in the position of subject, topic and agent. It can also be stated, that in the case of one potential antecedent there is a clear distinction between the personal pronoun and the demonstrative pronoun:

\emptyset 'she/he' : *az* 'that' = animate : inanimate.

\emptyset + inflection can be used both in animate or inanimate cases. Zero anaphora is used in neutral sentences where the subject of the two sentences are identical (i.e., zero anaphora refers to the subject of the previous sentence) in Hungarian. The choice between zero or personal pronoun, or zero or demonstrative pronoun is determined by the relative prominence of the anaphora. In Hungarian grammars it is described by syntactic features of the sentence: e.g., \emptyset should be used when it is stressed, thus focus, or sentence initial topic (with more than one possible antecedent), it is after the verb; it is in the scope of a quantifier etc. (cf. Kocsány 1997).

The case of anaphoric full nouns shows some other different characteristics, too (only some frequent varieties are mentioned here.) There is simple iteration, but with a change of reference point: if the antecedent is not the most prominent element in the first sentence (as in example (6), it is patient and subject), the repeated full noun can be the most prominent one and thus the reference point in the second as subject and topic:

(6) Péter a könyvet az asztalra tette. A könyv másnap is ott volt.

'Peter put the book on the table. The book was there next day, too.'

The anaphora may be a synonym of the antecedent:

(7) A szomszéd fát ültetett a kert sarkába. A csemete szépen kihajtott.

'Our neighbour planted a tree in his garden. The seedling sprouted well.'

The coreferential relation based on synonymical conceptual relation is a relatively open structure; its constraints are textual ones as well as semantic ones. The possible domain of the semantic compatibility of the antecedent and the anaphora is determined by the previous parts of the text and the context, consequently by the meaning of the antecedent, too.

The anaphora may be in a categorisation relationship with the antecedent:

(8) Péter vett egy pulit. A kutya egész nap ugat.

'Peter bought a *puli*. The dog barks all day.' (*puli* 'ancient Hungarian sheep-dog')

In (8) the first mention of the referred entity *puli* is the specific naming of one particular species. In relation to *puli* 'ancient Hungarian sheep-dog' *kutya* 'dog' is the basic level category (cf. Lakoff 1987: 5–67). Since members of basic level categories can be learned easily, they are represented by the shortest and contextually most neutral linguistic units; they represent the most properties of the category, it can be used as the anaphor of the specific antecedent. The two linguistic units of the coreferential relation in (8) may be transposed, but this version is quite rare in Hungarian:

(9) Péter vett egy kutyát. A puli egész nap ugat.

'Peter bought a dog. The *puli* barks all day.'

The version (8) is more frequent because the sequence of specific–basic level category needs less cognitive effort in the anaphora resolution than the opposite.

Frames, scripts also play an important role in the coreference of two full nouns as in (10):

(10) Zsuzsa elment bevásárolni. A bolt azonban zárva volt.

'Susan went shopping. But the shop was closed.'

Shop is a component of the frame "shopping," therefore the partial coreference can be understood easily.

Instead of (partial) iteration or the use of a frame the anaphora may be an adjective, i.e., an adjective of the antecedent, thus it becomes a metonymy of the antecedent, like in (7):

(11) A múlt héten egy férfi elrabolta Péter táskáját. A szerencsétlen sokáig félt az utcára menni.

'Last week a man robbed Peter's bag. The poor [man] didn't dare to go out for a long time.'

It has to be noted, that in all the above examples (6)–(11) with full noun anaphoras the first sentences contain other reference points than the second ones: generally

the antecedent belongs to the context of the most prominent entity, while the anaphora is the reference point in the second sentence.

Thus, in the case of Hungarian anaphoras a scale can be posited, where three domains are to be differentiated: one for full nouns with low accessibility, one for pronouns with medium high accessibility, and one for zero + inflection with absolute high accessibility. This feature plays an outstanding role in determining the anaphoric function of the two different Hungarian pronouns *ő* (she/he) and *az* (that) parallel with perspective, in cases where there are two potential antecedents, since the medium high accessibility makes the choice between the potential antecedents without using any full nouns possible.

When there are two potential human antecedents for the anaphora, the case is certainly different. In the case of two different potential antecedents both pronouns (*ő* 'she/he' and *az* 'that'), and zero + inflection can be used for animate, human referents in Hungarian.

(12) A tanár megszólította a diákot. Ø Odament hozzá.

'The teacher addressed the pupil. [he = the teacher] Went to him.'

(13) A tanár megszólította a diákot. Ő odament hozzá.

'The teacher addressed the pupil. [?] Went to him.'

(14) A tanár megszólította a diákot. Az odament hozzá.

'The teacher addressed the pupil. [that 'he' = the pupil] Went to him.'

Hungarian linguists discussed the phenomenon demonstrated in examples (12)–(14) for decades in order to decide what determines the use of \emptyset , *ő* and *az*. The particular problem is the difference between the zero + inflection form and the demonstrative pronoun, since according to the tests *ő* 'she/he' has a double feature: on the one hand it indicates a human referent in a longer passage in Hungarian texts (cf. Kocsány 1997), on the other hand it is ambiguous: in the case of (13) Hungarian native speakers hesitate when they try to decide the antecedent of the *ő* anaphora. Nevertheless, the functions of *ő* is closer to \emptyset + inflection than to *az* 'she/he'.

The difficulty in examples (12)–(14) comes from the fact that there are two human participants with thematic roles in the first sentence in each example: the *tanár* 'teacher' and the *diák* 'pupil'; and they both are able to act like human agents, in the above examples to go to the other.

In the case of one potential antecedent it was demonstrated, that the most expected coreferential relation in Hungarian is the one with the absolute highly accessible \emptyset + inflection anaphora with one potential human antecedent, both in the

position of subject, topic and agent. In other words: when there is clear topic continuity in consecutive sentences, and the second is without emphasis (i.e., without focus), the anaphora is \emptyset + inflection. This regularity functions in the case of two potential antecedents, too, demonstrated in (12). Since the *tanár* 'teacher' is the most prominent element in the first sentence of (12), it determines the immediate context for the other elements, such as *diák* 'pupil'. *Tanár* 'teacher' is lowly accessible, while \emptyset + inflection in the second sentence is absolute highly accessible, thus they are prominent within the same context, they represent the same reference point, consequently they are in coreferential relation. As mentioned above, *ő* 'she/he' also can be used in the case of topic continuity in emphatic sentences (with focus). Then example (13) can be interpreted in the following way: 'it was the teacher who went to the pupil'. But why is *az* 'that' used for animate, human antecedents as anaphoras, when for one potential antecedent it can only be inanimate?

Earlier interpretations like that of Pléh–Radics (1978) suggested in a generative frame that the anaphoric correlations of the parts of speech in consecutive sentences are governed by syntactic rules: 1) if the anaphora is zero, the anaphoric subject in the form of nominative Pro is deleted in the surface structure. Second, if the subject is unstressed, 2) and if the anaphora is zero, the anaphoric object in the form of accusative Pro is deleted in the surface structure, if the object is unstressed [inanimate], or optionally deleted if it is stressed [animate], 3) in other cases either the personal pronoun or the demonstrative is compulsory as Pro-form 1. (All these rules are valid in neutral sentences, where there is no emphasis on the co-referent nominal in the second sentence.) Later Pléh (1998) examined the syntactic function, the semantic role, the word order, and the syntactic topic–comment functions in the case of two potential antecedents in relation to the question of the inanimate pronoun *az* vs. zero anaphora and concluded that in determining the antecedent the main decisive factor is whether or not the antecedent is "active," i.e., whether or not it takes part of the action of the sentence of the antecedent. If the antecedent is inactive, the anaphora takes the previous subject as antecedent. If the antecedent is active, the anaphora takes the previous object as antecedent according to 2/3 of his informants. Thus, the inanimate pronoun *az* vs. zero anaphora difference does not play a decisive role in anaphora resolution. But these approaches have not revealed the basis of the differences indicated above. For the explanation the notion of perspective has to be introduced.

Perspective or viewpoint is considered to be the zero point, the origin, i.e., the here, the present and the *ego* from where the current speaker sees the situation (cf. Bühler 1934). Many authors consider viewpoint as something separate from the syntactic or semantic features of anaphora, since it is "vague" (cf., e.g., van Hoek 1995: 333). Contrasting to some extent to the opinion on viewpoint by van Hoek (1995), Langacker (1987) and Sanders–Spooren (1997) give a more thoroughly

based interpretation of perspective. These authors take perspective as a complex system, present in every discourse. Sanders–Spooren (1997: 85–112) distinguishes three aspects of vantage points within perspective in discourse, based on Langacker’s Cognitive Grammar (1987): a) the neutral vantage point (“a set of possible instantiations of an ‘I’”, R); b) the referential center (the actual location and time of the speech act, i.e., the position of the current speaker); and 3) the subject of consciousness (this subject is “responsible for the propositional content of the utterance”, S). Perspective and the different vantage points indicate a particular segment of the space-time, and thus situational relations of the universe of discourse (for the universe of discourse see Talmy 1978, Givón 1989, Pause 1991), where the position of the entity in foreground (i.e., the prominent element, the reference point or starting point) is proximate to the position of the current speaker in the proximate–distal relation, and the positions of all other entities to the current speaker are distal in the same proximate–distal relation, according to the relation of the neutral vantage points and the referential center. It can be assumed that the proximate–distal relation is a domain within the third person neutral vantage points, relative to other (second or first person) vantage points, if there are any in the discourse. To demonstrate the different aspects of perspective first I use the examples given by Sanders–Spooren (1997: 86):

- (15) a) I go to Paris.
 b) John goes to Paris.
 c) John wants to go to Paris.

In (15) a) the referential center, the neutral vantage point and the subject of consciousness are identical. In b) the referential center and the subject of consciousness are implicitly part of the speaker, the neutral vantage point is placed in *John*. In c) the referential center is the position of the speaker, but the subject of consciousness is placed in *John* with the neutral vantage point.

The examples of Sanders–Spooren (1997) make it possible to form the following hypothesis: each prominent conceptual reference point opens a new neutral vantage point in the syntactic structure or in sequences of syntactic structures in discourse.

In answering the questions formulated above, I believe that in the issue of the inanimate pronoun *az* vs. personal pronoun/zero anaphora perspective (viewpoint), especially change of vantage points in perspective plays a decisive role, besides conceptual reference points. In examples (12)–(14) there are two full nouns in the first sentences, and there are two pronouns or one zero + inflection, and one pronoun in the second sentences.

Supposing that R (the referential center, the current speaker) = S (the subject of consciousness) we have two main types in the case of coreference in the two successive sentences in examples (12)–(14).

1) The neutral vantage point of the reference point in the 1st sentence is identical in the 1st and the 2nd sentences, i.e., the reference point. The antecedent is a full noun, the anaphora is \emptyset (the anaphora is subject or object) or personal pronoun (the anaphora is not subject or object in the sentence). The antecedent–anaphora relation in the proximate–distal relation is proximate.

2) The neutral vantage point of the reference point in the 1st sentence differs in the 1st and the 2nd sentences. The antecedent is a full noun (object or other nominal in the sentence), and the anaphora is the demonstrative pronoun *az* (the subject of the sentence, irrespective of its animate or inanimate character). The antecedent–anaphora relation in the proximate–distal relation: distal.

The distribution of \emptyset , *ő* (he, she) and *az* (that): \emptyset , *ő* : *az* = proximate: distal.

Although it seems that the two full nouns are equally lowly accessible, the position of the first one (*the teacher*) as topic, subject, and agent, is considered to be more prominent: as a reference point it is the “starting point” to establish the context relative to the other full noun (*the pupil*). Consequently this reference point introduces that neutral vantage point from where the established context is represented. If this reference point and therefore this vantage point is the same in the next sentence, it is absolutely highly accessible, so zero and inflection is its linguistic representation.

In the second case – in (14) – a new reference point (*the pupil*) is established in the second sentence, but it is not completely new, since in (14) *the pupil* as object, patient and part of the comment belongs to the context of the *the teacher* in the first sentence.

Therefore, *the pupil* is seen from the neutral vantage point of *the teacher* in the first sentence, thus its introduction as reference point and new neutral vantage point in the second sentence is construed still from that first vantage point:

a) the relation between the reference center (the current speaker) and the first neutral vantage point is proximate;

b) the relation between the first neutral vantage point and the second neutral vantage point is proximate;

c) thus the relation between the reference center (the current speaker) and the second neutral vantage point is distal.

In a more schematic way:

1)

		sentence No. 1		sentence No. 2
[referential center	→	reference point	=	reference point
(current speaker)]		vantage point	=	vantage point
		<i>the teacher</i>	=	zero + inflection

relation within perspective			
a) between the vantage points:		identical	
b) between the referential center and the vantage points:	proximate	proximate	
2)			
	sentence No. 1		sentence No. 2
[referential center (current speaker)]	→	reference point	≠ reference point
		vantage point	≠ vantage point
		<i>the teacher</i>	≠ <i>az</i>
relation within perspective			
a) between the vantage points:		not identical	
b) between the referential center and the vantage points:	proximate	distal	

The referential center (the current speaker) posits a distal relation when placing certain elements as prominent ones, as reference points. In the discourse, i.e., in the universe of discourse the reference points as the sources of neutral vantage points create their own relations, also with relation to the referential center.

Since animate *ő* 'she/he' is used in Hungarian as anaphora in proximate relation between the referential center and the neutral vantage point in the case of one potential antecedent, it cannot be used without ambiguity in the case of two potential antecedents. Thus the inanimate *az* 'that' represents the double proximity, i.e., the distal relation between the referential center and the second, different neutral vantage point. It has to be noted that in examples (12)–(14) the second anaphora (*hozzá* 'to him/her') is in the domain of the first anaphora (\emptyset + inflection, *ő*, or *az*), i.e., in the domain of the conceptual reference point of the sequence, and it contains *ő*, too (*hozzá* = *hoz* "to" + *á* Sg3), thus it increases the ambiguity of *ő* in (4). However, since the first anaphoras are the reference points in the second sentences (not because of word order, but for being in the position of a certain component and thematic role), *hozzá*, containing *ő* becomes equally proximate in relation to the prominent \emptyset + inflection, *ő*, or *az* as reference points.

As I mentioned above, all the Hungarian examples introduced so far consist of sentences with neutral, "flat" intonation (i.e., there is no focus in them), and the subject is in its prototypical position, i.e., it is the topic of the sentence. However, there are other possibilities in Hungarian. Take first those variants that have the agentive anaphoric pronouns as focus. Note that in the neutral sentences the verbal prefix is immediately in front of the verb (*odament* = there [she/he] went), in

sentences with focus the verbal prefix is after the verb (*ment oda* = went there), because in sentences with focus the focus has to be immediately in front of the verb (cf. É. Kiss 1995b).

(16) A tanár megszólította a diákot. \emptyset Ment oda hozzá.

'The teacher addressed the pupil. [he = the teacher] Went to him.'

(17) A tanár megszólította a diákot. \check{O} ment oda hozzá.

'The teacher addressed the pupil. It was he [?], who went to him.'

(18) A tanár megszólította a diákot. Az ment oda hozzá.

'The teacher addressed the pupil. It was that ['he' = the pupil], who went to him.'

It can be assumed that the distribution of \emptyset : \check{o} : *az* remains the same both in neutral and in focus position. The same can be experienced in such sequences where the agentive subject (the little boy) is in focus position in the first sentences:

(19) A tanár szólította meg a diákot. \emptyset Odament hozzá.

'It was the teacher, who addressed the pupil. [he = the teacher] Went to him.'

(20) A tanár szólította meg a diákot. \check{O} odament hozzá.

'It was the teacher, who addressed the pupil. [?] Went to him.'

(21) A tanár szólította meg a diákot. Az odament hozzá.

'It was the teacher, who addressed the pupil. [that 'he' = the pupil] Went to him.'

And also the same can be assumed in such consecutive sentences where the agentive subjects are in focus position in both sentences.

The next possible variants in contrast with (12)–(14) are the ones with different (i.e., reverse) topic–comment structures.

(22) A diákot megszólította a tanár. \emptyset Odament hozzá.

the pupil acc was addressed by the teacher nom

'The teacher addressed the pupil. [he = the teacher] Went to him.'

(23) A diákot megszólította a tanár. \check{O} odament hozzá.

the pupil acc addressed the teacher nom

'The teacher addressed the pupil. He [= ?] went to him.'

(24) A diákot megszólította a tanár. Az odament hozzá.

the pupil acc addressed the teacher nom

'The teacher addressed the pupil. That (he = the pupil) went to him.'

According to 82% of the informants, the distribution of zero + inflection and the two pronominal anaphoras are identical to the ones in (12)–(14).

It can be assumed that in the distribution of zero and pronominal anaphoras with two possible antecedents in the Hungarian language the identity or the change of the neutral vantage point pertaining to the current reference point is independent of thematic roles in Hungarian.

(25) A tanár megszólította a diákot. \emptyset Vele beszélgetett a szünetben.

\emptyset [He= the teacher] with + Sg3 [=instr] was talking [all] the break

'The teacher addressed the pupil. He [the teacher] was talking to him all the break.'

(26) A tanár megszólította a diákot. Az vele beszélgetett a szünetben.

That [he = the pupil] with + Sg3 [=instr] was talking [all] the break

'The teacher addressed the pupil. He [the pupil] was talking to him all the break.'

In (15) \emptyset + inflection represents the identity of the reference point and the neutral vantage point in the sequence, in (26) *az* represents the change of them.

Of course there are certain cases, where the above drafted system does not work, to be detailed in another paper. The system of perspective is present in the coreference relations with two or more different full nouns, but then it also plays a different role.

It can be assumed that the possibilities of zero, pronominal and nominal anaphora creates a rich system in the Hungarian language, based on morphology and syntax, but the conceptual content and the perspective has a decisive function in coreference, too.

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