

ADJUNCTS AND ARGUMENTS IN VP-FOCUS IN HUNGARIAN*

ISTVÁN KENESEI

Abstract

It has been well-known since Höhle (1982), and in particular since Selkirk (1984), that the prosody of focusing is sensitive to the difference between adjuncts and heads or arguments. In Selkirk's proposal, when some item receives focus or pitch accent, an entire phrase can be interpreted as focused if the item is its head or an argument of the head. If, on the other hand, it is an adjunct of the phrase, only the adjunct, but not the dominating phrase node, can be taken to constitute semantic focus.

Whereas in English there is no formal distinction between exclusive (or contrastive, operator) and nonexclusive (or information) focus, Hungarian appears to distinguish the two by syntactic means. Not all answers to (focused) *wh*-questions display a contrastively focused structure.

The data surveyed in this paper serve to show that in contrast with a widespread view (cf. É. Kiss 1981; 1987; 1994) the VP is a true constituent of the Hungarian sentence and that it, too, can be focused. But the VP cannot be focused in the same way as other constituents. Firstly, VP-foci do not have to be understood as contrastive. Secondly, VP-focus is expressed by placing the verb, one of its argument, or referential adjuncts into the designated focus position. Thirdly, *ex situ* VP-focus is possible only in case of activity verbs; VPs of verbs of achievement or accomplishment can be focused only by placing the verb in the focus slot.

The fact that arguments can be used to focus the VP is consonant with the general properties of focusing. Since arguments are ultimately projected by the head, they are in a grammatical sense representative of it. This is shown to be the case even in case of idioms, which can be focused much like other predicates, although idiom chunks are not focusable as such. Adjuncts, and in particular non-referential adjuncts, have no role in the projection of categories and are therefore incapable of 'transferring' their focus properties onto the category they are adjoined to whenever they are focused. Nonreferential adjuncts, e.g. manner adverbials, have limited contrastibility, though exclusive focus in such adjuncts is not impossible in the semantic domains they determine.

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1. Introduction

This paper presents new data and analyses relating to focus phenomena in Hungarian. The prevailing view of Hungarian maintains that it has a designated focus position in front of the inflected verb, which carries contrastive interpretation, or, in the terminology used in this paper, 'exclusive focus' reading. I will show not only that nonexclusive focus is a relevant notion in Hungarian, but also that there is an unexpected correlation between adjuncts versus arguments, as well as verb types and such foci. Similar distinctions between adjuncts and arguments come to play if VPs are contrastively focused. If, however, manner adverbials are focused, it appears that a similar type of contrast is not available. I will argue that not only manner adverbials, but also idioms can be contrasted, although in a fashion different from DPs or PPs.

I will start by reviewing the literature on the relationship between focus and grammatical structure in section 2. The distinction between heads/arguments and adjuncts are drawn up with respect to their focusability, first in connection with contrastive focus in section 3. Then structures expressing nonexclusive focus are examined in 4, and the findings arrived at there are developed for contrastive VP focus in 5. The focusing of manner adverbials, i.e. VP-adjuncts, are discussed in section 6, and that of idioms in section 7.

2. Focus types, language types

It has been well-known since Höhle (1982), and in particular since Selkirk (1984), that the prosody of focusing is sensitive to the difference between adjuncts and heads or arguments. In Selkirk's presentation, cf. (1), when some item receives focus or pitch accent, an entire phrase can be interpreted as focused if the item is its head or an argument of the head. If, on the other hand, it is (a constituent of) an adjunct of the phrase, only the adjunct, but not the dominating phrase node, can be taken to constitute semantic focus.

(1) **Phrasal Focus Rule** (Selkirk 1984, 207)

A constituent may be a focus if (i) or (ii) (or both) is true:

(i) The constituent that is its **head** is a focus.

(ii) A constituent contained within it that is an **argument** of the head is a focus.

Selkirk's phonologically based rule works on a simple example, such as (2), in the following fashion. (Boldface type stands for phonological focus, i.e. pitch accent,

marked on the word or syllable concerned; capitals signal items in the scope of semantic focus.)

- (2) (a) Bill bought a used **car**.
 (b) Bill bought a **used** car.

In (2a) pitch accent is on *car*, and the first choice is for this word to be interpreted for (narrow) contrastive focus as in 'Bill bought a used **CAR**, rather than a used **TRUCK**'. Another option is to take the whole noun phrase within which *car* is embedded as (broad) contrastive focus: 'Bill bought **A USED CAR**, rather than **THE TRUCK FOR SALE NEXT DOOR**'. A third option is to regard the whole VP as in focus, cf.: 'Bill **BOUGHT A USED CAR**, rather than **TAKE THE TRAIN**'. Finally, the remaining choice is to have the whole sentence in focus, as in answer to the question *What happened?*: '**BILL BOUGHT A USED CAR**'.

The case is different with (2b); *used* is an adjunct that can only be understood as being (narrowly) contrasted with some other adjective or attribute, such as *new*, *antique*, etc., in this case. Under no condition can (2b) be considered as contradicting anything like the sentence *Bill bought a boat*, i.e. contrasting the noun phrase of which the focused adjective is a constituent.

The regularity summed up in (1) is in need of some clarification. First of all, it was conceived outside of the customary framework of the T-model, in which the phonetic and the semantic modules are divorced from each other. In Selkirk's proposal phonology feeds semantics, i.e., a pitch accent placed on some word is accessible to semantic interpretation. This is a minor difficulty, which can be easily overcome by, say, assigning a focus feature to some arbitrary constituent (to be analyzed for semantic focus) and derive phonological focus by means of a simple algorithm, as for example Jackendoff (1972), Rochemont (1986), or Jacobs (1991) suggests. The rule below is from Kenesei (1993).

- (3) (a) **Focus Assignment**
 Assign [+focus] to a lexical head X^0 or a maximal projection XP.
- (b) **Focus Percolation**
 The feature [+focus] percolates onto the lexical head (and/or the lexical head of an argument) of the XP it is assigned to.

The rule in (3) guarantees that adjuncts are not accented if phrases receive the focus feature, and that no functional head receives a pitch accent if its maximal projection is focused.¹

Secondly, neither Selkirk's (1984) analysis, nor any of the others in her wake, pay attention to languages in which focus does not simply arise as a result of pitch accent placement, but through the movement of some constituent into a designated position. Languages having this type of 'ex situ' focus range from Basque and Russian, which have initial focus, cf. Ortiz (1986; 1989), King (1993), to Mayan and Hungarian, which have preverbal focus, cf. Aissen (1992) and Horvath (1986) or É. Kiss (1987), to the Bantu language of Aghem and the Chadic language of Podoko, which have postverbal focus, cf. Watters (1979), Tuller (1992), to the Chadic languages of Tangale and Ngizim, with final focus, cf. Tuller (1992). It is one of the points we will argue here that our reformulation of Selkirk's focus rule can handle this variety of focus movement, if it is supplemented by some mechanism of pied-piping and movement.

Finally, Selkirk's analysis makes no significant distinction between the types of foci pitch accents can carry. Discounting emotional 'highlighting' or 'contexts of repair', there are still two important subtypes that need to be distinguished: contrastive and noncontrastive focus.² Following Chomsky (1971), we understand contrastive focus as exclusion by identification in some finite domain of discourse D, and render it in case of (4) as (5a,b).³

¹ For a modified and updated version, see Selkirk (1995). The reference to lexical heads is necessary to prevent structures from arising in which an entire phrase is in semantic focus with the functional head having pitch accent as in (i), a possible sentence, though with a different meaning:

(i) *Bill bought **THE USED CAR**.

The use of *and/or* in the rule observes objections to the exclusive *or* in Selkirk's formulation, which a number of researchers have found counterintuitive in a right-branching language like English, cf. Stechow-Uhmann (1986), Jacobs (1991), Richard Kayne, Mark Liberman and Mark Steedman (personal communication), but see below for data from Hungarian. One of the reviewers called my attention to the fact that right-adjoined adjuncts can also carry focus stress in English provided the head (of the argument) also has pitch accent, cf. (ii)–(iii). Cf. also Drubig (1994).

(ii) John **BOUGHT A CAR FROM JAPAN**.

(iii) John **READ THE BOOK ALOUD**.

² Emotional 'highlighting', cf. Bolinger (1961), is illustrated in (i); 'contexts of repair', i.e., contrasting parts of words, cf. Rochemont-Culicover (1990), are exemplified in (ii).

(i) I **hate** them.

(ii) I didn't say **blueberry**, I said **bluebird**.

³ The formula $x \in D$ is the restrictor; cf. also Kenesei (1986), Szabolcsi (to appear).

- (4) Jeff hit Bill in the office.
- (5) (a) $\lambda x, x \in D$, (Jeff hit x in the office), Bill
 (b) 'It is Bill, rather than Jim, Jack, John, ... (or any other student, man, person, ...), that Jeff hit in the office'

Contrastive or exclusive focus is understood to operate within a domain in which there are distinct entities or properties known at least to the speaker. Note that contrastive focus has the power of creating a domain, as in the case of (4), when the hearer is not aware of the intended range in which the referent of Bill is contrasted.

Nonexclusive focus carries out identification but differs from exclusive focus thus conceived in that it is not interpreted with respect to a domain or if it is, other entities in the domain are not negated, i.e. contrasted. In consequence, a characteristic context of nonexclusive focus, such as a VP-question as in (6), can be answered by any one of (7a–d), with the interpretation given in (8a) and the possible, though not quite satisfactory, logical rendering in (8b).

- (6) What did Jill do in the office?
- (7) (a) Jill GAVE THE **BOOK** TO MARY.
 (b) Jill GAVE THE BOOK TO **MARY**.
 (c) Jill GAVE THE **BOOK** TO **MARY**.
 (d) Jill **GAVE** THE **BOOK** TO **MARY**.
- (8) (a) 'What Jill did was give a book to Mary'
 (b) λx , (Jill did x), [give a book to Mary]

Note that *wh*-questions in general, and VP-questions in particular, do not necessarily elicit contrastively focused answers. It is thus possible to answer the question in (6) by a mere *Nothing*, without violating any truth-conditions the question and the answer may share.⁴ Moreover, none of the possible answers in (7a–d) commit the speaker to the belief that Jill did nothing other than give the book to Mary, although

⁴ Or alternatively, it may be claimed that the question is ambiguous between a presuppositional reading, in which the speaker believes that Jill did something in the office, and a nonpresuppositional one, i.e., an open question, according to which what the speaker asks is in fact something of the order *What did Jill do in the office if she did anything?*

Observe that nonexclusive focus is defined with reference to contrastive focus and we are not committed as to whether it is the same as information focus, presentational focus, rheme, etc. While we believe contrastive focus to be available in general, the semantics of nonexclusive focus can differ from language to language.

such a reading is, in principle, possible. In other words, the answer does not identify Jill's action **in some finite domain of actions**, consequently, it does not express contrastive focus.

Clearly, not all questions are nonpresuppositional, so not all answers are non-contrastive either. One standard example is the proverbial lawyer's question *When did you stop beating your wife?*, or in general adjunct questions constructed by means of question words like *when*, *how* or *why*. (We return to some of the problems adjunct focus constructions raise in section 6.) Nor are all focused answers interpretable for nonexclusive focus: in the context of the question *Is it night or day?* (9a) is understood in a contrastive sense, although pitch accent on the subject does not necessarily have this effect, as well-known cases of sentences 'out-of-the-blue' such as those listed in (9) illustrate, cf. Berman and Szamosi (1972), Bresnan (1972), Ladd (1980), Selkirk (1984), Schmerling (1976).

- (9) (a) THE **SUN** IS SHINING.
 (b) MY **UMBRELLA'S** BEEN FOUND.
 (c) MY **MOTHER'S** COMING.

Whereas in English there is no formal distinction between exclusive and nonexclusive focus, Hungarian appears to distinguish the two by syntactic means. To begin with, not all answers to (focused) *wh*-questions display a contrastively focused structure. (The constituent moved into the designated focus position is enclosed by brackets informally marked by 'F'.)

- (10) (a) Péter mi-t csinált tegnap?
 Peter what-acc did yesterday
 'What did Peter do/what was Peter doing yesterday?'
 (b) (Péter) **OLVASTA** A **HAMLET-ET** A **KERT-BEN**.
 read the Hamlet-acc the garden-in
 'Peter/He was reading Hamlet in the garden'
 (c) (Péter) **FEL-OLVASTA** A **HAMLET-ET** A **KERT-BEN**.
 up-read
 'Pcter/He read out Hamlet in the garden'
 (d) ??(Péter) [**A KERTBEN**]_F olvasta (fel) a Hamletet.
 'It was in the garden that Peter was reading (out) Hamlet'

While (10d) is a possible sentence, it is not a conceivable answer to the VP-question in (10a), while either (10b) or (10c) are likely choices. Both are essentially identical with neutral (i.e. nonfocused) sentences in terms of both constituent order and stress/intonation, as is shown by the equal stresses on the notional words (indistinguishable from unreduced focus accents) and the usual intonational downdrift. (10d), in turn, has focused order, stress pattern and intonation, and it expresses a contrast between the garden and the range of places where Peter might have been reading. (For more on stress and intonation, see the next section.) Consequently, (10b) and (10c) contain nonexclusive foci, namely, the VP itself, as distinct from contrastive focus, as in (10d), which is associated with a different syntactic structure.⁵

Having set the scene, I will now proceed to review research showing that at least some differences between adjuncts and arguments with respect to contrastive focus are relevant also in a language that has ex-situ focus, and then I will extend these findings in section 4 onto nonexclusive foci in this language.

3. Asymmetries in contrastive focus

The recurrent and consistent differences between heads and arguments on the one hand and adjuncts on the other regarding the prosody and the semantics of focus structures, which were recapitulated in the previous section following Selkirk (1984), are not confined to languages with in-situ focus. As was claimed in Kenesei (1993), similar distinctions obtain in Hungarian, a focus-movement language.

Although there are diverse views concerning the prosodic structure and/or properties of focused sentences in Hungarian (cf. Varga 1986; É. Kiss 1987/88; É. Kiss 1994; Kálmán–Kornai 1989; Kálmán–Nádasdy 1994), here I will follow research reported in Vogel–Kenesei (1987), Kenesei–Vogel (1989; 1996), which agrees with all except É. Kiss's work in that it does not admit of an automatically left-branching prosodic structure with degrees of stresses decreasing from left to right, but differs from some, notably Kálmán and Kornai, and to some extent from Kálmán and Nádasdy, in that it makes use of prosodic constituents and, as a result of this, the items following and including the preverbal focus and the (completely destressed) verb form a phonological phrase in which postverbal constituents are not completely (as with Kálmán and Kornai)

⁵ The question in (10a), just as its English equivalent, is ambiguous between a process/activity and an accomplishment reading, as reflected in the range of possible answers. We return to the problem of contrastive VP-focus below.

or optionally (as with Kálmán and Nádasdy) destressed, but have reduced stresses throughout.⁶

Now if an adjunct within some maximal category is focused, the phrase containing it has to move into the designated focus position, since a left-adjunct is unable to move on its own, and constituents other than the VP have invariable left-adjunction in Hungarian. In other words, a focused adjunct pied-pipes the dominating phrase node. In the focus position it receives prosodic prominence, i.e. primary stress or pitch accent, accompanied by the concomitant stress reduction of the constituents following it.

(11) (a) Péter [az UNALMAS jelentéseket]_F olvassa.

Peter the boring reports-acc reads

'It is the BORING reports that Peter reads'

(b) Péter [a KÖNYVTÁRBAN olvasó fiút]_F találta meg.

Peter the library-ine reading boy-acc found pfx

'It's the boy reading in the LIBRARY that Peter found'

In (11a) the bracketed DP is moved into the preverbal position, the adjective has primary stress and is interpreted for contrast, so out of a set of reports of various properties, such as exciting, interesting, boring, insipid, fascinating, etc., it is the boring ones that Peter reads.⁷ In (11b) out of the set of boys each reading at some place, such as the library, the park, the school, the stadium, etc., Peter found the one reading in the library. In neither example can an interpretation go through which places the dominating category in contrast, e.g., '*Peter read the BORING reports, not the NEWS MAGAZINES' or '*Peter found the boy reading IN THE LIBRARY, rather than the one WALKING IN THE PARK'. Thus any reading that involves the semantic focusing of the phrase node dominating the adjunct is out of the question.

⁶ Items preceding the focus (e.g., topics, quantifiers) determine their own phonological phrases and have unreduced stresses. Items between the focus and the inflected verb (including the verb) are fully destressed. Thus, stress markings for (11a) and (12a) are given, respectively, in (i) and (ii). ["] stands for unreduced stress, ['] for reduced stress (illustrated in (iii)), and no marking for lack of stress. Boldface syllables are therefore to be regarded as carrying the last unreduced stress in the clause (before another focused constituent).

(i) "Péter [az "UNALMAS jelentéseket] olvassa.

(ii) "Péter [AZ "UNALMAS "JELENTÉSEKET] olvassa.

(iii) "Péter [az "UNALMAS jelentéseket] olvassa a 'kertben.

'It's the BORING reports that Peter is reading in the garden'

⁷ Another possible, though in this context irrelevant, reading would involve a generic sense of 'boring reports'.

The case is different with heads or arguments in prosodic focus. If, in contrast with the examples in (11), the (lexical) head *jelentéseket* or (the lexical head of) the argument *a könyvet* receives primary stress, the entire phrase that it is the head or the argument of can be interpreted for focus.⁸

(12) (a) Péter [AZ UNALMAS JELENTÉSEKET]_F olvassa.
 Peter the boring reports-acc reads
 'It is THE BORING REPORTS that Peter reads'

(b) Péter [A KÖNYVET OLVASÓ fiút]_F találta meg.
 Peter the book-acc reading boy-acc found pfx
 'It is the boy READING THE BOOK that Peter found'

In other words, (12a) is understood as contrasting boring reports with books, magazines, comics, journals, etc., which Peter may have been reading, and (12b) as contrasting boys readings books with boys eating chocolate, running in the garden, swimming, etc., that Peter may have found.⁹

Note that the structural correlation between the stress placement and the semantic interpretation of focused constituents makes it impossible to move items in a random fashion to the designated focus position and then assign them a focus feature there, as Horvath (1986; 1995), É. Kiss (1987; 1994), and Brody (1990) sug-

⁸ It would lead us too far afield to discuss the notion 'have primary stress' here. The idea that topics, or in general pre-focal items are as a rule unstressed was questioned by Varga (1986), while Vogel–Kenesei (1987), Kenesei–Vogel (1989; 1996) in agreement with Kálmán and Kornai (1989) claim that focus is distinguished from preceding constituents by being the last item that has unreduced stress, and by consequence a characteristic pitch accent. See also fn. 6.

⁹ On another reading, compatible with the analysis presented here, a sentence phonetically identical with (12a) can be understood as contrasting boring reports with, say, insipid magazines, constituting a case of multiple contrast. (In this instance the adjective *unalmas*, or its initial syllable, would also have to be in boldface.)

One reviewer objects that in examples like (12b) it is boys, rather than properties of boys, that are in focus. If, however, focus can be a function not only over (sets of) entities, but also over (sets of) properties, I see no difficulty in the semantic interpretation, although the logical formulae are far from simple. The domain in which contrast or exclusion by identification is at work is not that of boys but properties of boys, with the proposition 'Peter found some boy' constituting the (semantic) presupposition in (12b), even if it is sets of individuals (boys in our case) which are characterized by those properties.

In syntax, on the other hand, Chomsky's (1993) copy-and-deletion approach to reconstruction can accommodate these and similar structures by allowing the noncontrasted part of the focus-moved constituent to reconstruct into its root position for interpretation. That such a reconstruction is necessary is argued in section 7.

gest. If the DP *az unalmas jelentéseket* in (11b) or (12b) were to move into the preverbal position and were assigned a focus feature there, the feature would have to be allowed to percolate down onto either the lexical head or the adjunct without being able to guarantee that its location in Phonetic Form will correspond to its place at Logical Form, i.e., that the placement of the stress will allow the concurrent semantic interpretation as outlined above.

Rather, in agreement with Rochemont (1986), among others, items must be randomly marked for focus at the level of D-structure, and—following possible pied-piping—move in order to check their features in overt syntax in ex-situ languages, and at LF in focus-in-situ languages, much in line with Chomsky's (1993) checking theory.

4. Arguments and VP-focus

The asymmetry between adjuncts and heads/arguments, well-known from in-situ languages, has not been extensively studied in ex-situ languages. Even less attention has been given to problems of adjunct-argument asymmetries in producing broad focus, although É. Kiss (1987/88) made an important attempt to adapt Selkirk's (1984) findings to Hungarian by trying to demonstrate that arguments in the focus position may result in noncontrastive focus. On the one hand, however, she does not consistently distinguish contrastive and nonexclusive foci, but quotes Selkirk's definition, which is neutral between the two, and, on the other hand, her crucial examples are ill-chosen in that they contain an adjunct for a purported argument.¹⁰ In this section I will concentrate on nonexclusive focus, while in the next one, I will take up the issue of contrastive VP-focus.

True internal arguments can indeed be placed in focus positions and convey VP focus in Hungarian. Using the examples in (10), a VP-question as in (10a), repeated below in (13a) can also be answered by a sentence that has the object argument in focus, whether with a plain or with a prefixed verb.

¹⁰ Consider her standard example (17), cited with our symbolism and translation.

- (i) János **PIROSKÁVAL** ebédelt a menzán.
 John Piroška-ins had-lunch the canteen-sup
 'It is Piroška that John had lunch with at the canteen'

In (i) *Piroskával* is an adjunct of the verb *ebédelt*, and it can only be interpreted as contrastive focus, even in the context of the question É. Kiss quotes as introducing (i): 'You have any news from the department?' Clearly, the set of people determined by 'the department' suffices for a domain of discourse as required by our definition of contrastive focus above. For more, see fn. 15 and Varga (1987/88).

- (13) (a) Péter mi-t csinált tegnap?
Peter what-acc did yesterday
'What did Peter do yesterday?'
- (b) (Péter) [A **HAMLETET**]_F OLVASTA.
the Hamlet-acc read
'Peter/He was reading Hamlet'
- (c) (Péter) [A **HAMLETET**]_F OLVASTA FEL.
'He was reading out Hamlet'

It is an interesting feature of the focused sentences in (13b,c) that in the relevant nonexclusive reading they can only be interpreted as progressive, even though the verb would otherwise be compatible with an accomplishment meaning, as in (13c): 'finished reading out Hamlet'. The nonexclusive reading is possible if there is no understood domain of discourse, i.e., if the action of Peter's reading (out) Hamlet is not one of a closed number of possible alternative activities as understood by the speaker (and the hearer), such as mowing the grass, picking apples, watering the flowers, walking, jogging, etc.

The object arguments of verbs of accomplishment/achievement cannot occur in the designated preverbal focus position in answer to a VP-question.¹¹

- (14) (a) Mit csinált Edison 1877-ben?
what-acc did Edison 1877-ine
'What did Edison do in 1877?'
- (b) **FEL-TALÁLTA** A **FONOGRÁFOT**.
pfx-invented-3sg the phonograph-acc
'He invented the phonograph'
- (c) ?? [A **FONOGRÁFOT**]_F találta fel.
'It is the phonograph that he invented'

¹¹ For more on verb types and terminology, see Kiefer (1994) and the literature cited there. Here I concentrate on the three verb types: activities versus accomplishments and achievements. The focusing properties of other, such as stative or momentous (semelfactive), predicates fall outside the scope of this paper.

I am especially indebted to one of the anonymous reviewers for comments on the remaining part of this section.

The answer in (14c) is only acceptable if the question is one of a series asking about what Edison invented in each year including 1877, i.e., in 1876 he invented the telephone receiver, in 1877 the phonograph, in 1878 the lightbulb, and in 1879 the carbon filament. Since such an enumeration determines a closed list of activities, it is clearly a context for contrastive, rather than nonexclusive focus.

Noncontrastive focus, in accordance with the picture outlined in section 2, identifies the entity, property, etc. in question, but does not exclude any other one in the domain of discourse. In other words, an answer along the lines of (10b,c), (13b,c) and (14b) in the relevant readings is **not** tantamount to saying that the referent of the subject was doing **nothing other** than what is specified in the predicate. Peter may have been having coffee, walking, etc., in the garden in the scenario depicted by (10b,c), and Edison may have travelled round the world in the situation portrayed in (14b). Note the impossibility of (15a), but not (15b).

- (15) (a) *Miközben utazgatott, [A FONOGRÁFOT]_F találta fel.
 'While he was traveling, it's the phonograph he invented'
- (b) Miközben utazgatott, **FEL-TALÁLTA A FONOGRÁFOT**.
 'While he was traveling, he invented the phonograph'

In contrast with (15a), sentences such as (13b,c) are perfectly acceptable in a similar context.

- (16) Miközben a kertben üldögélt, A **HAMLETET OLVASTA (FEL)**.
 'While he was sitting in the garden, he was reading (out) Hamlet'

That the difference is not due to a distinction between affected and effected objects is shown by the following examples in which an affected object behaves the same way as the effected object in (14b,c).

- (17) (a) (Péter)**KI-TAKARÍTOTTA A SZOBÁT**.
 Peter perf-cleaned the room-acc
 'Peter cleaned up the room'
- (b) ??(Péter) [A **SZOBÁT**]_F **TAKARÍTOTTA KI**.
 'It's the room that Peter cleaned'
- (c) (Péter) [A **SZOBÁT**]_F **TAKARÍTOTTA**.
 'Peter cleaned/was cleaning the room'
- (d) (Péter) **TAKARÍTOTTA A SZOBÁT**.
 'idem'

In the context of a question like (13a), i.e. 'What did Peter do yesterday?', (17a) is a possible answer, but (17b) is not, unless an exclusive reading is associated with it as before. The examples in (17c,d) both have progressive readings, and are fully acceptable as answers containing VP-foci, similarly to (10b) and (13b,c).

It appears that the distinction is between resultative actions and nonresultative processes. In other words, predicates containing achievement verbs (e.g., *megtalál* 'find', *elér* 'reach', *feltalál* 'invent') and accomplishment verbs (e.g., *megeszik* 'eat up', *kitakarít* 'clean up', *megtanul* 'learn [perf.]'), do not allow their (object or, in general, internal) arguments to be focused and have the entire VP in semantic focus, while the internal arguments of activity verbs (e.g., *tanul* 'study', *olvas* 'read', *takarít* 'clean') can move into the focus position with a concomitant VP-focus interpretation. Achievements and accomplishments are telic and denote an action in its totality. Processes or activities are atelic and partitive; (13b) is understood as a partial reading of Hamlet, but in (14b) there can be no partial invention of the phonograph. Partitive activities can then share the time span they define with other processes, but telic actions can only be executed consecutively.

Note, furthermore, that in every case when the focused argument allows a broad VP-focus reading to emerge, this interpretation oscillates freely between a contrastive and a noncontrastive alternative, depending on whether or not the action in the VP is understood with respect to a limited domain of discourse.

We have seen that focus on the VP is indeed possible in Hungarian with an internal argument placed in the designated focus position, as was surmised by É. Kiss (1987/88), but only if certain conditions are observed, such as the prohibition on achievement and accomplishment verbs. The picture we have presented of VP-focus is far from complete as yet. In order to obtain a clearer view, we have to compare contrastive VP-foci with noncontrastive ones.¹²

¹² These observations also have the consequence of providing an argument for a distinction between internal and external arguments in Hungarian, which has been challenged primarily by É. Kiss (1987; 1994). The question in (i) can be answered only by (ii) or (iii), and not by (iv) or (v).

- (i) *Mi ez a zaj?*
'What is this noise?'
- (ii) *PÉTER [A FÜVET]_F NYÍRJA A KERTBEN*
Peter the grass-acc mows the garden-ine
'Peter is mowing the grass in the garden'
- (iii) *PÉTER NYÍRJA A FÜVET A KERTBEN*
'idem'
- (iv) ?? *[PÉTER]_F NYÍRJA A FÜVET A KERTBEN*
'It's Peter that's mowing the grass in the garden'
- (v) ?? *[PÉTER]_F NYÍRJA A FÜVET A KERTBEN*

5. Contrastive VP-focus

In discussion with Szabolcsi (1981a; 1981b), I argued in Kenesei (1986; 1989) that whenever full sentences, i.e. propositions, are contrastively focused, every notion-al word except for the verb carries primary stress.

- (18) Nem **PÉTER** ALUDT A **PADLÓN**, hanem A **HÁZIGAZDA** KÖLTÖZÖTT **SZÁLLODÁBA**.
 not Peter slept the floor-sup but the host moved hotel-ill
 'It is not the case that Peter slept on the floor, but that the host moved to a hotel'

As regards the placement of primary stresses, this structure formally corresponds to Kálmán *et al.*'s (1989) 'sentences with multiple contrast', though the constituents are not contrasted pairwise here.

The case is not different when VPs are contrasted: if they have at least one argument, it will occupy the designated focus position, with the rest of the arguments lined up behind the verb.¹³

- (19) Péter [A **HAMLETET**]_F OLVASTA FEL **MARINAK**, míg
 Peter the Hamlet-acc read up Mary-dat while
 János [AZ **AUTÓT**]_F SZEDTE **APRÓ DARABOKRA**.
 John the car-acc took small pieces-sub
 'Peter was reading out Hamlet to Mary, while John was taking the car into small pieces'

Note that verb-initial VPs are also possible in contrast contexts, though structures with the argument in the preverbal focus position are somewhat more acceptable.

- (20) (a) ?Péter nem **OLVASTA A HAMLETET MARINAK**, hanem **SZALADGÁLT**.
 (b) Péter nem A **HAMLETET** OLVASTA **MARINAK**, hanem **SZALADGÁLT**.
 'Peter was not reading Hamlet to Mary, but running around'

Why verb-initial VPs are less likely or customary as VP-foci is an interesting puzzle, especially in view of the general applicability of Selkirk's rule (1) and the fact that lexical heads can carry phonological focus in Hungarian. This even includes verbs in Hungarian if (a) they are lexically marked for focus, i.e., when they are contrasted with some other verb, or (b) they are 'assertive' or truth-functional, that is, they are contrasted with the nonexecution of the same action.

¹³ The order of the arguments is immaterial: the dative object *Marinak* can also be placed in the preverbal focus position with the object *a Hamletet* remaining behind the verb.

(21) (a) Péter nem [OLVASTA/FELOLVASTA]_F a Hamletet, hanem TANULTA.
 'Peter was not reading/reading out Hamlet; he was studying it'

(b) Péter (igénis) [OLVASTA/FELOLVASTA]_F a Hamletet.
 'Peter (indeed) did read/read out Hamlet'

That the structure expressing lexical contrast differs from the assertive one was shown by Kálmán *et al.* (1989) by using the auxiliary *fog* 'will', which precedes the infinitive only if the contrast is assertive, rather than lexical.

(22) (a) Péter [FOGJA]_F olvasni a Hamletet.
 Peter will-3sg read-inf the Hamlet-acc
 'Peter WILL read Hamlet'

(b) Péter [OLVASNI]_F fogja a Hamletet.
 'What Peter will do in relation to Hamlet is read (it).'

In (22a) assertive focus is involved, so we may conjecture that it is Tense, the head of the IP, and not the (lexical) verb, that is marked for focus and moves into the designated position. In (22b) the verb in infinitive has the focus feature and is thus moved into the appropriate position. The verb in (21b) has to move into Tense only to check its ϕ -features, and it is the head of Tense Phrase that moves on into the head of the Focus Phrase, carrying the verb adjoined to it along, as it were. Whereas contrastive and assertive foci correspond to two different structures in (22), they happen to coincide in (21a) and (21b), as illustrated in (23), in which (21a) would have focus marking on the verb, and (21b) on Tense.¹⁴

(23) [_{TopP} Péter_i [_{FP} [_F [_{V+T} olvas-t-a_j]] [... e_i e_j a Hamletet]]]
 Peter read-past-3sg the Hamlet-acc

If the VP is focused, its focus feature trickles down on its head and its arguments. If movement into the Spec of FP is triggered by the focus feature, then not only an argument, but also the head of the VP, i.e., the verb itself can be moved into the focus position, as in (23), and consequently carry prosodic prominence. (It is prob-

¹⁴ Although, as seen in (23), the verb moves into the head of the Focus Phrase, for purposes of illustration we will continue to mark by brackets labeled for 'F' only constituents other than the verb that move into the focus position.

ably a 'low' phonological rule that destresses the verb whenever it is not initial in the focused phrase, cf. Kenesei–Vogel (1989).)

- (24) (a) Péter **ANNÁNAK** OLVASTA A **HAMLETET** (nem pedig szaladgált).
 Peter Ann-dat read the Hamlet-acc not rather ran-around
 'What Peter did was read Hamlet to Anna (rather than run around).'
 (b) Péter **OLVASTA ANNÁNAK A HAMLETET** (nem pedig szaladgált).
 'Idem'

If, however, an adjunct is placed in the designated focus position, it is impossible to interpret the VP as focused, cf. (25a). If, in turn, the verb is focused with the adjunct unfocused, the structure passes as VP-focus, cf. (25b).¹⁵

- (25) (a) *Péter [**A KERTBEN**]_F OLVASOTT FEL (nem pedig úszott).
 Peter the garden-inc read out not rather swam
 (b) Péter **FELOLVASOTT A KERTBEN** (nem pedig úszott).
 'What Peter did was read out in the garden (rather than swim).'
 (26) (a) *Péter [**HANGOSAN**]_F OLVASOTT FEL A KERTBEN.
 aloud
 (b) Péter **HANGOSAN FELOLVASOTT A KERTBEN**.
 'What Peter did was read out aloud in the garden'

Since heads project arguments, but not adjuncts, arguments can in their turn percolate their visible properties onto the dominating category that they are arguments of. This is the fundamental insight that lies behind Selkirk's (1984) observation on adjunct/argument asymmetry in focusing. As the case appears to be in Hungarian, it is not sufficient for a single argument to carry the focus feature. If a VP is focused, the head and every one of its arguments must be marked for focus, i.e., the feature percolates down onto every one of them, and either the verb or one of the arguments moves into the designated focus position with the rest of them (excepting the verb) remaining *in situ* and ultimately assigned focus stress.

However, the case is not as simple as it might appear. Alongside with the expected constructions in which the head or one of the arguments is moved into focus (with the rest of the arguments having focus stresses *in situ*), cf. (18a,b), an adjunct can also be focused, whether moved or *in situ*, and the VP can be inter-

¹⁵ It is shown by the preverbal position of the prefix *fel* that the verb, rather than the adjunct, is focused.

preted for semantic focus, provided there is at least one argument in a postverbal position (carrying unreduced, focus stress of course), cf. (27c).¹⁶

- (27) (a) Péter **FEL**OLVASTA A **HAMLETET** A **KERTBEN** (nem pedig úszott).
 Peter pfx-read the Hamlet-acc the garden-ine not rather swam
 (b) Péter A **HAMLETET** OLVASTA (FEL) A **KERTBEN** (nem pedig úszott).
 (c) Péter A **KERTBEN** OLVASTA (FEL) A **HAMLETET** (nem pedig úszott).
 'What Peter did was read (out) Hamlet in the garden (rather than swim).'

Note that the adjunct in the distinguished focus position must be referential, otherwise the purported interpretation of the VP as semantic focus fails. If a nonreferential (manner, reason, etc.) adjunct is moved into focus, whether or not there are postverbal arguments, the only reading possible is one of narrow contrastive focus on the adjunct. The following illustrates.

- (28) (a) *Péter (nem úszott, hanem) **HANGOSAN** OLVASTA FEL A **HAMLETET**.
 not swam but aloud
 'Peter was not swimming, but reading out Hamlet aloud'
 (b) *Péter (nem úszott, hanem) **HANGOSAN** OLVASOTT.¹⁷

¹⁶ That É. Kiss's (1987/88) example has an adjunct in focus is shown by the analogy with (26a): no VP-focus is possible in (i).

- (i) *János [**PIROSKÁVAL**]_F EBÉDELT (nem pedig úszott).
 John Piroška-ins had-lunch not rather swam
 'What John did was have lunch with Piroška (rather than swim)' (intended meaning)

The sentence in (i) is of course interpretable as contrastive: 'It is Piroška that John had lunch with.' The adjunct in focus position becomes acceptable as VP-focus if a postverbal referential phrase is also stressed, unlike her claim and as Varga (1987/88) suggests, cf. (ii).

- (ii) János **PIROSKÁVAL** EBÉDELT A **MENZÁN**.
 John Piroška-ins had-lunch the canteen-sup
 'What John did was have lunch with Piroška at the canteen'

¹⁷ The possible readings for (28a,b), provided postverbal constituents have reduced stresses, are the following: 'Peter was reading (Hamlet) ALOUD.' I am not concerned here with a version of (28a) in which each word has unreduced stress, resulting in a progressive reading, cf. Kiefer (1994). Another variant of (28b), in which the verb carries unreduced stress, belongs under a different heading, for the adjunct *hangosan* is not in focus, as shown by the preverbal prefix in (ii) in the same context and interpretation.

- (i) Péter (nem úszott, hanem) **HANGOSAN** OLVASOTT.
 (ii) Péter (nem úszott, hanem) **HANGOSAN FEL**-OLVASOTT.
 'Peter was not swimming but was reading (something out) aloud.'
 (iii) *Péter (nem úszott, hanem) **HANGOSAN** OLVASOTT FEL.

Finally, as is predictable, the integrity of the minimal VP must be observed. In other words, while adjuncts can be removed from the VP, no argument can stay outside the scope of focusing if the head or any other argument moves into the focus position, thus producing the effect of VP-focus.

- (29) (a) Pétera kertben [A FÜVET]_F NYÍRTA (és nem szaladgált)
 Peter the garden-in_e the grass-acc mowed (and not ran)
 'In the garden Peter was mowing the grass (rather than running around)'
- (b) *Péter a füvet [A KERTBEN]_F NYÍRTA (és nem szaladgált)
- (30) (a) Péter hangosan [A KÖNYVET]_F OLVASTA FEL (és nem énekelt)
 Peter aloud the book-acc read out and not sang
 'Peter was reading out the book aloud (rather than singing)'
- (b) *Péter a könyvet [HANGOSAN]_F OLVASTA FEL (és nem énekelt)
- (31) (a) *Péter Annának [A KÖNYVEKET]_F ADTA EL (és nem integetett)
 Peter Anna-dat the books-acc sold pfx and not waved
 'As for Anna, Peter sold the books to her (rather than waved)'
- (b) *Péter a könyveket [ANNÁNAK]_F ADTA EL (és nem olvasta)
 'As for the books, Peter sold them to Anna (rather than read them)'

In (29) the referential place adjunct can be outside the VP in focus, but the object cannot. (30) shows that the same holds for nonreferential adjuncts, such as manner adverbials. (31) illustrates the impossibility of extracting an argument even if another remains in the scope of focus.

We may conclude then that the VP can be focused if (a) the head and its argument(s) are all marked for focus, which may in part be a result of a parametrized version of our Focus Rule (3) by making use of the *and* option in (3b), and (b) the referential adjuncts in the VP are also all marked for focus *in situ*. Then (a) the verb, (b) one of its internal arguments, or (c) in case the verb has at least one argument, a referential adjunct must move into the designated focus position. No argument can be extracted from the VP unless it moves into the focus position. The focus feature can be percolated from the VP-node onto the head and the arguments with no difficulty, while an inclusion of the referential adjuncts must make reference to D-linking in ways to be studied by further research. We may, however, conjecture that the difference between the focusability of, for example, place and manner adjuncts

in case of VP-focus is compatible with an analysis of manner adverbials as predicates ranging over other predicates in distinction to place or time adjuncts.

6. Manner adverbials and focus domains

As was seen in the preceding section, one particular type of adjunct occurring in the focus position is manner adverbials. Their behavior is interesting also because they do not apparently fit in the mould of focus interpretation outlined in section 2.

As Szabolcsi (1981a; 1981b) demonstrated, focused DPs have semantic or truth conditional consequences different from nonfocused ones.

- (32) (a) Mária és Éva látta Pétert.
 Mary and Eve saw Peter-acc
 'Mary and Eve saw Peter'
- (b) [MÁRIA ÉS ÉVA]_F látta Pétert.
 'It is Mary and Eve that saw Peter'
- (c) Mária látta Pétert.
 'Mary saw Peter'
- (d) [MÁRIA]_F látta Pétert.
 'It is Mary that saw Peter'

She argues that focusing changes the truth conditions of the sentence since (32c) follows from (32a) and from (32b) but (32b) does not entail (32d), the focused version of (32c). Therefore, conjoined focused NPs do not arise out of any operation like conjunction reduction, which is a possible option for nonfocused sentences.

With reference to Szabolcsi's work, É. Kiss (1994, 28ff) claims that if manner adverbials are focused, the resulting reading is incompatible with the standard interpretation of focus, i.e. exclusion by identification. The argument she invokes is based on the fact that in contrast to DPs and PPs manner adverbials do not exclude each other from focus contexts.

- (33) (a) Mari SZÉPEN vasalta ki az inget.
 Mari beautifully ironed pfx the shirt-acc
 'Mari ironed the shirt BEAUTIFULLY'

- (b) Mari SZÉPEN ÉS GYORSAN vasalta ki az inget.
'Mary ironed the shirt BEAUTIFULLY AND QUICKLY'
- (c) Mari AZ INGET vasalta ki.
'It is the shirt that Mary ironed'

While (33a) does not exclude the truth of (33b), the sentence in (33c) is incompatible with any state of affairs in which Mary ironed anything other or more than the shirt. É. Kiss's conclusion is that focusing as exclusion by identification is "meaningless in the case of nonreferential adverbials, because, when an adverbial is true of an action or a property, an infinite number of other adverbials may simultaneously also be true of it" (29).

That, however, is an instance of overgeneralization; for although there may be a large number of adverbials applicable in addition to the one in focus without adversely affecting the truth conditions of the proposition, it is not the case that any adverbial can occur there.

- (34) (a) *Mari GYORSAN ÉS SEBESEN vasalta ki az inget.
'Mary ironed the shirt QUICKLY AND FAST'
- (b) *Mari SZÉPEN ÉS CSÚNYÁN vasalta ki az inget.
'Mary ironed the shirt IN A BEAUTIFUL AND AN UGLY WAY'

What rules the sentences in (34) ungrammatical is the fact that the adverbials involved are from the same realm of meaning, that of properties relating to speed and taste, respectively. Manner adverbials differ from referential phrases, or in general, from expressions designating (sets of) entities, exactly in that the domains corresponding to manner adverbials can remain disparate: *quickly* excludes only adverbials in the domain of speed, and *beautifully* those in the domain of aesthetic judgement, whether synonymous, antonymous or anything in between these extremes. Unlike the single domain of physical objects or entities, such as *shirt*, the domains of manners in which actions are carried out can be multiple.¹⁸

It is precisely this property of the multiplicity of domains that distinguishes actions from other entities in focus. We have seen above that unless explicitly contrasted, VP-focus does not exclude other VPs, cf. (10b, c), (13b,c), (14b), and their discussion in section 4. In other words, some action as expressed in a VP excludes only actions in the same domain, but not those in a different semantic 'field'.

¹⁸ This analysis of adverbs of manner in focus developed from discussions with Vieri Samek-Lodovici.

(35) (a) Péter mi-t csinált tegnap?
 Peter what-acc did yesterday
 'What did Peter do yesterday?'

(b) A HAMLETET olvasta.
 the Hamlet-acc read-3sg
 'He was reading Hamlet'

(c) A HAMLETET olvasta és a HANGVERSENYT hallgatta.
 and the concert-acc listened
 'He was reading Hamlet and listening to the concert'

As was said before, if (35b) is true, it does not render (35c) false, unlike the case of (32b,d). In other words, (35b) and (35c) are not incompatible, as follows from the nature of actions. And if the two actions happen to be in the same domain and therefore exclude each other, it is always possible to salvage the interpretation of VP-focus by assigning the events expressed by the two VPs to different time segments, as in (36).

(36) (a) Péter mit csinált a múlt héten?
 'What did Peter do last week?'

(b) (Péter) LONDONBA repült és PÁRIZSBA GYALOGOLT.
 Peter London-ill flew and Paris-ill walked
 'Peter/He flew to London and walked to Paris'

The only actions that are truly incompatible are those in 'complementary distribution' with each other, such as *leave* and *stay*, *remember x* and *forget x*, *eat one's cake* and *have it*, etc. On the other hand, a DP or a PP in focus calls for an obligatory contrastive interpretation, as the following illustrates. (Note that postverbal constituents have reduced stresses.)

(37) (a) Péter TEGNAP repült Londonba.
 Peter yesterday flew London-ill
 'It was yesterday (rather than last Thursday, Monday, week, etc.) that Peter flew to London'

(b) Péter A HAMLETET olvasta tegnap.
 Peter the Hamlet-acc read yesterday
 'It was Hamlet (rather than King Lear, The Times, etc.) that Peter was reading yesterday'

VP focus works as noncontrastive focus probably because the element of exclusion is missing from its normal interpretation, in contrast with DP or PP focus. When, in turn, manner adverbials are in focus, they have to be interpreted as contrastive, i.e., relative to a domain in the same way as other focused items are.

7. Idioms

The last context in which the role of arguments in focusing VPs is studied is idioms. It is well known that some idioms lose their idiomatic sense if constituents within them are (contrastively) focused, cf. (38).

- (38) (a) *He kicked the BUCKET (rather than something else).
 (b) *He kicked THIS bucket (and not the other one).

There are, however, other types of idioms, whose modifiers can receive a focus interpretation, even though they do not allow their parts to be focused, cf. (39a–c), where (39c) is an informal illustration of the focus structure of (39a) in LF.

- (39) (a) He didn't keep CLOSE tabs on Jack.
 (b) *He didn't keep TABS on Jack (... he kept something else)
 (c) NOT [FOC [close x] [he kept x tabs on Jack]]

Similar observations hold for a focus-movement language like Hungarian.¹⁹ Parts of the idiom cannot be contrasted, cf. (40b), but a modifier can, as in (40c).

- (40) (a) Mari be húzták a csöbe.
 Mari-acc in pulled-they the tube-ill
 'They pulled Mary in the tube. (= They tricked Mary.)'

¹⁹ We cannot go into a survey of idiom types in Hungarian. Let it suffice here that there are two general syntactic classes: (i) one with a preverbal modifier (an articleless but casemarked noun or pronoun, generally thought to be incorporated in the verb) + a prefixless verb, and (ii) another with a verb (with or without a prefix) + a definite DP following it.

- (i) *rész-t vesz* 'part-acc take'; *tönk-re megy* 'trunk-sub go: go bankrupt'
 (ii) *le-teszi a lant-ot* 'down-puts the lute-acc: ends work or life';
fel-veszi a kesztyű-t 'up-takes the glove-acc: faces the challenge'

Since it is only in case of definite DPs that focusing can be illustrated, only idioms from the second class will figure in the discussion below.

(b) *Marit [A CSŐBE]_F húzták be.

(c) Marit [EBBE a csőbe]_F húzták be.

 : this-ill

 ‘They tricked Mary in THIS particular way’

Since parts of idioms cannot be focused, the movement of the case-marked DP in (40c) has the effect of focusing only the capitalized demonstrative, rather than the entire DP, in a semantic sense. In order to account for this, it is necessary to make use of some version of reconstruction, such as the one suggested by Chomsky (1993, 41), which is based on a copy-and-deletion resolution of problems raised by movement rules and on a ‘preference principle’ of reconstruction: “Do it when you can, (i.e., try to minimize the restriction in the operator position).” In the context of the interaction of Binding Principle and reconstruction, for example, the ambiguous sentence in (40a) and also the loss of the idiomatic sense on one reading can be easily accounted for by the two LF structures resulting from different options of deletion, and ultimately corresponding to *himself* bound by *John*, as in (41b), or by *Bill*, as in (41c),

(41) (a) John_i wondered which picture of himself_{i/j} Bill_j took.

 (b) John wondered [which *x*, *x* a picture of himself] [Bill took *x*]

 (c) John wondered [which *x*] [Bill took [*x* picture of himself]]

The analysis carries over to other *wh*-phrases in English, as Chomsky (1993) points out, cf. (42), and to a focus-movement language, such as Hungarian, as seen in (42)–(44).

(42) (a) [which *x*, *x* a book] [John read *x*] (“*War and Peace*”)

 (b) [which *x*] [John read [*x* book]] (“*that (book)*”)

(43) (a) Anna [a [KÖNYVTÁRBAN olvasó] fiút]_i látta *e*_i

 Anna the library-ine reading boy-acc saw

 ‘It’s the boy reading IN THE LIBRARY that Ann saw’

(b) FOC[the library *x*] [Anna saw [the boy [reading in *x*]]]

(44) (a) Anna [az [**EBBEN** a könyvtárban olvasó] fiút]_i látta e_i
 this-ine

'It's the boy reading in THIS library that Anna saw'

(b) FOC[this x] [Anna saw [the boy [reading in [x library]]]]

In other words, as was seen above, focus-movement languages do not make use of their designated focus positions to focus all and only the constituents moved there in either a phonological or a semantic sense. It is a syntactic slot into which constituents (containing items) marked for [+focus] move to have their focus features licensed or checked, just as *wh*-phrases have their *wh*-features licensed/checked in languages that have overt *wh*-movement.

One version of (39b) is, however, grammatical.²⁰

(45) (a) He didn't **KEEP TABS** on Jack, he **KEPT AN EYE** on him.

(b) He didn't **KEEP TABS** on Jack, he **PAYED HEED** to him.

Since in (45) the head of an argument (of an argument) is in focus, the whole VP can be contrastively focused, i.e., the whole idiom *keep an eye (on x)* is in contrast. But note that the corresponding structure in Hungarian, i.e., a focused idiom chunk as contrasted with another one, loses its idiomatic sense and results in veritable garbage.

(46) (a) Anna ki-vágta a rez-et.

Anna out-cut the copper-acc

'Anna cut the copper out (= showed her best).'

(b) *Anna [A REZET]_F vágta ki (nem a magas C-t).

'Anna cut the copper out (rather than cut out [= sing] the high C note = excelled).'

But to conclude that it is impossible to focus arguments in idioms in a focus-movement language would be premature. Recall that one of the differences between VPs that allow their arguments to be focused and those that do not is related to whether or not they make an activity/progressive reading possible, cf. (13), (14) and their discussion.

²⁰ I owe the regularity behind (45a) to Richard Kayne and that captured in (45b) to one anonymous reviewer.

If we can show that idioms with a progressive aspect allow their arguments to move into the focus position, the analogy between in-situ and ex-situ languages will be complete. Consider now the following idioms.

(47) (a) ?*Nem [A VIZES LEPEDŐT]_F HÚZTÁK RÁ, hanem csak egyszerűen cserben hagyták.
 not the wet sheet-acc pulled-3pl on-him but only simply in-lurch left-3pl
 'They didn't pull the wet sheet on him (= blame him for all), but simply left him in the lurch'

(b) *Nem [A FOGÁT]_F HAGYTA OTT, csak megsebesült.
 not the his-tooth-acc left-3sg there, but got-wounded-3sg
 'He didn't leave his teeth there, (= kick the bucket, get killed) he simply got wounded'

(48) (a) Nem [A ZAVAROSBAN]_F HALÁSZOTT, hanem csak összekeverte a dolgokat.
 not the muddy-water-ine was-fishing-3sg but simply bungled-up the things
 'He wasn't fishing in troubled waters, he simply bungled up everything'

(b) Nem [A LÓBŐRT]_F HÚZZA, hanem keményen dolgozik.
 not the horse-skin-acc scrape-3sg but hard works
 'He is not scraping horse-skin (= sawing logs, snoring), but is working hard'

The idioms in (47), together with the one in (46), are achievement or accomplishment verbs, without a progressive reading, and (47a) is possible only insofar as it allows such an option. The idioms in (48) in turn denote activities, rather than accomplishments or achievements, and consequently their arguments can be focused with the entire idiom understood as focused, just like their English counterparts in (45).

In short, arguments in verbal idioms expressing activity behave in the same way as the arguments of activity verbs: they can move into the focus position and have the full idiom understood as being focused.

8. Conclusion

The data surveyed in this paper have served to show that the VP is a true constituent of the Hungarian sentence and that it, too, can be focused. But the VP cannot be focused in the same way as other constituents. Firstly, VP-foci can, but do not have to be understood as contrastive; they can have nonexclusive readings, since actions are in general not incompatible. Secondly, VP-focus is expressed by placing the verb, one of its arguments, or one of the referential adjuncts of the VP into the designated focus position. Thirdly, focusing the VP by moving the argument or the referential adjunct into the focus position is possible only in case of activity verbs; VPs of verbs of achievement or accomplishment can be focused only by placing the verb in the focus slot.

The fact that arguments can be used to focus the VP is consonant with the general properties of focusing as was seen in constituents other than the VP and in a language-type other than an *ex-situ* language like Hungarian. Since arguments are ultimately projected by the head, they are in a grammatical sense representative of it: an argument can invoke the category it is an argument of just as a head can. This was shown to be the case even in case of idioms, which can be focused much like other predicates, although idiom chunks are not focusable as such. Adjuncts, and in particular nonreferential adjuncts, have no role in the projection of categories and are therefore incapable of 'transferring' their focus properties onto the category they are adjoined to whenever they are focused. Nonreferential adjuncts, e.g. manner adverbials, have limited contrastability, though exclusive focus in such adjuncts is not impossible in the semantic domains they determine.

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Address of the author: István Kenesei
Institute of English and American Studies
and PhD Program in Theoretical Linguistics
József Attila University
Egyetem u. 2.
H–6722 Szeged, Hungary
e-mail: kencsci@lit.u-szeged.hu