On the prosody of different scopes of the Hungarian additive particle *is* 'also'

Corinna Langer

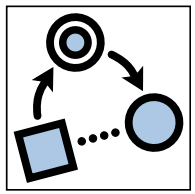
20.01.2021

Contents

- Introduction
- Theoretical Background
  - Lambrecht's (1994) focus definition
  - Focus sensitivity
  - The Hungarian additive particle *is*
  - A context-based focus account
- Case study - my Master's thesis
  - Data
  - Usages of the additive particle
  - Prosody of the additive particle
- Planned controlled experiment
- Discussion

What am I presenting today?

- my Master's thesis* (supervisor: Dr. Kata Balogh)
  → part of the project *D04: The role of information structure in sentence formation and construal: a frame-based approach* of the CRC 991 at the Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf
  *parts forthcoming in Balogh & Langer (to appear)



- part of my PhD thesis (supervisor: Prof. Frank Kügler)
  → controlled experiment on the prosody of *is* in different focus domains based on the findings of my Master's thesis

Information structure

- structuring of information within a sentence or utterance

Topic	vs.	Comment
Focus	vs.	Background
Given	vs.	New

Focus

Lambrecht (1994)

- pragmatic presupposition → The set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered.
- pragmatic assertion → The proposition expressed by a sentence which the hearer is expected to know or take for granted as a result of hearing the sentence uttered.
- focus → The semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition.

Focus Domains

1. What did your brother eat?
   → My brother ate [the CAKE]^F. narrow focus (object)
2. Who ate the cake?
   → [My BROther]^F ate the cake. narrow focus (subject)
3. What did your brother do?
   → My brother [ate the CAKE]^F. predicate focus
4. What happened?
   → [My brother ate the CAKE.]^F sentence focus
5. Did your brother eat the cookies?
   → No, my brother ate [the CAKE]^F.
   narrow, contrastive focus

Topic and focus in Hungarian

- Hungarian is a "discourse configurational language"
  $\rightarrow$ fixed positions for focus and topic [É. Kiss 1995]
  - post-verbal: free word order
  - pre-verbal: "fixed" word order – depends on the information structure of the sentence
    - topic position: sentence initial
    - focus position: immediate pre-verbal position (with an exhaustive interpretation) [see, e.g., É. Kiss 2002]
    - identificational focus vs. informational focus [É. Kiss 1998]

(1) János Vili-t mutatta be Zsuzsi-nak.
John Bill-ACC introduced PRT Sue-DAT

'John introduced [BILL]^F to Sue (and no one else).'

Focus sensitivity

- differences in the focus marking lead to different interpretations of some particles (also, even, only, etc.)

  [Beaver & Clark 2008, Krifka 2006]

- for example: the English particle *only* → differences in the truth conditions of the two sentences

  (2) John **only** introduced BILL to Sue.

  (3) John **only** introduced Bill to SUE.

  context: John also introduced Bill to Mary.
  → (4) is true, (5) is false

Focus sensitivity

- the English particle *also* $\rightarrow$ differences in the presuppositions

  (4) Peter **also** introduced BILL to Mary.

  (5) Peter **also** introduced Bill to MARY.

assertion (both): $introduce'(p, b, m)$
presupposition (6): $\exists x.x \neq b \wedge introduce'(p, x, m)$
presupposition (7): $\exists y.y \neq m \wedge introduce'(p, b, y)$

[Krifka 2006]

The Hungarian additive particle *is*

- *is* ("also") is an enclitic → cliticizes to the preceding word (the *syntactic host*)
- *is*-phrases cannot be in the focus position, because they are not compatible with the exhaustive interpretation → does not associate with the overtly marked focus

(6) János Vili-t is be-mutatta Zsuzsi-nak .
John Bill-ACC also PRT-introduced Sue-DAT
'John also introduced [BILL]^F to Sue.'

(7) *János Vili-t is mutatta be Zsuzsi-nak.
John Bill-ACC also introduced PRT Sue-DAT

The Hungarian additive particle *is*

- the *semantic associate*, i.e. the scope of the additive particle, can go beyond its host

(8) És [a húg-om]^{host} **is** meg-üti a kutyá-t, ...
and the sister-POSS **also** PRT-hit the dog-ACC, ...
'And my little sister also hits the dog.'

a. És [a húg-om]^{F} **is** meg-üti a kutyá-t, ... narrow focus
b. És [a húg-om **is** meg-üti]^{F} a kutyá-t, ... predicate focus
c. És [a húg-om **is** meg-üti a kutyá-t]^{F}, ... sentence focus

- disambiguate the scope through the context (QUD and coherence relations) $\rightarrow$ semantic associate = pragmatic focus

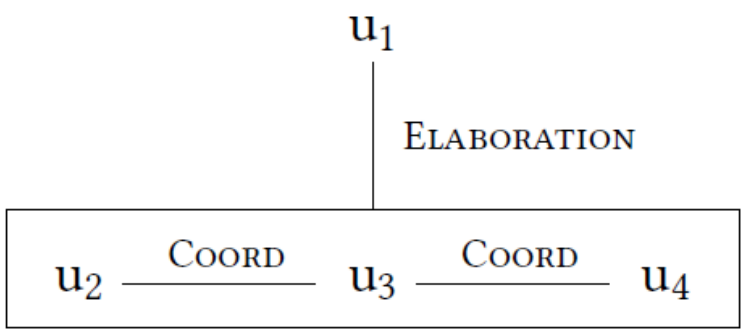
[Balogh (2020)), Lambrecht(1994)]

A context-based focus account

Balogh (2020)

Context: My dog has a hard life. On the fourth of July, the fireworks terrify him and he hides under the bed. Since he is so small, even the cat chases him around the house all the time. And my little sister hits the dog, whenever she has the chance.

(9) És [a kishúg-om **is** meg-üti]^F a kutyá-t, ...
and the little.sister-POSS **also** PRT-hit the dog-ACC, ...
'And my little sister hits the dog, too, ... '



u_1: dog has a hard life
(q_1: *What about the dog?*)
u_2: fireworks terrify dog
u_3: cat chases dog
u_4: sister hits dog

Data

Balogh & Langer (to appear)

- spoken narratives
- 18 short stories based on 6 picture books (Frog Stories)
- narrated by 8 Hungarian native speakers
- 162 occurrences of the additive particle *is*

Two (main) aims:

1. describe the different usages of the additive particle found in the data
2. find prosodic patterns for the different (pragmatic) focus domains

Usages of the additive particle

- five usages in the data: (not all of them are focus sensitive)
  - plain additiv reading
    → focus-sensitive
  - scalar additiv reading [Balogh (2020)]
    → focus-sensitive
  - „indeed"-reading
    → not focus-sensitive (special case, always broad focus)
  - constituent coordination [Szabolcsi 2013]
    → not focus-sensitive (purely constructional)
  - listing
    → not focus-sensitive (purely constructional)

Usages of the additive particle

Examples

(10) A kisfiú **is** elég dühös volt már eddigre,
the boy **also** rather angry was already by.then
'Also the boy was pretty angry by then,' (plain additive)

(11) és **még** a teknősbéka **is** el-bújt teknőc-é-be.
and **yet** the turtle **also** PRT-hid shell-POSS-ILL
'Even the turtle hid in his shell.' (scalar additive)

(12) He was thinking to go to their place, following the footsteps of the boy and the dog.

Meg **is** érkezett a lakás-uk-ba.
PRT **also** arrived the flat-POSS3PL-ILL
'And (indeed) he arrived in their place.' ('indeed'-reading)

Usages of the additive particle

Examples

(13) A kisfiú **is**, a kutya **is** kihajolt az ablak-on.
the boy **also**, the dog **also** PRT-leaned the window-SUP
'The boy and the dog (both) leaned out of the window.'
(coordination)

(14) Összes állat-a, egy kutya, egy béka és egy
all animal.POSS3SG a dog a frog and a
teknősbéka **is** kíváncsian várja,
turtle **also** curiously wait
'All his animals, a dog, a frog and a turtle, are waiting curiously'
(listing)

Usages of the additive particle

number of occurrences

- 26 sentences had to be excluded during the analysis → 136 remaining sentences
- 4 different possible positions in the sentence: *is*-phrase pre-verbal, *is*-phrase post-verbal, *is* cliticized to the verb (or verbal material), no verb in the clause

	total	preV	postV	onV	noV
plain additive reading	93	63	17	11	2
scalar additive reading	12	7	–	3	2
"indeed" reading	12	–	–	12	–
constituent coordination	10	5	3	1	1
listing	9	5	4	–	–
	136	80	24	27	5

Prosody in pre-verbal cases

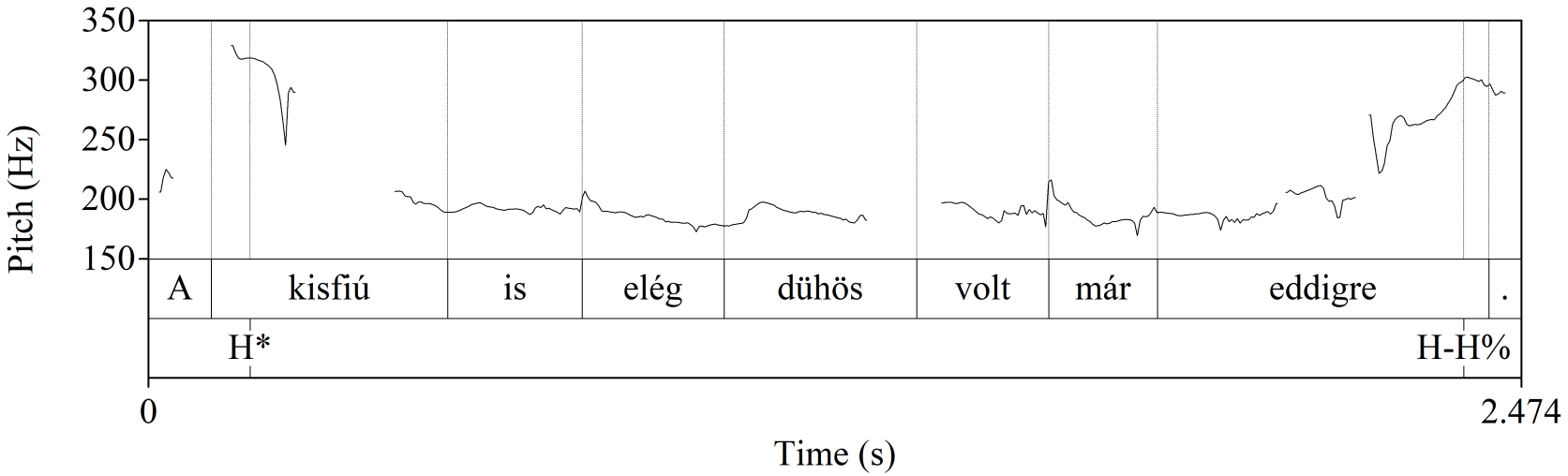
- largest group of the data
- four of the five usages can occur here (except "indeed" reading)
- the syntactic host(s) of the additive particle(s) are always accented
- focus sensitive readings (plain & scalar additive)
  $\rightarrow$ different prosodic patterns for narrow and broad focus
- not focus sensitive readings (constituent coordination & listing)
  $\rightarrow$ list intonation pattern

Prosody in pre-verbal cases

plain additive reading - narrow

(15) A kisfiú is elég dühös volt már eddigre, (...)
the boy also rather angry was already by.then (...)

'Also the boy was pretty angry by then, (...)'

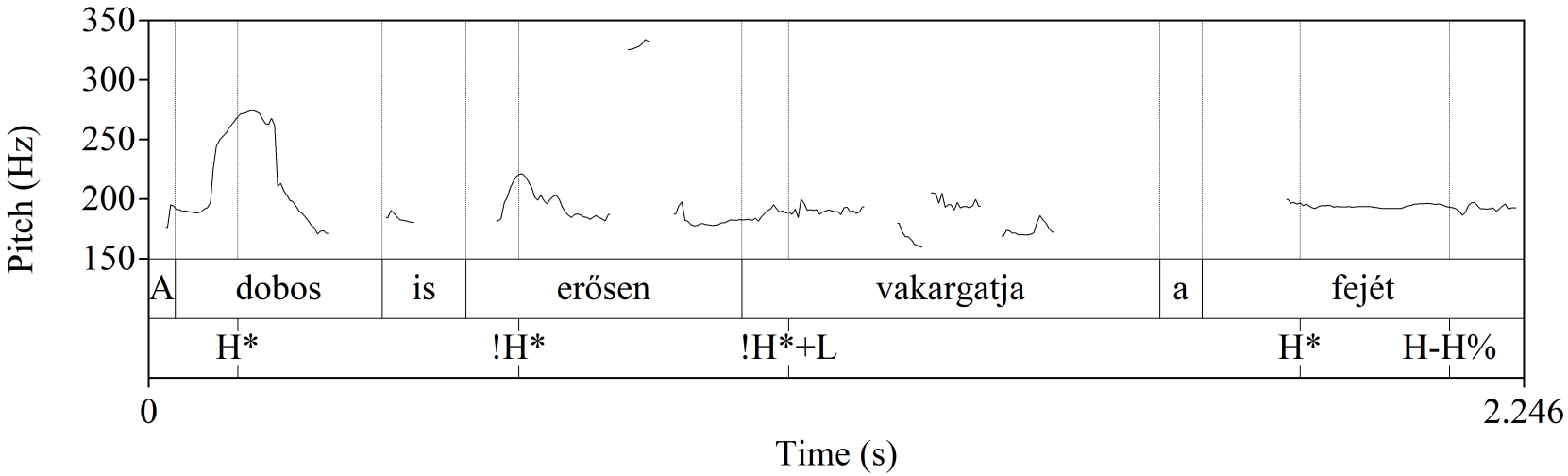


- main accent on the host & deaccenting after the *is*-phrase
- context → the dog got angry
- narrow semantic associate / narrow focus

Prosody in pre-verbal cases

plain additive reading - broad

(16) A dobos is erősen vakargat-ja a fej-é-t.
the drummer also heavily scratch-DEF the head-POSS-ACC
'Also the drummer is scratching his head heavily.'

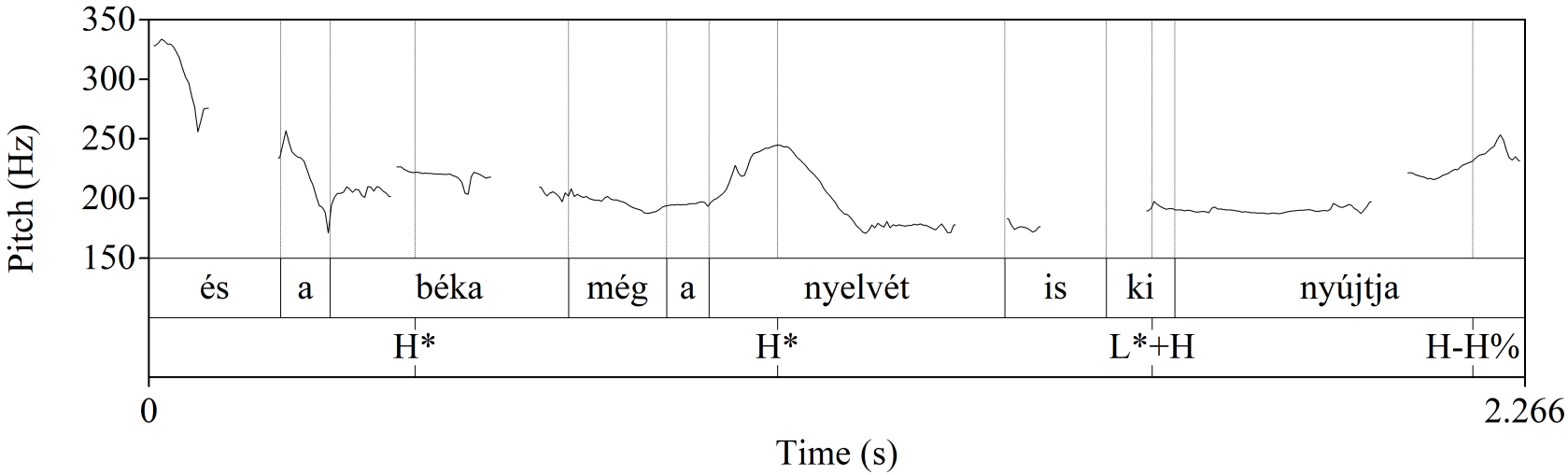


- main accent on the host & no deaccenting
- context → no one else scratched his head
- broad (sentence) semantic associate / broad (sentence) focus

Prosody in pre-verbal cases

scalar additive reading - broad

(17) és a béka még a nyelv-é-t is ki-nyújtja,
and the frog yet the tongue-POSS3SG-ACC also PRT-streches
'and the frog even stretches out his tongue,'



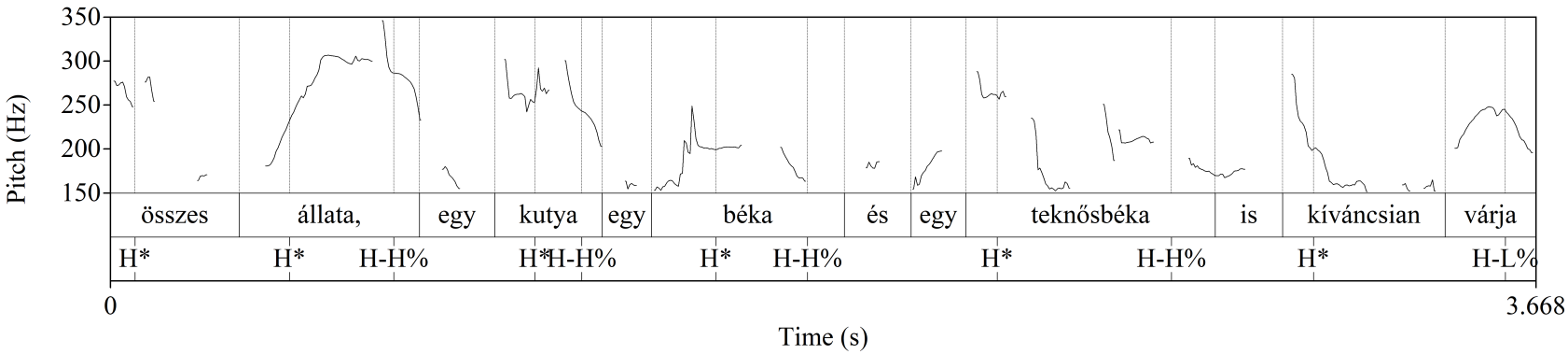
- main accent on the verb & no deaccenting
- context → the big frog kicks the small frog
- broad semantic associate / broad focus

Prosody in pre-verbal cases

listing

(18) Összes állat-a, egy kutya, egy béka és egy
all animal.POSS3SG a dog a frog and a
teknősbéka is kíváncsian várja,
turtle also curiously wait

'All his animals, a dog, a frog and a turtle, are waiting curiously'



- list intonation
- not focus-sensitive → (de)accenting not relevant

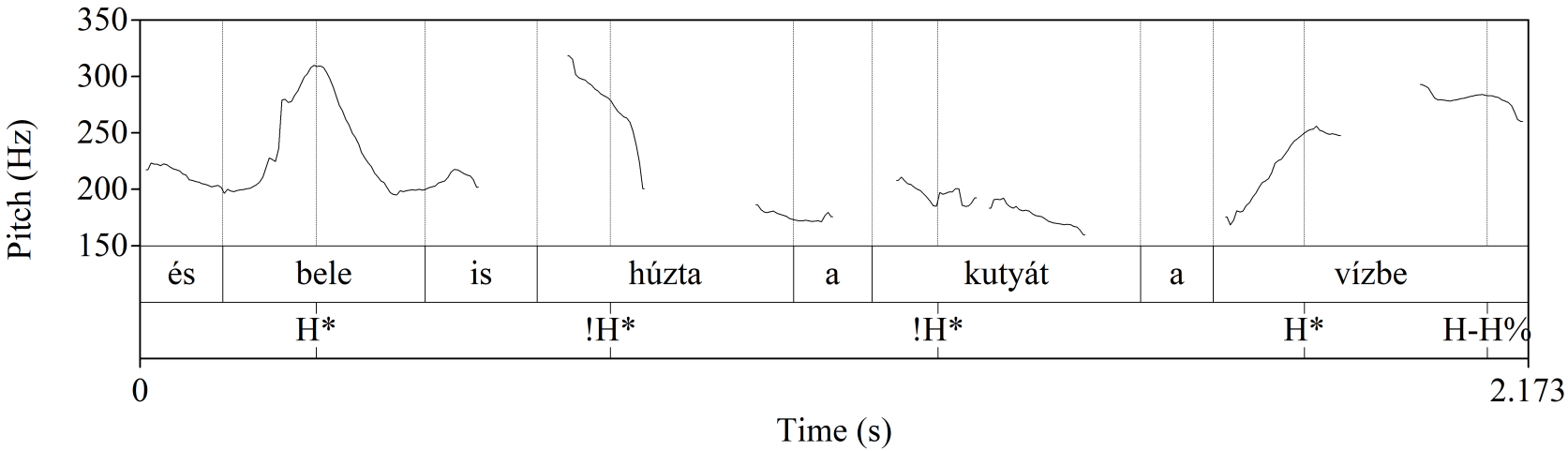
Prosody in "on the verb" cases

- all usages can occur with the *is* cliticized to the verb (or verbal material) → but: no cases with listing in the data and no cases with narrow focus
- the syntactic host(s) of the additive particle(s) are always accented
- focus sensitive readings (plain & scalar additive) & "indeed" → same pattern as in the pre-verbal broad cases
- not focus sensitive reading (constituent coordination) → list intonation pattern

Prosody in "on the verb" cases

plain and scalar additive reading (plain additive example)

(19) és bele is húzta a kutyá-t a víz-be,
and VPRT also pulled the dog-ACC the water-ILL
'and he(= the turtle) also pulled the dog into the water

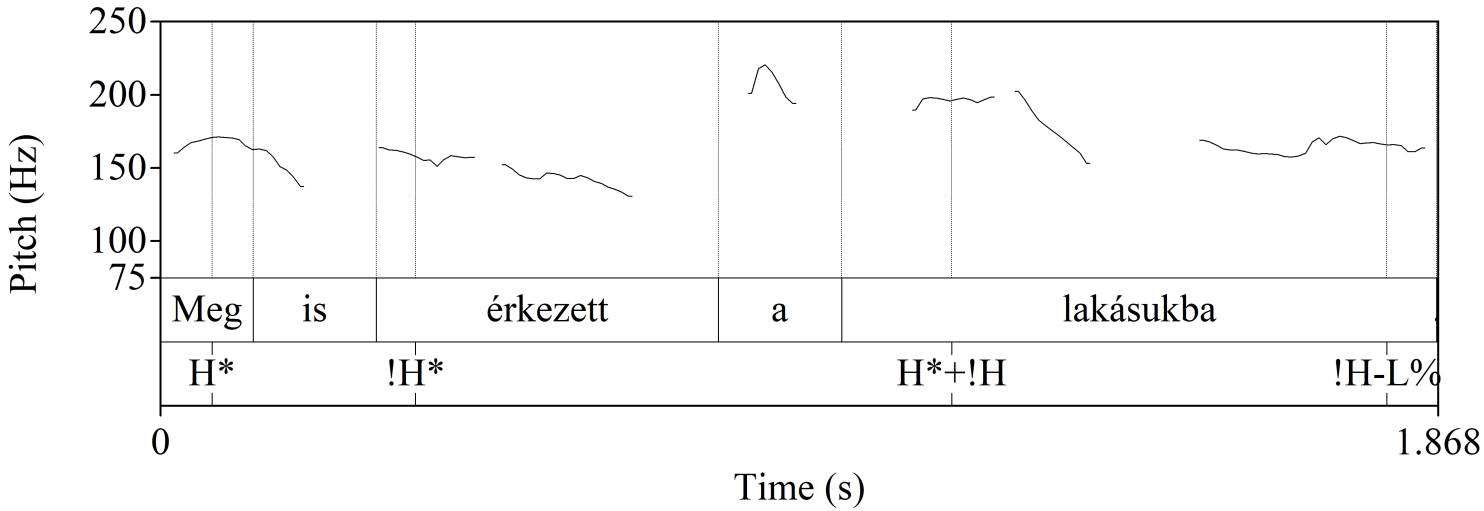


- accent on the host & no deaccenting
- context → the boy saw that the turtle was doing something
- broad semantic associate & broad focus

Prosody in "on the verb" cases

the "indeed" reading

(20) Meg is érkezett a lakás-uk-ba.
PRT also arrived the flat-POSS3PL-ILL
'And indeed, he did arrive in their place.'



- main accent on the host & no deaccenting
- context → the frog was thinking about going to their place
- special semantics → *is* takes the whole proposition as its scope & the additivity targets the goal, wish or intention

Conclusion

Usages of the additive particle

- focus sensitive under certain readings → plain & scalar additive
- special case "indeed" reading → behaves like broad focus: always takes the whole proposition as its scope
- not focus sensitive in constructional cases → listing & constituent coordination

Conclusion

Prosody of the additive particle

- focus sensitive readings:
  - pre-verbal & on the verb:
    - main accent on the syntactic host of the additive particle → marks the left edge of the focus domain of the utterance
    - prosodic pattern after the is-phrase marks the focus domain/the range of focus
      → deaccenting = presupposed = narrow focus
      → no deaccenting = not presupposed = broad focus
- "indeed" reading: behaves like broad focus
- not focus sensitive readings: list intonation no matter where it appears in the sentence

Discussion

Problems

- data not collected for a prosodic analysis → not recorded in a laboratory
  - a lot of background noise
  - one speaker too quiet for analysis
- data not collected for research on additivity
  - not controlled for the contexts in which the additive particle occurs
  - different usages and focus domains not evenly distributed among the occurrences

→ results should be further investigated with controlled experiments

Planned Experiment

- Task: participants read short Hungarian texts that elicit one of two different focus domains in the target sentence
  - narrow focus on the object
  - broad focus on the VP
- two versions of each text → only differ in the position of the is-phrase in the target sentence (pre- or post-verbal):
  1. $\text{topic}_{(\text{Subject})}$ **object=is** partikel+verb adjunct
  2. $\text{topic}_{(\text{Subject})}$ particle+verb **object=is** adjunct

Narrow focus (on the object) & *is*-phrase pre-verbal	Narrow focus (on the object) & *is*-phrase post-verbal
Broad focus (on the VP) & *is*-phrase pre-veral	Broad focus (on the VP) & *is*-phrase post-verbal

Planned Experiment

- Narrow focus (on the object):
  Péter munka után szívesen kertészkedik. Ma délután leszedi mézédes szilvát és a szilvafa melletti fáról a piros almákat. **Péter a körtét is leszedi a fáról. / Péter leszedi a körtét is a fáról.**
  Peter likes to garden after work. This afternoon, he is picking the sweet plums and the red apples from the tree next to the plum tree. Péter also picks the pear from the tree.
- Broad focus (on the VP):
  Péter munka után szívesen kertészkedik. Ma délután meglocsolja a zöldségeket, megmetszi a kiálló faágakat és felássa a hagymát.**Péter a körtét is leszedi a fáról. / Péter leszedi a körtét is a fáról.**
  Peter likes to garden after work. This afternoon, he waters the vegetables, he cuts the branches that are sticking out and he digs up the onions. Péter also picks the pear from the tree.

Thank you for your attention!

Are there any questions or suggestions for my experiment?

Special thanks to Kata Balogh and Noémi Ecsedi

References

- Balogh, K. (2020). *Additive particle uses in Hungarian: A Role and Reference Grammar account*. Studies in Language.
- Balogh, K. & C. Langer (to appear) *Additive particles, prosodic structure and focus sensitivity in Hungarian*
- Beaver, D. & B. Clark. (2008). *Sense and sensitivity: how focus determines meaning*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- É. Kiss, K. (ed). (1995). *Discourse configurational languages.* Oxford University Press.
- É. Kiss, K. (1998). „Identificational focus versus information focus". *Language 74*.
- É. Kiss, K. (2002). *The syntax of Hungarian*. Cambridge University Press.
- Krifka, Manfred. (2006). „Association with focus phrases". In: Molnár, Valéria and Susanne Winkler (eds). *The architecture of focus*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton. 105-136.
- Lambrecht, K. (1994). *Information structure and sentence form*. Cambridge University Press.
- Szabolcsi, A. (2013). „Quantifier particles and compositionality". In: Aloni, Franke & Roelofsen (eds). *Proceedings of the 19th amsterdam colloquium*. ILLC, University of Amsterdam.