Summary by the author

Hungarian is frequently referred to in generative studies in connection to language-specific phenomena like contrastive focus. While focusing is relatively well-studied due to its typologically rarer nature, Hungarian wh-movement, which partly overlaps with focus, has not been fully studied for its own sake. My dissertation aims at filling this gap, but embeds the research on wh-movement in a larger project: the syntactic study of Hungarian wh-items in general.

After identifying environments where wh-items productively occur in present day and older Hungarian, the dissertation draws the conclusion that Hungarian wh-items are variables. They do not possess an inherent quantificational meaning, rather they obtain their interpretation syntactically from various quantificational elements. Consequently, the configuration they occur in determines what meaning they are construed with, and what properties they have. My dissertation takes the distribution and behaviour of wh-items under scrutiny in three specific areas: in single constituent questions, in multiple constituent questions and in the so-called multiple partitive construction. The latter is a curious construction that contains wh-items in parallel positions of juxtaposed non-interrogative clauses. Multiple partitives exist in many languages but have not yet been dealt with in the generative framework to my knowledge. Applying the framework of the minimalist program to Hungarian, it is shown that in all three domains wh-items show properties that are expected if they are variables bound in the syntax. Analyzing them as variables can explain long standing problems that previous analyses had left unexplained.

1. The preliminaries

For the discussion in this review, the following preliminaries have to be covered.

The phrase structure of the Hungarian preverbal field in non-neutral clauses contains the following most important functional categories (É. Kiss 1987, Szabolcsi 1997):

(1) [CP [TopP [DistP [FocP [...]]]]]

Thus right below CP we can find topic phrases (in SpecTopP), universal quantifiers (in SpecDistP) and (contrastive) focus (in SpecFocP). In sentences with contrastive focus, the verb obligatorily raises to the Foc0 head, stranding the preverb (marked \( \text{pv} \)) behind. Preverb stranding is characteristic of focusing:

(2) JÁNOS ment el a moziba.

János-NOMNOM went-3SG PVSG PV the cinema-ILLILL

‘It was John who went to the cinema.’

It is well known since Huang (1982), Cheng (1991) and Tsai (1994) on Chinese and Postma (1994) on other languages that bare wh-items themselves can be used as indefinite pronouns, i.e. they take part in an interrogative/existential alternation, which is conditioned by the context. In another set of languages, where Hungarian also belongs, the interrogative/existential alternation can be morphologically marked on the wh-item itself: we get an existential reading when the wh-item occurs with a particular suffix. Hungarian wh-items form the base of quantificational paradigms as shown in (3):

(3) ki ‘who’ mindenki ‘everyone’
mi ‘what’ minden ‘everything’
hol ‘where’ mindenhol ‘everywhere’
hogyan ‘how’ mindenhogyan ‘every way’
valaki ‘someone’
valami ‘something’
valahol ‘somewhere’
valahogyan ‘somehow’

In these words minden- and vala- arguably serve as binders of the wh-items, which lack quantificational force:

Title of the dissertation: On the syntax of wh-items in Hungarian.

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(4) \[ \text{Op}_{</>} [\text{wh}] \]
Beside suffixed \( \text{wh} \)-items we also find bare \( \text{wh} \)-items with an indefinite reading in other configurations. One is the infinitival clause, which can host bare \( \text{wh} \)-items if it is embedded under the existential verb \textit{van} ‘be’. In this case it is the matrix existential predicate that serves as a (non-local) binder of the \( \text{wh} \)-phrase.

(5) Van kivél beszélni.
be-3SG who-INS talk-INF
‘There is someone/there are people to talk to.’

On the basis of the above examples it is concluded that it is advantageous to generalize over the nature of \( \text{wh} \)-items and treat them as variables in all their occurrences. This applies to \( \text{wh} \)-items when they occur in interrogative or exclamative clauses as well. In the latter cases, we hypothesize a word-level question/exclamative operator (marked here as \( \text{Q}_{\text{wh/ex}} \)) that does the binding, thereby providing the \( \text{wh} \)-item with the appropriate semantics:

(6) \[ \text{Q}_{\text{wh/ex}} [\text{wh}] \]
As far as the syntactic licensing of \( \text{wh} \)-items is concerned, the following sections spell it out in detail.

2. The analysis of single constituent questions

Research on Hungarian in the last 20 years has shown beyond doubt that \( \text{wh} \)-movement appears exactly parallel to focus movement in overt syntax (Horvath 1986, E. Kiss 1987). However, it has not yet been spelled out systematically how the two differ from each other. I argue that the two differ a great deal in the covert component, and that this difference has overt reflections as well.

In constituent questions \( \text{wh} \)-items overtly front, but not all the way to SpecCP, rather to the canonical position for focus (FocP, Brody 1995a), which explains why \( \text{wh} \)-items and focus are in complementary distribution. I show that this movement step is \( <+f \) \)-feature-driven. On the basis of cross-linguistic evidence, it is shown that apart from the \( <+f \) \)-feature \( \text{wh} \)-items possess yet another feature, \( <+\text{wh} \) \>, which is also syntactically active. This \( <+\text{wh} \) \>-feature on \( \text{wh} \)-items belongs to the operator that functions as a word-level binder of these in questions (recall (6) from above), since \( \text{wh} \)-items are only interpreted with an interrogative meaning if this \( \text{Q}_{\text{wh}} \)-binder is present. It is argued that the \( <+f \) \)-feature is also a property of this \( \text{Q}_{\text{wh}} \)-binder.

Recall from (1) above that in between FocP and CP in Hungarian we find a number of other functional projections including DistP and TopP. This predicts that elements in SpecFocP can be preceded by universal quantifiers or topics. Regardless of what fills SpecFocP (focus or a \( \text{wh} \)-item), topics can freely precede it. When it comes to quantifiers, however, the situation is not the same for lexical focus items and \( \text{wh} \)-items: only the former conform to the prediction. Focus can, \( \text{wh} \)-items cannot be preceded by universal quantifiers:

(7) a. Mindig PÉTER hívtam meg.
always Péter-ACC invited-1SG PV
‘At all times, I invited PÉTER.’
b. (*Mindig) kit hívtál meg?
always who-ACC invited-2SG PV
‘Who did you always invite?’

To explain (7) and other distributional differences between \( \text{wh} \)-items and focus, it is put forward that just as in other languages \( \text{wh} \)-items are only licensed in interrogative clauses. The syntactic expression of this is that of feature-checking: there is a feature-checking relation between an interrogative \( <+\text{wh} \) \> \( \text{C}^0 \) and the \( \text{wh} \)-items in Hungarian. In (7b), ungrammaticality ensues because there is a quantifier intervening between the \( \text{wh} \)-item in FocP and the interrogative \( \text{C}^0 \). A quantificational item in this position counts as a \textit{harmful} intervener, as we know from other languages as well. Exactly the same \textit{intervention effect} explains the ungrammaticality of the following French sentence:

(8) Il admire (‘toujours) qui?
he-NOM admire-3SG always who-ACC
‘Who does he always admire?’

The in-situ \( \text{wh} \)-item in French undergoes \( <+\text{wh} \)-feature movement at LF as argued in Cheng and Rooryck (2000), and quantifiers block this kind of movement (see a.o. Beck 1996). I claim that exactly the same happens in the Hungarian (7b): the quantifier harmfully intervenes between the overt \( \text{wh} \)-item and \( \text{C}^0 \) because it blocks feature movement along this path.

Hungarian \( \text{wh} \)-items therefore can be said to only partially move in overt syntax. They front to FocP as focus constituents and they undergo \( <+\text{wh} \)-checking at LF against an interrogative \( \text{C}^0 \). Thus the mechanism of \( \text{wh} \)-movement in Hungarian can be represented the following way:

(9) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{CP} \\
\text{LC} \text{C}^0 \\
\text{[FocP [Q}_{\text{wh}}[\text{wh}]]} \\
\text{[<+wh>]......at LF......} \\
\text{[<+f>]......overtly...} \\
\text{[<f>]...[... t_i ...]]} \\
\text{......<f>}
\end{array}
\]

3. The analysis of multiple constituent questions

Hungarian allows us to distinguish four multiple question types on syntactic and semantic grounds. I argue that questions never contain two \( \text{wh} \)-items with the same syntax, due to the fact that at most one \( <+\text{wh} \)-constituent can enter into a checking relationship with \( \text{C}^0 \).

The most frequent type of multiple questions in Hungarian contains all \( \text{wh} \)-items fronted. These questions trigger pair-list answers, and can be paraphrased with the help of a universal quantifier:

(10) a. Ki mit vállalt?
who-NOM what-ACC undertook-3SG
‘Who undertook what?’
b. for every \( x \), \( x = \text{person} \), what did \( x \) undertake?
The analysis I provide for these multiple questions executing the ‘wh-as-variable’ approach follows the footsteps of É. Kiss (1993). É. Kiss’ analysis was built to account for the paraphrase in (10b), which shows that the higher wh-item functions as a kind of universal quantifier. Since Hungarian has a special position for universal quantifiers (DistP right above FocP, recall (1) above), the higher wh-item comfortably occupies this position. Here the bare wh-variable gains its universal quantificational interpretation from the silent universal quantifier in the Dist0 head:

\[ \text{(11) \ldots \text{DistP} \text{wh}_j \forall \text{FocP} \left[ Q_{\text{wh}} \left[ \text{wh}_i \right] \right] \text{Foc}^0 \left[ t_i, t_j \right] \text{]]} \]

In a less frequent type of multiple question we find wh-items on both sides of the VP. The wh-items in this question type have to be of the same form, and the postverbal wh-item is preferably placed at the very end of the clause:

\[ \text{(12) a. Ki hívott meg tegnap} \]
\[ \text{who-NOM invited-3SG PV yesterday} \]
\[ \text{a moziba kit?} \]
\[ \text{the cinema-ILL who-ACC} \]
\[ \text{b. (?)Ki hívott meg kit} \]
\[ \text{who-NOM invited-3SG PV who-ACC} \]
\[ \text{tegnap a moziba?} \]
\[ \text{yesterday the cinema-ILL} \]

Questions like these are single pair questions and they can be used in two contexts. In one the ordering in a pair (or, less frequently, in an n-tuple) is questioned, in the other the question asks for identification of a pair or n-tuple of individuals from a known set. It is put forward that the syntax of these questions is largely that of the syntax of multiple focus (so-called “mirror” focus), which also serve as answers to these questions:

\[ \text{(13) PÉTER hívta meg tegnap} \]
\[ \text{Péter-NOM invited-3SG PV yesterday} \]
\[ \text{a moziba MARIT.} \]
\[ \text{the cinema-ILL Mari-ACC} \]
\[ \text{’PÉTER invited MARI yesterday to the cinema} \]
\[ \text{\(, \) not the other way around/\(\)not JÁNOS invited BEA).’} \]

The preverbal wh-item in (13) occupies SpecFocP and has the same syntax as wh-items in single questions. The postverbal wh-item is arguably not in an A-bar position (contra Horvath 1998), but in an A-position which is found on the right periphery as a result of stylistic shift. The licensing of the <+t> and <+wh> features of this postverbal wh-item is not done by checking. Rather, the features of this wh-item are anaphorically related to/parasitic on the features of the preverbal wh-item, in a way yet to be discovered.

Conjoined questions constitute the third and fourth types of multiple questions, as the following shows:

\[ \text{(14) a. Ki és mikor látta Marit?} \]
\[ \text{who-NOM and when saw-3SG Mari-ACC} \]
\[ \text{b. Ki látta Marit és mikor?} \]
\[ \text{who-NOM saw-3SG Mari-ACC and when} \]
\[ \text{’Who saw Mari and when?’} \]

These questions are interpreted as conjoined single questions, and so they can be answered by a single pair. In their syntax, they have been argued to be the conjunction of two clauses, with VP deletion applying to either clause (Bálnéti 1992). Syntactic tests, however, reveal that the two constructions are not underlyingly similar. While in (14a) both wh-items belong to the overt verbal head, in (14b) the two wh-items are constituents of different clauses. That is, questions with preverbal conjunction (14a) contain clause internal coordination of wh-items, while those with postverbal conjunction contain the coordination of clauses.

4. Multiple partitive constructions

Multiple partitives (which are named such in the typological study of Haspelmath 1997) are constructions in which we find bare wh-phrases in parallel positions of two or more juxtaposed clauses. The clauses are indicative, they contrast in their predicates and the wh-items in them are interpreted as indefinites:

\[ \text{(15) Ki a boltba ment, ki} \]
\[ \text{who-NOM the shop-ILL went-3SG who-NOM} \]
\[ \text{a piacra (ment).} \]
\[ \text{the market-SUB (went-3SG)} \]
\[ \text{’Some (people) went to the shop, some (= the others) to the market.’} \]

(15) is “exhaustive” in characterizing the contextually given individuals: the people given in the context could not have gone anywhere else but to the shop or the market. Also, there could not have been people who went to both places.

According to the cross-linguistic survey that is reported on in the dissertation, multiple partitive constructions come in two varieties, differing in their interpretation and syntax. Hungarian (Finno-Ugric) and Russian multiple partitives are exhaustive (as shown above), cannot have an overt “and”-type coordinator element in between the clauses (while contrastive coordinators are possible), and can host a variety of wh-items (who, what, when, where). French, Italian, Hebrew and Georgian multiple partitives are not exhaustive, can have an overt “and” coordinator between the clauses, and can only host the wh-item who. The following Georgian example illustrates:

\[ \text{(16) Vin ma c’avida, (da)} \]
\[ \text{who-NOM shop-INE went-3SG (and)} \]
\[ \text{vin bazaar-i.} \]
\[ \text{who-NOM market-INE} \]
\[ \text{’Some people went to the shop, others to the market.’} \]

The analysis of the Hungarian construction makes use of my analysis of contrastive topicalization and
exhaustive disjunction. I briefly introduce these constructions below.

Beside ordinary topics and left-dislocates I claim that Hungarian possesses a distinct topic element, a contrastive topic as well. This element is similar to left dislocates but has different phonological and syntactic properties. I argue that contrastive topics are specifiers of a distinguished Contrastive Topic Phrase (CTopP), whose head can be spelled out with so-called contrastive coordinators like meg contrasting ‘and’ or pedig ‘though’, which appear inside the clause in non-initial position. CTopP always dominates an emphatic phrase like focus. The following illustrates:

(17) [CTopP Pali [FocP VIRÁGOT kapott [VP Maritól, Pali-NOM flower-ACC got-3SG Mari-ABL [CTopP Péter [CTop’ (pedig) [FocP AJÁNDÉKOT]]]]]. Péter-NOM (COORD) present-ACC ‘Pali, he got FLOWERS from Mari, whereas Péter, he got a PRESENT.

Exhaustive disjunction has the form of vagy... vagy... “either... or...” clauses in Hungarian. This kind of disjunction most likely involves the coordination of clauses. I believe that the coordinated clauses in this kind of disjunction are CTopP structures, that is they parallel the structure in (17). The disjunctor vagy elements (grammaticalized from the verb “be”) occupy the CTopP heads, and they can appear together with contrastive coordinators like pedig.

I believe that multiple partitives have the structure of contrastive topicalization with an underlying clausal disjunction structure. The latter is supported by the fact that multiple partitives have the following logical paraphrase (for (15) above):

(18) Everyone was such that either he went to the shop or he went to the market.

In (18) we find exclusive disjunction with a universal quantifier scoping over it. It is argued that multiple partitives are exactly like (18) with the difference that there is a covert universal every operator scoping over disjunction and we find wh-items instead of the bound pronominal he:

(19) ∀ [[[wh VP] or [wh VP]]

The universal quantifier acts as an unselective binder for the wh-items in each clause. This licenses the wh-items and provides them with an existential meaning. The latter is the result of the fact that the clauses are disjoined. Syntactically, the elements are found in the following configuration:

(20) [CTopP ∀ [CTopP ki, [CTop’ vagy [Dsub/FocP ... i ...]]],
[CTopP ki, [CTop’ vagy [Dsub/FocP ... i ...]]]]

The disjunctor vagy can never be overt, which is put down to a surface syntactic requirement.

The analysis accounts for the right interpretation of the bare wh-items and is faithful to the structural properties of these constructions. It provides further evidence for my general claim that wh-items are variables in Hungarian.

Appendix
The following abbreviations are used in this paper:

| ABL | ablative |
| ACC | accusative |
| COORD | coordinator |
| ILL | illative |
| INE | inessive |
| INF | infinitive |
| INS | instrumental |
| NOM | nominative |
| PV | preverb |
| SUB | sublative |

Glosses are intended to illustrate the point under discussion only; tense specification and definite/indefinite object agreement are unglossed throughout.

Review by Genoveva Puskaš

The proposal at the heart of Lipták’s dissertation is an authentically original one with respect to the analysis of wh-items in Hungarian. Although the literature has, here and there, noted the morphologically complex nature of wh-phrases (see e.g. Brody 1995b), the claim that wh-items do not have an inherently interrogative content has not been considered up to now as a possible option within generative grammar to account for the distribution of wh-phrases in various contexts.

The second main claim of the dissertation, namely that wh-items not only realize a set of features different from that of focused elements but that this induces a different syntactic behavior, is also a highly innovative proposal. Empirical evidence has led researchers to identify the two types of elements as necessarily competing for a unique structural position, namely the preverbal left-peripheral position identified as FocP:

(1) a. JANOS ment el a moziba
Janos-NOM went-3SG PART the cinema-ILL “JOHN went to the cinema” [Lipták’s summary (2)]

b. Hova ment el János?
where went-3SG PART Janos-NOM ‘Where did John go?’

c. *Hova JANOS ment el?
where Janos-NOM went-3SG PART

d. *JANOS hova ment el?
Janos-NOM where went-3SG PART

Lipták proposes that wh-items do check a <+focus> feature in SpecFocP, hence their presence in this position, in complementarity with focused constituents.
But in addition, *wh*-items need to check their *wh*-feature in SpecCP covertly. Lipták's simple and elegant proposal sheds light on the differences between *wh*-items and focused elements, despite the similarities that have been observed.

The consequences of these two proposals are relevant at various levels. First, they allow the author to account for a variety of phenomena related to *wh*-items in a uniform way. The interaction between focus and *wh*, in that they share properties but also exhibit striking differences is thus made compatible with the observation that not all clauses which contain a *wh*-phrase are interrogative. This solves some of the recurrent questions related to *wh*-phrases in Hungarian, since the analysis of embedded interrogatives. Embedded interrogative clauses are selected, as in other languages, by predicates such as kiváncsi (‘(be) curious, wonder’), kérdész (‘ask’), etc:

(2) Azt kérdzte János, hogy Péter meneteugnap hívtam meg
‘At all times, I invited PETER.’

As illustrated in (2), the *wh*-phrase kit (‘who’) appears lower than the complementizer hogy. It is even preceded by topicalized material, namely Peter and tegnap (‘yesterday’). If selection is local, as is standardly assumed, the question arises of how the feature <+wh> can appear on Foc. Lipták’s analysis provides a straightforward answer to this question, since the <+wh> can be locally selected by the matrix verb.

The discrimination between *wh* and focus also accounts for some of their asymmetrical behaviors (despite their alleged similarity) such as the possibility versus impossibility of occurring with a quantifier:

(3) a. Mindig PÉTER hívtam meg
always Peter-*ACC invited-3SG PART
’At all times, I invited PETER.’

b. *Mindig kit hívtál meg?
always who-*ACC invited-2SG PART

The approach presented here, which follows from the analysis proposed for *wh*-items, gives a new and interesting account for this well-known phenomenon: since *wh*-items move to Spec CP, whereas focused items do not, the asymmetry follows automatically. The author explains the ungrammaticality of examples such as (3b) above by an intervention effect: the presence of the quantificational element (mindig ‘always’ in our example) destroys the relation between the *wh* item and C: feature movement cannot take place. The author’s proposal finds a welcome parallel in the analysis of French intervention effects by Cheng and Rooryck (2000).

Second, the proposal is also relevant to the analysis of other Hungarian constructions, as for example sentences involving negation. As illustrated in (4), negative items always appear with the sentential negation marker nem:

(4) a. János *((nem) hívtott meg
John-NOM NEG invited-3SG PART
nem* invited John.

It has been proposed by various authors that negative items lack negative content (see e.g. Puskás 1999; Olsvay 2000; Surányi 2001). As *se*-words are not intrinsically negative, they need to be bound by a sentence-level negative operator, syntactically realized as the sentential negation marker nem. Semantically, they are either dependent on some negative operator or, as proposed by Surányi, can be licensed by various quantificational operators. The *se*-words illustrated above can alternate with morphologically more complex elements, which seem to exhibit slightly different properties:

(5) a. János nem hívtott meg
John-NOM NEG invited-3SG PART
nem* invited John.

b. Senki sem (*nem) hívtá meg
Nobody-*ACC NEG invited-3SG PART
nem* invited John.

This variant, which is formed of the *se*-words and a post phrasal sem can appear without the negative marker in some contexts, among others in preverbal position. Surányi proposes that this variant of the *se*-words is intrinsically negative. If Surányi is on the right track, the variability of *wh*-items as discussed in Lipták fits in nicely within the picture of variability for quantificational elements in general, in that their specific features <+wh, +neg> are licensed either at the sentence level or at the word level by the relevant quantificational operator.

Finally, the dissertation also opens perspectives onto the cross-linguistic study of *wh*-movement. The author mentions Rumanian, but one immediately thinks of other languages which exhibit a richly populated left-peripheral domain, with an overt Focus position and concomitant *wh*-movement, such as Slavic languages illustrated here with Bosnian (6).

(6) a. NOBELOVU NAGRADU kome dodjeljuju?
Nobel prize-*ACC who-DAT award-3PL PART
‘To whom are they giving the NOBEL PRIZE?’

b. Kome NOBELOVU NAGRADU
who-DAT nobel prize
dodeluju?
award-3PL PART
‘id.’

[Leko 1996]
(6) shows that in Bosnian, wphrases occupy a position different from the Focus position. Although these positions have been conflated in Hungarian (and in other languages, see e.g. Rizzi 1997 for Italian, Bosković 1998 for Bulgarian) not only on the surface but also covertly, Lipták’s proposal to distinguish them radically finds extra evidence in other languages. This might have interesting consequences for the analysis of wh-movement in these languages. In addition to obligatory focusing, wh-phrases may then have the choice of appearing either in the actual focused position, or in the <+wh> position, which, in Lipták’s analysis, is distinct from the Focus position. This also raises the question – which remains to be solved – of whether all wh-phrases are necessarily focused, especially in languages like Bosnian which seems to exhibit the two orders, i.e. wh-focus and focus-wh. The answer may be related to their interpretation, an issue which needs more cross-linguistic work.

Lipták’s main proposal hinges on the assumption that wphrases are not intrinsically interrogative. As an alternative, Lipták proposes that wh elements are bound by various word-level operators, a proposal corroborated by the morphological make-up of quantificational elements (see (3) in Lipták’s summary). The author gives a complete picture of possible operator bound constructions, that is, word-level binding by universal operators (as in (5) in Lipták’s summary). The careful and systematic demonstration that vagy heads a TopicPhrase is convincing. Given the parallel observed between C[ontrastive]Top constructions/interpretations and disjunction as discussed here, this seems an interesting step to take. It is important to show that multiple partitives and (multiple) disjunction are similar, and that they occupy a position different from (and structurally higher than) the Focus position. On the other hand, Lipták’s claim that Topic is A-movement, although not central to the thesis, is surprising. Alternative analyses (see e.g. Cinque 1990 for Italian, Aboh 1999 for Gungbe, Puskás 2000 for Hungarian) give clear arguments in favor of the A-bar nature of topicalization. For instance, topicalization in Hungarian is sensitive to strong crossover (8a) and to strong islands (8b), a standard diagnostic for A-bar chains:

\[
\begin{align*}
(8) & \quad a. *Jánost hívtam meg pro/\overline{0}, \\
& \quad \text{John-ACC yesterday invited-3SG PART pro/he} \\
& \quad \text{that invited-2SG}
\end{align*}
\]

Wh-constructions

One of the important proposals of the dissertation is that wh-items and focused constituents are different. After a review of the similarities noted above, the author shows, in a very well presented section, that wh-items correspond in fact to exclusive focus, i.e. one type of focusing. The observation that there are manifest differences between wh and focus elements leads to the proposal discussed above, namely that <+wh> is introduced by a null Q morpheme, and quantificational operator OP binding the variable wh-item at the word-level.

Lipták argues that wh-items also bear a +focus feature. Given the standard assumptions on feature-driven movement and an adequate characterization of the relevant features, Lipták proposes a two-step derivation for wh-items: a first step which moves it into SpecFocP, checking the <+f> feature overtly; then a second step, realized as covert feature movement, which checks the <+wh> feature in C0. This step is highly innovative, in that it challenges the standard assumptions that wh-items land in SpecFocP in Hungarian to check both features. Thus, rather than resorting to complex selectional mechanisms for embedded contexts, such as the one proposed in Puskás (2000), the two-step derivation accounts...

[Omitted due to text length and formatting constraints]
straightforwardly and elegantly for the embedded wh-contexts in a strictly local way. This raises the interesting question of the nature of checking, its motivation and the distinctions between various types of features. It also raises the question, at a more theoretical level, of why features are allowed to be checked either in the overt or the covert component.

In order to derive the correct movement – and the correct sequence of feature checking – Lipták examines the characteristics of the feature system she proposes. She is thus lead to reconsidering the empirical background that lies behind the theoretical notions of interpretable/uninterpretable. The minimalist approach assumes that uninterpretable features do not contribute to the semantics of the sentence and have to be deleted before the structure reaches the Conceptual-Intentional (i.e. interpretative) interface. However, the feature system Lipták builds also has the slightly less welcome result of marking the <+f> feature on the focused constituent as [+interpretable], while necessarily characterizing the same <+f> feature on wh-phrases as [+interpretable]. Lipták reaches this conclusion on the basis of VP focusing, as opposed to the focusing of a constituent of the VP.

(9) Péter [FocP a FÜVET, Péter-NOM the grass-ACC nyírtai [AspP le [VP t t]]] mowed-3SG PART
   a. ‘It was the grass that Péter mowed.’
   b. ‘It was mowing the grass that Péter did (and not playing, etc.)’

[Lipták 2001:59]

In a sentence like (9), the focused constituent is an argument of the VP. However, the sentence can be interpreted as bearing either constituent focus on füvet (‘grass’) or as the focusing of the whole VP. Since the semantic contribution of the feature <+f> is not uniform, she concludes that the feature is [+interpretable]. But as semantically, focusing is significant, she is led to assuming two formatives, a feature <+f> relevant for syntax and an Opf for interpretation. It seems that the splitting of focus properties into two formatives is not the most convincing solution, especially since wh-phrases also carry a <+f> feature which need not be subject to this splitting. An alternative analysis of ‘VP focusing’, such as the one proposed in Puszkás (1997), for example, can account for the two readings without resorting to any extra semantic formative. The core of the proposal is that ‘VP focusing’ raises the whole focused maximal projection into SpecFocP, satisfying the spec-head relation crucial for the exclusive focus reading. This would make the system homogeneous and account more easily for the fact that the <+f> feature on wh-phrases is, and has to be, [+interpretable].

The other question the reader might want to ask is one which arises directly from the distinction between focus and wh: since the author assumes that both <+wh> and <+f> features are introduced by the Q morpheme (a welcome proposal, since non-interrogative wh-items are not focused), how is the feature <+f> introduced on non wh focused elements? Since the feature is dependent on a quantificational morpheme, it seems reasonable to propose that some quantificational morpheme assigns the (same) <+f> feature in non-wh contexts. This would constitute an interesting follow up on the original proposal.

Multiple wh-questions

Lipták gives a very useful summary of the wh-system and a good survey of different types of wh-questions. For multiple wh-questions with multiple fronted wh-phrases (her Type one), she assumes É. Kiss’ (1993) analysis. Since these questions unambiguously trigger pair-list readings, it is argued that they contain a “real” wh-item, which corresponds to the constituent the question bears on, and other wh-items which function as universal quantifiers (see (10) in Lipták’s summary). Therefore, the “real” wh-phrase will appear in SpecFocP, while the other ones occupy SpecDistP. The question that immediately arises is the discrepancy in the intervention effects. While universal quantifiers in DistP cannot co-occur with a wh-phrase in SpecFocP, the same restriction does not apply to wh-phrases in DistP. Lipták solves the problem by proposing that universal quantifiers are “inherent quantifiers”, contrary to wh-items in a quantifier position. This distinction remains purely descriptive, unfortunately, and runs into contradiction with Lipták’s own proposal. Recall that wh-phrases were argued to be variables bound by word-level operators (e.g. the Q-morpheme) and that “inherent quantifiers” of the kind mindenki (“everybody”) were analyzed as another instance of word-level binding of the wh-item (see Lipták’s summary (3)). So the crucial difference is rather the nature of a binder like the Q morpheme as opposed to the existential or universal binder. The difference in behavior and intervention potential between wh-phrases and universal/existential quantifiers is also discussed in Starke 2001, but there as well, remains mainly descriptive. To have a full fledged story, one would need much more ground work on what quantificational elements actually are and how they are licensed in the scope positions in which they appear. This question is at the heart of current research in the domain of quantification. It is, obviously, far beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it is a crucial question that must be raised explicitly.

On the other hand, the absence of superiority effects, a well-known puzzle in some of the languages that have multiple wh-fronting (see e.g. Rudin 1988), follows neatly from Lipták’s proposal: the wh-elements which appear in quantifier positions are D-linked (as attested by the pair-list reading). Any account of D-linked wh will explain the absence of superiority effects. Lipták refers to Bosković’s (1998)
Multiple partitive constructions

Lipták engages in a discussion of a totally unexplored area of wh occurrences in Hungarian. As for the other constructions, the approach is very systematic and careful, and provides a minute comparison with apparently similar constructions in other languages. It introduces the notion of exhaustivity, which requires a characterization of all the subsets of a discourse set. Lipták claims that multiple partitive constructions have an underlying clausal disjunction structure, as they are also subject to the exhaustivity requirement.

Lipták shows that the two structures exhibit striking similarities, such as a necessary contrast with a constituent in the clause, as well as multiplicity (the structures need at least two clauses) and ordering requirements with respect to positive and negative predicates. All these pieces of evidence build up elegantly to make the parallelism between the two constructions obvious. One could have objected that the postulation of the covert disjunctor vagy in multiple partitives (see (20) in Lipták's summary) is only weakly defended. But it turns out that the proposal finds additional evidence in the example below which combines the multiple partitive wh-phrase and the disjunctor vagy:

(10) ...s azóta hol az elvi alap ...and since-then where the conceptual base-NOM hiányzik [...], hol az irodalmi szint, miss-3SG where the literary level-NOM vagy mindkettő or both-NOM

'...and since then sometimes the conceptual base is missing, sometimes the literary quality sometimes both.'

[Lipták 2001:167; boldface mine]

This seems to corroborate the proposal that we are dealing with two instances of the same construction. A minor problem one could note, however, is that Lipták's analysis relies on the assumption that the structure of the two clauses involved in the multiple partitive construction is identical. From that point of view, an example such as (11a) raises a problem:

(11) a. ki MINDENKIT meghívott, who-NOM everyone-ACC part-invited-3SG
    ki csak HÁROM embert.

b. ki MINDENKIT meghívott, ki csak HÁROM embert hívott meg/*meghívott.

Lipták proposes that in (11a), the two wh--phrases occupy two identical clause-initial positions in two identical clauses, and that what follows the focused constituent csak három embert ('only three people') is elided. However, if we reduce the ellipsis, as in (11b), we realize that the elided clause is not totally parallel to the first, non-elided one: whereas the quantifier does not require particle-verb inversion, the focused numeral phrase does. Given work on elision in Hungarian (see e.g. Bárány 1994) such an asymmetry is puzzling. A solution to the problem could be found in the analysis of preverbal quantifiers and the absence of particle-verb inversion as proposed in Puskaš (2000). It is argued there that when the quantifier occupies the preverbal position DistP (see Lipták's summary (I)), the whole projection which contains the particle and the verb raises to SpecFocP, in a way which is similar to the process of "VP focusing" discussed above. This analysis yields parallel structures for the two clauses in (11), and renders elision possible.

As can be seen from the numerous points under discussion, the dissertation is very rich and tackles a great number of questions related to the nature of wh-items. Lipták takes care to handle all the points, and anticipates questions and potential problems. The residual problems that have been mentioned at various points do not, at any rate, reduce the extremely high quality of the dissertation. On the contrary, they suggest that the whole issue is a very complex one, that the solutions Lipták points to are interesting and defended in a convincing way, and that there is room for further research in the area. The starting point is a highly innovative one, and inevitably leads to further questioning, which is ultimately a sound and fruitful approach to linguistic research. Moreover, the careful and methodic approach Lipták takes in constructing her argumentation, and the rich and complex data she examines make this dissertation a landmark not only in the field of Hungarian syntax, but also in the domain of research on wh-items and, more generally, on the interaction between the semantics and the syntactic properties of quantificational elements.
References


