



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN (IN)ALIENABLE POSSESSION AND THE (THREE POTENTIAL) FORMS OF POSSESSED NOUNS IN HUNGARIAN\*\*\*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In Hungarian, there are some nouns which have two different stems in the possessive paradigm. *Gyapja* ‘wool.Poss.3Sg’, for instance, is an inflected version of *gyapjú* ‘wool’. This has an inalienable interpretation since wool is an inalienable part of a sheep. However, if the wool is considered to belong to someone else, for instance, a shepherd, an alternative inflected form is used to express this alienable interpretation: *gyapjúja* ‘wool.Poss.3Sg’. In a similar fashion, the noun *ablak* ‘window’ also has an inalienable possessive form and an alienable one: *ablak-a* (that of a house) and *ablak-j-a* (say, that of a distributor). Section 2 scrutinizes this phenomenon, on the basis of which we classify possessed nouns into four groups (2.1), and base several generalizations on our observations concerning them (2.2).

It is shown in Section 3 that some productive Hungarian deverbal nominalizers, illustrated in (1) below, provide data relevant to the topic. Nominal constructions derived by means of these inevitably contain a possessed form of the noun head with shorter or longer variants of the possessedness suffix *-(j)A*, on the one hand, and on the other, a possessor with a thematic role designated in the derivational relationship (Laczkó 2000: 307-310; Alberti and Farkas to appear). In the case of  $T_{EV}$ -noun constructions, for instance, a shorter possessed form, claimed to indicate inalienability, is accompanied by a Theme possessor (1a), whilst in the case of  $T_{TH}$ -noun and *HATNÉK*-noun constructions, a longer possessed form is accompanied by an Agent-like possessor (1b-c).<sup>1</sup> Since the Agent is held to stand in a non-intrinsic, that is, alienable, relationship with the verb,

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1 As is also illustrated by the translations given in (1),  $T_{EV}$ -noun constructions denote complex events,  $T_{TH}$ -noun constructions refer to human Theme participants of complex events, while a *HATNÉK*-noun construction denotes a desire or urge concerning the realization of an event. For further discussion on *HATNÉK*-noun constructions, see Farkas and Alberti (to appear).

in contrast to the intrinsic relationship between verbs and their Themes (Kratzer 1996), the association of the longer possessed form with the less intrinsic semantic relationship is in harmony with den Dikken's (2015: 138) thesis based on a linguistic universal proposed by Haspelmath (2008), according to which longer possessive forms express alienable possession.

(1) Forms of possessives in some deverbal nominal constructions in Hungarian<sup>2</sup>

- |    |   |                           |                         |
|----|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| a) | <i>Vendel tegnap</i>  | <i>likvidál-t-á-val</i>   | [T <sub>EV</sub> -noun] |
|    | Vendel yesterday.Adj  | liquidate-T-Poss.3Sg-Ins  |                         |
|    | ‘with Vendel <sub>Theme</sub> (having been) liquidated yesterday’   |                           |                         |
| b) | <i>Vendel tegnap</i>  | <i>likvidál-t-ja</i>      | [T <sub>TH</sub> -noun] |
|    | Vendel yesterday.Adj  | liquidate-T-Poss.3Sg      |                         |
|    | ‘the person whom Vendel <sub>Agent</sub> liquidated yesterday’  |                           |                         |
| c) | <i>Vendel ebéd után</i>   | <i>való</i>               |                         |
|    | Vendel lunch after  | be.Part                   |                         |
|    | <i>beszélget-hetnék-je</i>  | <i>/ ásítóz-hatnék-ja</i> | [HATNÉK-noun]           |
|    | talk-HATNÉK-Poss.3Sg  | / yawn-HATNÉK-Poss.3Sg    |                         |
|    | ‘[Vendel’s <sub>Agent</sub> desire to talk] / [Vendel’s <sub>Partial_Agent</sub> urge to yawn] after lunch’ |                           |                         |

## 2. FORMS OF THE POSSESSEE

### 2.1 Four Groups of Nouns in Respect of Possessed Forms

The 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular possessedness suffix *-(j)A* has the following four allomorphs (in the case of singular possessives): *-ja*, *-je*, *-a*, and *-e*, distributed partly on the basis of vowel harmony, and partly on the basis of the following mysterious phenomenon, which attracts much attention in the literature. There are nouns which can appear more or less readily both with *-jA* and *-A* essentially depending on the alienable or inalienable semantic character of the possessive structure (e.g., Kiefer 1985, 2000: 201), as is illustrated by the minimal pair in (2a-a’) below. As the stem of the noun that bears the possessedness suffix may also appear in two different forms, illustrated by the often-quoted minimal pair in (5b-b’), nouns can be divided into four groups with respect to their potential alternative (3Sg) possessed forms. The relevant data is presented below in the series of examples in (2-5).

What is at stake is the verification in Hungarian of a straightforward generalization by Haspelmath (2008) according to which languages tend to express alienable possession by means of morphologically richer forms than inalienable possession. This can be done either by verifying that the component *-j-* itself has a morphemic status responsible for the expression of alienability inside the possessedness suffix *-(j)A* (den

2 In (1) and throughout the whole paper the following six-degree scale of grammaticality judgments, given in Broekhuis–Keizer–den Dikken (2012: viii), is used: \*: unacceptable, \*\*: relatively acceptable compared to \*, \*\*: intermediate or unclear status; ? : marked: not completely unacceptable or disfavored form; (°): slightly marked, but probably acceptable.

Dikken 2015: 131) or by interpreting morphological richness in some less trivial way (in (5b-b’), the expression of alienability is claimed to be transferred from *-j-* to *-á-* by den Dikken (2015: 141–142)).

Let us start the overview by considering the distribution of grammaticality judgments in the group of nouns with a single stem but with a phonotactically permitted alternation between the forms *-jA* and *-A* of the possessedness suffix *-(j)A* (2). As in all example pairs in (2-5), the possessive structures in the primed examples are evaluated as expressions of unquestionably alienable relationships while those in the primeless ones as those of inalienable relationships, or at least of types of relationship which can be regarded as encoded in Hungarian as inalienable on the basis of analogous examples.

Part-whole relations form the trivial basis of alienable possessive structures (2a,b,d,e) with body parts as a distinguished subset (2b,e).<sup>3</sup> Of these examples, in the inalienable constructions (2a,b,d), the *-jA* variants are fully unacceptable, while in the corresponding alienable possessive structures (2a’,b’,d’), the *-jA* variants are more or less marked but not unacceptable. In the latter case, the *-A* variants are also more or less marked (but still acceptable). As a similar distribution of grammaticality judgments can be observed in the minimal pair (2c-c’), rulers of nations can be considered to be encoded in language as inalienable parts of their nations.

(2) Inalienable/alienable forms of possessed nouns: I. Basic data, in which the difference between the variants can be regarded as *-j-* insertion

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>a) <i>a ház ablak-(*)a</i><br/>the house window-Poss.3Sg<br/>‘the window of the house’</p> <p>b) <i>Ili talp-(*)a</i><br/>Ili sole-Poss.3Sg<br/>‘Ili’s sole’</p> | <p>a’) <i>a világ legjobb ablak-??(?)a</i><br/>the world best window-Poss.3Sg<br/>‘the world’s best window’</p> <p>b’) <i>a világ legbűdösebb talp-?(?)a</i><br/>the world most_smelly sole-Poss.3Sg<br/>‘the world’s most smelly sole’</p> |
|---|---|

3 Note that there is no difference between the four groups in the (semantic) respect that all contain body parts; see (2b,e), (3a-d), (4a-c), and (5c).

4 All of our alienable examples in (2-5) follow the pattern [possessor + superlative adjective + possessed noun] in order to guarantee that the alienable interpretation is achieved in a highly uniform manner. We are aware of the fact that there are also other constructions guaranteeing alienability as the [possessor + body part] construction in medical contexts and the [classifier as a possessed noun] construction (e.g., *’pohárja egye euró a sörnek* ‘glass.Poss.3Sg one euro the beer.Dat’ ‘a glass of beer costs one euro’). According to our first observations, there are slight (but fairly speaker-dependent) differences in grammaticality judgments between the different types of alienable construction. This suggests that (in)alienability is not a dichotomy but a scalar category. It goes beyond the scope of this paper to investigate this global aspect of the problem of forms of possessed nouns as well as to extend the investigation to forms of possessed nouns in plural and in non-third person. As for this latter problem, a noun like *ablak* ‘window’ (2a), for instance, has no alternative possessed forms in first person singular (*ablakom* ‘my window’ is the only form), in contrast to such nouns as *gyapjú* ‘wool’ (5c), which has a separate alienable form *gyapjóm* ‘my wool’ besides the inalienable form *gyapjam*.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| c) <i>a németek császár-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>the German.Pl kaiser-Poss.3Sg<br>'the Germans' kaiser'  | c') <i>minden idők legifjabb császár-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>all time.Pl youngest kaiser-Poss.3Sg<br>'the youngest kaiser of all time'     |
| d) <i>az egyetem bölcsészkar-<sup>(*)j</sup>a</i><br>the university fac._of_hum.-Poss.3Sg<br>'the faculty of humanities<br>of the university' | d') <i>a világ legjobb bölcsészkar-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>the worldbest fac._of_hum.-Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's best faculty of humanities' |
| e) <i>Ili kar-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>Ili arm-Poss.3Sg<br>'Ili's arm'   | e') <i>a világ legerősebb kar-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>the worldstrongest arm-Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's strongest arm'                       |
| f) <i>az oroszok cár-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>the Russian.Pl tzar-Poss.3Sg<br>'the tzar of Russians'   | f') <i>minden idők legifjabb cár-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>all time.Pl youngest tzar-Poss.3Sg<br>'the youngest tzar of all time'             |

The last two examples, in which a body part (2e-e') and a sort of ruler (2f-f') are referred to, do not satisfy the above-sketched distribution of grammaticality judgments, since both kinds of interpretation can be expressed exclusively by the *-jA* variants. The homophonous forms (obviously belonging to the two different lexical items 'faculty' and 'arm') presented in (2d) and in (2e), thus, show different patterns of grammaticality judgments, in spite of the fact that both express part-whole relations.

In the series of examples in (3), a few phonotactic rules of Hungarian are illustrated which exclude the simultaneous occurrence of the *-jA* and *-A* variants in possessed nouns.

A noun ending in a vowel (3a-b'), for instance, has no *-A* variant while a noun ending in *-s* (pronounced as the consonant in the English word *ash*) (3c) has no *-jA* variant (see Rebrus 2014: 387-390; this exclusion also holds for all other sibilants as a very strong but somewhat speaker-dependent tendency). The consonant combination shown in (3d), however, disprefers *-A*. As for deciding the precise set of such consonants and consonant combinations, this morphophonological task (together with accompanying methodological questions) requires future research.

(3) Inalienable/alienable forms of possessed nouns: II. One (potential) form for phonotactic reasons

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a) <i>Ili vesé-<sup>(?)j</sup>e</i><br>Ili kidney-Poss.3Sg<br>'Ili's kidney' | a') <i>a világ legnagyobb vesé-<sup>(?)j</sup>e</i><br>the world biggest kidney-Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's biggest kidney'           |
| b) <i>Ili boká-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>Ili ankle-Poss.3Sg<br>'Ili's ankle'   | b') <i>a világ legszebb boká-<sup>(?)j</sup>a</i><br>the world most_beautiful ankle-Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's most beautiful ankle' |
| c) <i>Ili has-<sup>(*)j</sup>a</i><br>Ili belly-Poss.3Sg<br>'Ili's belly'    | c') <i>a világ legnagyobb has-<sup>(*)j</sup>a</i><br>the world biggest belly-Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's biggest belly'              |

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| d) <i>Ili comb-*(<sup>✓</sup>j)a</i><br>Ili thigh-Poss.3Sg<br>'Ili's thigh'                      | d') <i>a világ legszebb comb-*(<sup>✓</sup>j)a</i><br>the world most_beautiful thigh-Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's most beautiful thigh' |
| e) <i>a csavar any*(<sup>(?)</sup>á)ja</i><br>the screw mother.Poss.3Sg<br>'the nut of the bolt' | e') <i>a szerelő legnagyobb any*(<sup>(?)</sup>á)ja</i><br>the mechanic biggest mother.Poss.3Sg<br>'the mechanic's biggest nut'     |

The minimal pair presented in (3e-e') above is of special interest to us, given that the noun *anya* 'nut (of a bolt)', which belongs to the vowel-ending subgroup shown in (3a-b) is a polysemic counterpart of *anya* 'mother' presented in (5b-b') below, just mentioned above as an example of nouns having two stems. This pair thus patterns with the pair of homophonous nouns presented in (2d-e') above in behaving differently in respect of accepting *-jA/-A* variants.

The third group consists of nouns with an alternative (idiosyncratic) possessed form from that which can be derived on-line from the nominative form via adding *-jA* or *-A* (4). Such nouns, thus, potentially have three 3Sg possessed forms. However, both the inalienable and alienable meanings are very much preferably expressed by the idiosyncratic variant and the *-A* variant is fully unacceptable. In the case of the noun *gyomor* 'stomach', for instance, the inalienable meaning can be expressed only by means of the idiosyncratic variant *gyomra*, providing a fully acceptable possessive structure (4a). The alienable meaning can be expressed by means of either the idiosyncratic form or the *-jA* variant, though both resulting structures are highly marked (4a'). The minimal pair in (4e-e') illustrates such an extreme preference for the idiosyncratic variant that this can readily express both kinds of meaning, with the two other potential forms providing fully unacceptable possessive structures.

(4) Inalienable/alienable forms of possessed nouns: III. An idiosyncratic form coexists with an "on-line created" form derived by means of *-jA* from the nominative version (while a form derived by means of *-A* is phonotactically possible but not acceptable)

- a) *Ili gyomra / \*gyomorja / \*gyomora*  
Ili stomach.Poss.3Sg  
'Ili's stomach'
- a') *a világ legnagyobb ??gyomra / ??gyomorja / \*gyomora*  
the world biggest stomach.Poss.3Sg  
'the world's biggest stomach'
- b) *a sas karma / \*karomja / \*karoma*  
the eagle claw.Poss.3Sg  
'the claw of the eagle'
- b') *a világ legélesebb ??karma / \*\*karomja / \*karoma*  
the world sharpest claw.Poss.3Sg  
'the world's sharpest claw'

- c) *Ili körme / \*körömje / \*köröme*  
 Ili nail.Poss.3Sg  
 ‘Ili’s nail’
- c’) *a világ legélesebb<sup>??</sup> körme / \*körömje / \*köröme*  
 the world sharpest nail.Poss.3Sg  
 ‘the world’s sharpest nail’
- d) *Pécs főtere / \*főtérje / \*főtére*  
 Pécs main\_square.Poss.3Sg  
 ‘the main square of Pécs’
- d’) *a világ legnagyobb<sup>(?)</sup> főtere / \*főtérje / \*főtére*  
 the world biggest main\_square.Poss.3Sg  
 ‘the world’s biggest main square’
- e) *Pécs egyik tere / \*térje / \*tére*  
 Pécs one\_of square.Poss.3Sg  
 ‘a square of Pécs’
- e’) *a világ legnagyobb tere / \*térje / \*tére*  
 the world biggest square.Poss.3Sg  
 ‘the world’s biggest square’

In the fourth group, the nouns have an idiosyncratic possessed form but the ending of the nominative form excludes either the *-A* variant (5a-c’,e-e’) or the *-jA* variant (5d-d’) for the same phonotactic reasons as was discussed in connection with the examples presented in (3) above. It can be observed that the inalienable meanings can be associated only with the idiosyncratic variants (see the primeless examples in (5a-d)). The alienable meanings, on the other hand, are only associated with the variants based on the nominative form (see the corresponding primed examples). The minimal pair presented in (5e-e’) with the noun *falv* ‘village’ is somewhat exceptional with respect to the inalienable meaning. Presumably this is due to the quite archaic character of the idiosyncratic variant *falva*: in present-day Hungarian, the nominative-form-based variant *faluja* is almost as acceptable as the idiosyncratic variant (NB: it is even questionable whether the possessive structure presented in (5e) is encoded as an inalienable relationship in language). As for the alienable meaning tested in (5e’), it is unequivocally the nominative-form-based variant that expresses the alienable meaning (even more preferably than in the case of the acceptability pattern typical of the corresponding variants in (5a’,b’,c’,d’)).

(5) Inalienable/alienable forms of possessed nouns: IV. An idiosyncratic form coexists with an on-line created form whilst phonotactics prohibit *-A/-jA* alternation

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a) <i>a ház teteje / *tetője</i><br>the house roof.Poss.3Sg<br>‘the roof of the house’ | a’) <i>a cég legjobb teteje / <sup>(?)</sup>tetője</i><br>the firm best roof.Poss.3Sg<br>‘the firm’s best roof’ |
|--|---|

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| b) <i>Ili anyja / *anyája</i><br>Ili mother.Poss.3Sg<br>'Ili's mother'   | b') <i>a világ legjobb *<sup>?</sup>anyja / (<sup>?</sup>)anyája</i><br>the world best mother.Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's best mother'         |
| c) <i>a juh gyapja / *gyapjúja</i><br>the sheep wool.Poss.3Sg<br>'the wool of the sheep'                                       | c') <i>a cég legjobb *<sup>?</sup>gyapja / (<sup>?</sup>)gyapjúja</i><br>the firm best wool.Poss.3Sg<br>'the firm's best wool'              |
| d) <i>a tűz parazsa / *parázsa</i><br>the fire glow.Poss.3Sg<br>'the glow of fire'   | d') <i>a világ legforróbb *<sup>?</sup>parazsa / (<sup>?</sup>)parázsa</i><br>the world hottest glow.Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's hottest glow' |
| e) <i>a zsellérek (<sup>?</sup>)falva / (<sup>?</sup>)faluja</i><br>the cottar.Pl village.Poss.3Sg<br>'the village of cottars' | e') <i>a világ legjobb *<sup>?</sup>falva / (<sup>?</sup>)faluja</i><br>the world best village.Poss.3Sg<br>'the world's best village'       |

## 2.2 Generalizations

In what follows, the observations about the four groups of nouns are summarized (Table 1) and generalized using the terminology defined in (6) below, which makes it possible to formulate the generalizations in a simple and elegant form (7).

### (6) Definition of three kinds of possessed variants

- a) *Possessed variant 1 (v1)*:  
on-line created as [nominative form of the noun + *-jA*], unless the relevant phonotactic rules of Hungarian prohibit this;  
otherwise, [nominative form of the noun + *-A*].<sup>5</sup>
- b) *Possessed variant 2 (v2)*:  
on-line created as [nominative form of the noun + *-A*] if the relevant phonotactic rules of Hungarian permit both this variant and the [nominative form of the noun + *-jA*] variant  
(NB: v2 is defined in a way that it is inevitably different from v1).
- c) *Possessed variant 3 (v3)*:  
acceptable (idiosyncratic) historical form of the noun, different from those referred to in v1 and v2, if extant.

It must be noted that certain speakers refuse variant 1 forms in most cases, saying that they sound very artificial (e.g., *ablakja* 'its window'; cf. the generally accepted v2 variant *ablaka*). This phenomenon may be regarded as a kind of hypercorrection: the speakers in question are convinced that the given variants violate certain rules they learned, in spite of the fact that they have never been taught such rules. Certain variant 3 forms are also problematic for some speakers because they consider them unacceptably

5 The variant *hasa* 'his/her/its belly' (3c), for instance, counts as a (potential) variant v1 according to (6a), since the form *hasja* is (considered to be) phonotactically excluded even from the set of competing *potential* variants.

archaic (e.g., *disznaja* ‘his/her pig’; cf. the “modern” v1 variant *disznója*). It also generally holds for all examples in (2-5) except for those marked as fully acceptable or fully unacceptable that they show quite high speaker-dependent variation.

In Table 1, the four quarters correspond to the four series of examples in (2-5).

The (simplest) bottom right quarter presents the grammaticality judgments given in (3). In this group, v1 has no potential alternative, since there is no idiosyncratic variant (v3) and phonotactic rules exclude another nominative-form-based variant (v2). Furthermore, what is worth noting is that, in all cases in this group, v1 can always readily express the inalienable meaning as well as the alienable one.

The top right quarter presents the grammaticality judgments given in (5). In the corresponding group of nouns, only v3 and v1 are “in competition”, indicated in the corresponding heading as ‘{3, 1}’, since v2 is excluded for phonotactic reasons. As was observed in (5), in this group, v3 can readily express the inalienable meaning (indicated by the formula ‘{3, 1} → 3’ in the table) and v1 can be almost as readily associated with the alienable meaning (‘{3, 1} → 1’), but not *vice versa*. Thus the available potential variants differentiate the two kinds of meanings in a plausible way. The primary inalienable meaning belongs to the idiosyncratic variant v3 whilst the alienable meaning, calculated in the given context on the basis of some kind of mental conceptual network (Alberti and Farkas to appear, 2.1.1.2.2),<sup>6</sup> is expressed by the variant which can be calculated automatically, that is, by v1, referred to as the primary on-line created variant in (6a). Note that the simplified formula in (7a) below ([v1~a]) refers to this latter relationship between the alienable meaning and the on-line created form, which can be regarded as a generalization over den Dikken’s (2015: 131, 141-142) *-j*-insertion in certain cases (2a,c,d), and *-á*-insertion (5b) in other cases, plus some further morphological differences for which den Dikken (2015) does not account (5a,c,d,e).<sup>7</sup>

6 In such a mental network, it must be calculated that, say, the possessive structure *my house* can refer not only to default relationships such as my owning the given house, and/or my living there, but also arbitrarily expanded relationships such as my being the homeless person who inspects the garbage cans of the house or my being the agent whose task is to make the residents fill in some questionnaire.

7 It is clear that this group can be characterized not by a difference between the competing possessive variants manifesting itself in a certain sound-size morpheme (or sequence of sounds) but by the phonetically highly varied and unpredictable difference between an automatically producible potential variant v1 and an idiosyncratic variant v3 existing for historical reasons. The variant v1 *tető-je* ‘its roof’, for instance, is different from the v3 variant *tete-je* in the quality and the length of the stem-final vowel (see also the minimal pairs *ajtó-ja/ajta-ja* ‘its door’, *disznó-ja/diszna-ja* ‘its pig’, *tüdő-je/tüde-je* ‘its lung’). Relative to the v1 variant *gyapjú-ja* ‘its wool’, however, the v3 variant *gyapj-a* does not contain a stem-final vowel of another quality but it lacks the stem-final vowel and (hence) this form gets the *-j*-less version of the suffix *-(j)A* (somewhat similar examples with other stem-final vowels: *anyú-ja/any-ja* ‘its mother’, *apú-ja/ap-ja* ‘its father’). The minimal pair *parázs-a/parazs-a* ‘its ember’ exemplifies the case when there is a difference (chiefly) in the length of a stem-internal vowel (also see *darázs-a/darazs-a* ‘its wasp’), while the pair *falu-ja/falv-a* ‘its village’ illustrates the type of difference based on the phenomenon often referred to as *v*-insertion in synchronic descriptions (also see *tetű-je/tetv-e* ‘its louse’).



Table 1: Acceptability of different variants of possessed forms depending on phonotactic and historical factors

-A / -jA IDIOSYN	YES				NO			
	INALIENABLE		ALIENABLE		INALIENABLE		ALIENABLE	
YES	{3, 2, 1} → 3		{3, 2, 1} → 3		{3, 1} → 3		{3, 1} → 1	
	3	1	3	2	3	1	3	1
	✓gyomra	*gyomorja	?gyomra	?gyomorja	✓teteje	*tetője	*teteje	(?)tetője
	✓karma	*karomja	?karma	*karomja	✓anyja	*anyája	*anyja	(?)anyája
	✓körme	*kőrömje	?körme	*kőrömje	✓gyapja	*gyapjúja	*gyapja	(?)gyapjúja
	✓főtere	*főtérje	(?)főtere	*főtérje	✓parazsa	*parázsa	?parazsa	?parázsa
	✓tere	*térje	✓tere	*térje	(?)falva	?faluja	*falva	✓faluja
	NO	{2, 1} → 2		{2, 1} → 1		{1} → 1		{1} → 1
2		1	2	1	1		1	
✓ablaka		*ablakja	?ablaka	?ablakja	✓veséje		✓veséje	
{2, 1} → 2		{2, 1} → 2						
2		1	2	1	✓bokája		✓bokája	
✓talpa		*talpja	?talpa	?talpja	✓hasa		✓hasa	
✓b.kara		*b.karja	(?)b.kara	?b.karja	✓combja		✓combja	
✓császára		*császársa	(?)császára	?császársa	(?)anyája <sub>nut</sub>		(?)anyája <sub>nut</sub>	
{2, 1} → 2		{2, 1} → 2						
2		1	2	1				
*kara		✓karja	*kara	?karja				
*cára		✓cárja	*cára	✓cárja				

The top left quarter of Table 1 presents the grammaticality judgments given in (4). In the corresponding group of nouns, it could be theoretically possible that all the three variants be in competition, but, as can be observed in (4), v2 cannot express either the inalienable meaning or the alienable one. The systematic unacceptability of v2 is indicated in the corresponding heading by crossing out this variant (see the notation ‘{3, 2, 1}’ in the top left quarter of the table). The table does not present the uniformly fully unacceptable data. A generalization can be formulated which holds for all types of data that v2 and v3 mutually exclude each other; see (7e) below (\*[v3 & v2]). Hence there is no noun with three more or less acceptable possessed forms (7e’) (\*[v1 & v2 & v3]). Another straightforward consequence of the mutual exclusion between v2 and v3 is that if a noun has two possessed forms, one of them is v1 (7e’’).

Variant v2 excluded, hence, both in the top right quarter and in the top left quarter: the same two variants “remain in competition”. However, the outcome in the two cases is different: while in the top right quarter, the two variants differentiate the two kinds of meanings, as is formulated in (7a-a’) ([v1~a, v2~i, v3~i]), in the top left quarter, both the inalienable meaning and the alienable meaning are significantly more readily expressed by v3 (cf. (7c’): [v3~a → \*v1, \*v2]). What is formulated in (7a-a’) is a (plausible) strategy that functions only in certain domains of nouns (see the two specially framed domains with dark rims in Table 1) and not a universal generalization valid for all Hungarian nouns.

The bottom left quarter of the table, in which (in the absence of idiosyncratic (v3) alternatives) the two nominative-form-based variants v1 and v2 are in competition, shows the most eclectic picture. This picture is a reflection of the great variety according to which certain data pattern with those in the top right quarter in associating different forms with the two kinds of meanings (7a-a’) whilst other data pattern with those in the top left quarter in associating the same forms with the two kinds of meanings, and moreover, both v1 and v2 can serve as this dominant form (in the case of different nouns, of course; cf. (7c-c’): [v1~i → \*v2, \*v3], [v2~a → \*v1, \*v3]). Thus in this quarter, both v1 and v2 are associated with either the inalienable or the alienable meaning (in the case of different nouns), as is registered in (7b) below ([v1~i / v2~a / v3~a]); nevertheless, it never occurs that, in the case of one and the same noun, the alienable meaning is expressed by v2 while the inalienable one by v1. This restriction, which holds for all data in all the four quarters, is formulated in (7d) as follows: if different variants are associated with the two kinds of meaning (see the two specially framed domains with dark rims in Table 1), the “sequence number” (1, 2, and 3 given in (6) above) of the variant belonging to the inalienable meaning must be greater than that of the variant belonging to the alienable meaning; the opposite association is excluded. Note that this generalization can completely cover all the data with no exception due to its formulation in which cases of equation are also accepted (included in the relation ‘k≥n’ in (7d)): such cases cover the nouns with a single acceptable possessed form (see the other four domains framed with light rims in Table 1).

(7) Generalizations on the (somewhat hidden) relationship between v1 *versus* v2,v3 and alienability (a) *versus* inalienability (i)

a) v1~a	on-line created: morphophonologically ~ semantically
a’) v2~i, v3~i:	(a-a’): partial tendency as a good point of departure
b) v1~i / v2~a / v3~a	there are such counterexamples
c) [v1~i → *v2, *v3]	v1 as dominant variant
c’) [v2~a → *v1, *v3]	v2 as dominant variant
c’’) [v3~a → *v1, *v2]	v3 as dominant variant
d) [v <sub>k</sub> /v <sub>n</sub> ~ i/a → k≥n]	inalienable/alienable for each domain
e) *[v3 & v2]	variants excluding each other
e’) *[v1 & v2 & v3]	all the three variants cannot appear simultaneously
e’’) [v <sub>k</sub> & v <sub>n</sub> (k>n) → n=1]	of two variants, one is v1

All in all, although the data in (2-5) suggest a close relationship between the automatically calculable (on-line created) variant v1 and a context-dependent alienable meaning (7a), and, parallel to this, between the other two variants and inalienable meaning (7a'), either kind of meaning can be expressed by any variant (7b).

The hypothesized asymmetry of semantic affiliation between v1 *versus* v2 and v3, beyond the fact that the natural strategy formulated in (7a-a') explicitly prevails in certain domains of nouns, also prevails in the other domains “vacuously” and “implicitly” in the following sense. By ‘vacuously’ we mean that there is no domain in which v1 expresses the inalienable meaning with v2 or v3 expressing the alienable meaning (7d). As for ‘implicit’ manifestations of the asymmetry in question, the (c)-constraints formulate them by claiming that if a variant can express the opposite kind of meaning relative to its basic character given in (7a-a'), then, in the case of the same noun, it will express (at least as readily) the other kind of meaning (the one that *ab ovo* suits it), too. In such cases, the given variant is referred to as a *dominant* one.

The constraints in (7e-e'') formulate restrictions on the coexistence or, on the contrary, dominance of the three variants which do not follow from the foregoing.

Let us consider a few detailed instances or consequences of the (e)-restrictions (already discussed above). If, for instance, the idiosyncratic variant v3 expresses the inalienable meaning and phonotactics does not exclude the construction of a variant v2, the latter will be fully unacceptable as an expression of either the same inalienable meaning or the alienable meaning. The latter part of this claim is in harmony with the spirit of (7a-a') while the former part can be regarded as a unicity condition: it is needless to express the same kind of meaning in two or more ways. Therefore, practically if a noun has two (more or less acceptable) possessed forms, then the alienable meaning is expressed by v1 (7e'') and the inalienable meaning either by v2 or by v3, exclusively; it follows that there is no noun with three different more or less acceptable possessed forms (7e').

### **3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORMS OF POSSESSED DEVERBAL NOMINALS AND THE THEMATIC CHARACTER OF THEIR POSSESSORS**

Possessive structures of (complex-eventuality-related) derived nouns with thematic possessors fit well in the system functioning according to the constraints presented in (7) above – through placing the given types of derived noun in the appropriate quarters of Table 1; see Table 2 below. As is illustrated in (8) below (which demonstrates the entire system, only a part of which was shown in (1) in the Introduction), in the case of complex-eventuality-related derived nouns, the possessor always corresponds to a designated input argument, that is, it is always a thematic argument (see Alberti and Farkas to appear). Thematic arguments appearing as possessors are of distinguished relevance because the Agent is held to stand in a non-intrinsic relationship with the verb (Kratzer 1996), which can plausibly be considered to be related to alienability, in contrast to the intrinsic (hence, inalienable) relationship between verbs and their Themes.

(8) Productive deverbal nominalizers in Hungarian

- a) *Vendel tegnapi likvidál-t-á-val* [T<sub>Ev</sub>-noun]  
 Vendel yesterday.Adj liquidate-T-Poss.3Sg-Ins  
 ‘with Vendel<sub>Theme</sub> (having been) liquidated yesterday’
- b) *Vendel tegnapi*  
 Vendel yesterday.Adj  
*el-rohan-ás-a / likvidál-ás-a* [ÁS-noun]  
 away-run-ÁS-Poss.3Sg / liquidate-ÁS-Poss.3Sg  
 ‘the fact that yesterday [Vendel<sub>Agent</sub> ran away] / [Vendel<sub>Theme</sub> was liquidated]’
- c) *Vendel tegnapi likvidál-ó-ja* [Ó-noun]  
 Vendel yesterday.Adj liquidate-ó-Poss.3Sg  
 ‘the person who liquidated Vendel<sub>Theme</sub> yesterday’
- d) *Vendel tegnapi likvidál-t-ja* [T<sub>Th</sub>-noun]  
 Vendel yesterday.Adj liquidate-T-Poss.3Sg  
 ‘the person whom Vendel<sub>Agent</sub> liquidated yesterday’
- e) *Vendel ebéd után való*  
 Vendel lunch after be.Part  
*beszélget-hetnék-je / ásítóz-hatnék-ja* [HATNÉK-noun]  
 talk-HATNÉK-Poss.3Sg / yawn-HATNÉK-Poss.3Sg  
 ‘[Vendel’s<sub>Agent</sub> desire to talk] / [Vendel’s<sub>Partial Agent</sub> urge to yawn] after lunch’
- e’) *Vendel i-hatnék-\*(j)a / e-hetnék-?(j)e*  
 Vendel drink-HATNÉK-Poss.3Sg / eat-HATNÉK-Poss.3Sg  
 ‘Vendel’s<sub>Agent</sub> desire to drink / eat’
- e’’) *Vendel ásítóz-hatnék-\*(j)a / tüszent-hetnék-?(j)e*  
 Vendel yawn-HATNÉK-Poss.3Sg / sneeze-HATNÉK-Poss.3Sg  
 ‘Vendel’s<sub>Partial Agent</sub> urge to yawn / sneeze’

Since complex-eventuality-related derived nouns are inherently on-line created, they have no idiosyncratic possessed forms, so they cannot appear in the top two quarters of Table 1, but must be sorted in the bottom quarters according to phonotactic factors. ÁS-nouns (8b) and Ó-nouns (8c) must obviously be placed in the bottom right quarter, since ÁS-nouns end in *-s* (cf. *has\*(j)a* ‘its belly’ in (3c)) and Ó-nouns end in a vowel (cf. *vesé-\*(j)e* ‘its kidney’ and *boká-\*(j)a* ‘its ankle’ in (3a-b)), so for them to have v2 is excluded by the phonotactic rules of Hungarian (NB: ÁS-nouns have only *-A* variants and Ó-nouns have only *-jA* variants).<sup>8</sup>

8 As is illustrated by the translations given in (8b-c), ÁS-noun constructions denote complex events, while Ó-noun constructions primarily refer to Agent participants of complex events (on Instrument/Location-denoting Ó-noun constructions, see subsection 1.3.1.3 in Alberti and Farkas (to appear)). As was mentioned in footnote 2, T<sub>Ev</sub>-noun constructions denote complex events, T<sub>Th</sub>-noun constructions refer to human Theme participants of complex events, and HATNÉK-noun constructions denote a desire or urge concerning the realization of an event.

Complex-event-based  $\tau$ -nouns (see (8a,d)), however, follow the (7a-a') strategy in the bottom left quarter of the classification of possessed-noun forms in Table 1. That is,  $\tau_{Ev}$ -nouns (8a), which tend to have “inalienable” Theme possessors (and never prototypical Agents under any circumstances), have v2 possessed forms, while  $\tau_{Th}$ -nouns (8d) have v1 possessed forms, since their possessors are not Themes (though  $\tau_{Th}$ -noun constructions as a whole *refer to* human Themes). Since possessors of HATNÉK-nouns (8e) in the corresponding verbal argument structures are not Themes, either, but prototypical Agents or Agent-like participants who have partial control over bodily/sound emission, possessed forms of HATNÉK-nouns are – correctly – predicted to be variants v1. As the comparison between the grammaticality judgments associated with the minimal pairs in (8e'-e'') above shows, there *are* differences between the potential possessed HATNÉK-noun variants. However, these differences are not due to the completely or partially agentive character of the possessor (compare (8e') with (8e'')) but to such phonetic factors as the HATNÉK-noun form's demand for velar (-/j)a or palatal suffixes (-/j)e). HATNÉK-nouns requiring palatal suffixes, in contrast to those requiring velar suffixes, accept -j-less possessed forms to a certain extent (such forms have somewhat marginal grammaticality), also intensively depending on dialectal differences.

Table 2: The classification of -A/-jA forms of possessed complex-event(uality)-related derived nouns in Table 1 (depending on the thematic character of possessors)

3? \ 2?	YES	NO													
YES	{3, 2, 1} → 3/3	{3, 1} → 3/1													
NO	{2, 1} → 2/2	<table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">{2, 1}</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">↓</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">/</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><math>\tau_{Ev}</math></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><math>\tau_{Th}</math></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">HATNÉK</td> </tr> </table>	{2, 1}		↓		2	/	1	$\tau_{Ev}$		$\tau_{Th}$	HATNÉK		
	{2, 1}														
↓															
2	/	1													
$\tau_{Ev}$		$\tau_{Th}$													
HATNÉK															
	{2, 1} → 1/1	<table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">{1}</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">↓</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">/</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">ÁS</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">ÁS</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Ó</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">.</td> </tr> </table>	{1}		↓		1	/	1	ÁS		ÁS	Ó		.
{1}															
↓															
1	/	1													
ÁS		ÁS													
Ó		.													

#### 4. CONCLUSION

We argue that den Dikken's (2015) hypothesis concerning the existence of a morpheme -j- in Hungarian responsible for the expression of alienability must be generalized into (and should be replaced with) a system of more abstract and conditional claims (given in (7)) in order to account for all the relevant data (Section 2), including deverbal

nominals with possessors carrying different thematic roles (Section 3). In this global picture, den Dikken’s (2015) hypothesis appears as a (plausible) strategy that functions in a single domain of nouns (with competing variants v1 with *-jA* and *-j*-less v2 variants; see the lower specially framed domain with dark rims in Table 1), while in other domains, the *ab ovo* association of the *-jA* variants with alienability manifests itself in more hidden forms that (i) the alienable *-jA* variant (or rather, what is defined as variant v1 in (6a)) is opposed to a (phonetically varied) group of alternative idiosyncratic (v3) possessee variants (see footnote 8), or (ii) there is a dominant possessee variant (7c-c’), which simply suppresses the other potential variants (blocking or covering the differentiation according to (in)alienability).

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Summary  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN (IN)ALIENABLE POSSESSION  
AND THE (THREE POTENTIAL) FORMS OF POSSESSED NOUNS  
IN HUNGARIAN

The paper gives a thorough insight into the system of possible forms of (in)alienably possessed nouns in Hungarian. Its point of departure is the group of [Nominative + -j- +A] possessive forms the stem of which has an alternative (morphologically “shorter”) possessive form; such longer possessive forms are claimed to express alienable possession (see den Dikken 2015). We point out that Hungarian deverbal nominals—and especially the groups of T-nouns—play an interesting role in this system via the thematic character of their possessors (given the obvious connection between alienable possession and external argumenthood, on the one hand, and inalienable possession and internal argumenthood, on the other).

**Keywords:** (in)alienable possession, Hungarian, possessedness suffix (j)A, deverbal nominals, thematic roles

Povzetek  
RAZMERJE MED (NE)ODTUJLJIVO SVOJILNOSTJO IN  
(TREMI POTENCIALNIMI) OBLIKAMI POSEDOVANIH  
SAMOSTALNIKOV V MADŽARŠČINI

V članku podrobno predstavimo sistem možnih oblik (ne)odtujljivo posedovanih samostalnikov v madžarščini. Izhajamo iz svojilnih oblik tipa [Imenovalnik + -j- +A], katerih osnova pozna tudi alternativno (morfološko “krajšo”) svojilno obliko; tovrstne daljše svojilne oblike naj bi izražale odtujljivo svojilnost (glej den Dikken 2015). Med drugim izpostavimo, da imajo izglagolski samostalniki v madžarščini – še posebej skupina T-samostalnikov – v omenjenem sistemu zanimivo vlogo, ki izhaja iz tematske narave njihovih posedovalcev (ob upoštevanju očitne povezave med odtujljivo svojilnostjo in vlogo zunanjega argumenta na eni strani ter neodtujljivo svojilnostjo in vlogo notranjega argumenta na drugi strani).

**Ključne besede:** (ne)odtujljiva svojilnost, madžarščina, pripona posedovanega (j)A, izglagolski samostalniki, udeleženske vloge