

# On the Diachronic Development of a Hungarian Declarative Complementiser

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## The Problem

**Function** of Modern Hungarian *hogy* 'that': introduces finite declarative content clauses

↔ Old and Middle Hungarian: various functions (e.g. *hogy* appeared in comparative or conditional subclauses)

### Complex complementisers:

- several combinations did not survive into Modern Hungarian (e.g. *hogymint* 'that than')
- other combinations still exist (e.g. *minthogy* 'than that')

→ from a pair of combinations *hogy*+X and X+*hogy*, always only one survives

- also appeared in relative clauses: combinations with *ki* 'who' and *mi* 'what': *hogyki*, *hogymi*

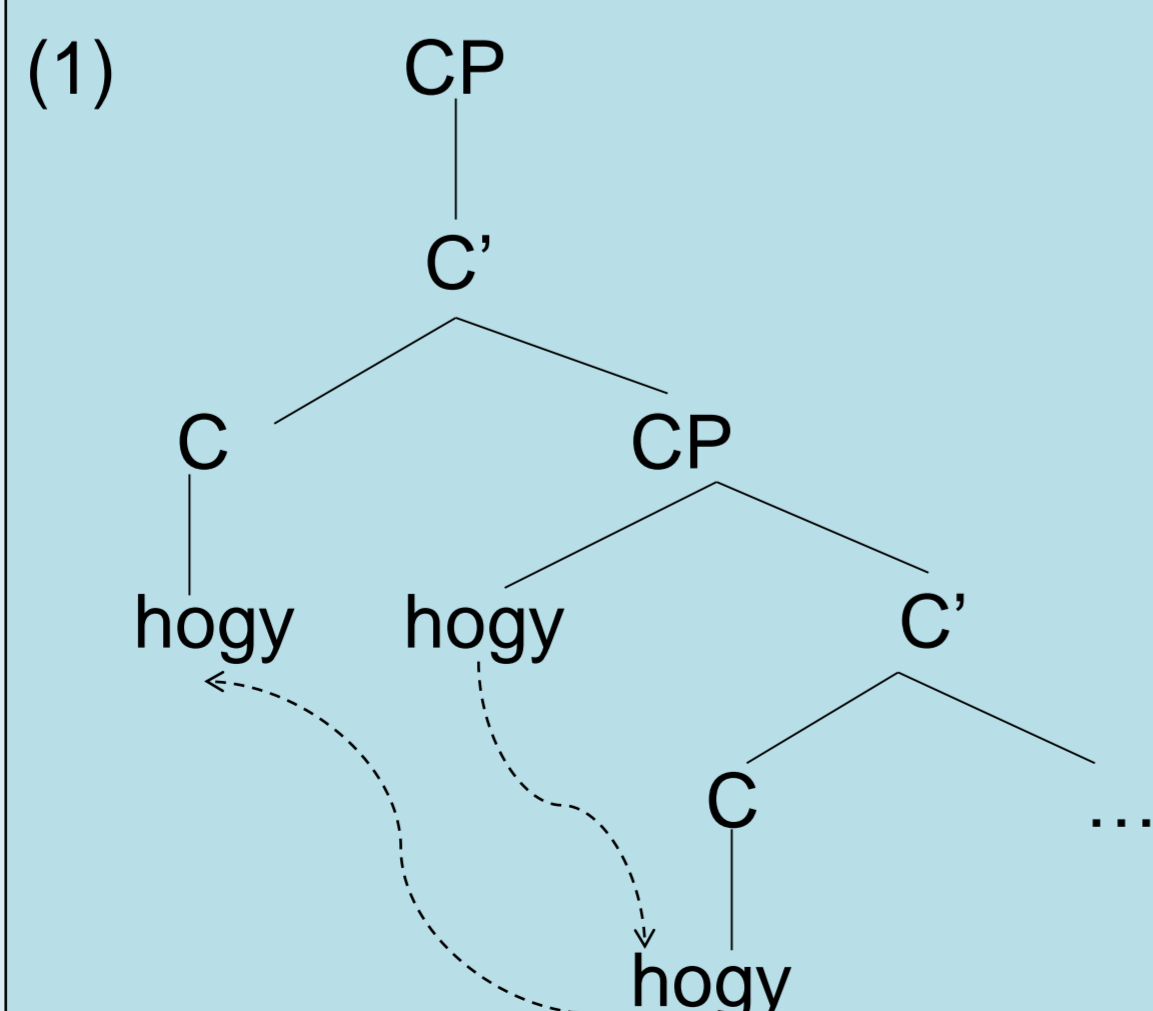
### Proposal:

- *hogy* developed via the relative cycle
- *hogy* became a general marker of declarative Force in Old and Middle Hungarian

## The Relative Cycle

**Relative cycle:** a pronoun becomes first an operator moving to [Spec; CP], and subsequently this operator is reanalysed as the head of that CP (van Gelderen 2009; Roberts–Roussou 2003).

**Reanalysis** from lower C to higher C (for English *that* see van Gelderen 2009)



**Economy:** both steps motivated by economy

- Head Preference Principle
- Late Merge Principle

(cf. van Gelderen 2004)

## Simplex Complementisers

**Development of other complementisers:** by way of the relative cycle

*ha* 'if', *mint* 'than' and *mert* 'because'

- originally pronouns, which came to be operators
- functional split → related operators

e.g. *hogy* ~ *hol* 'where'

### Chronology:

- functional split for *hogy* and *ha* took place before the Old Hungarian period

→ **position:** *ha* always in the higher C head, *hogy* typically a higher C head and rarely a lower one

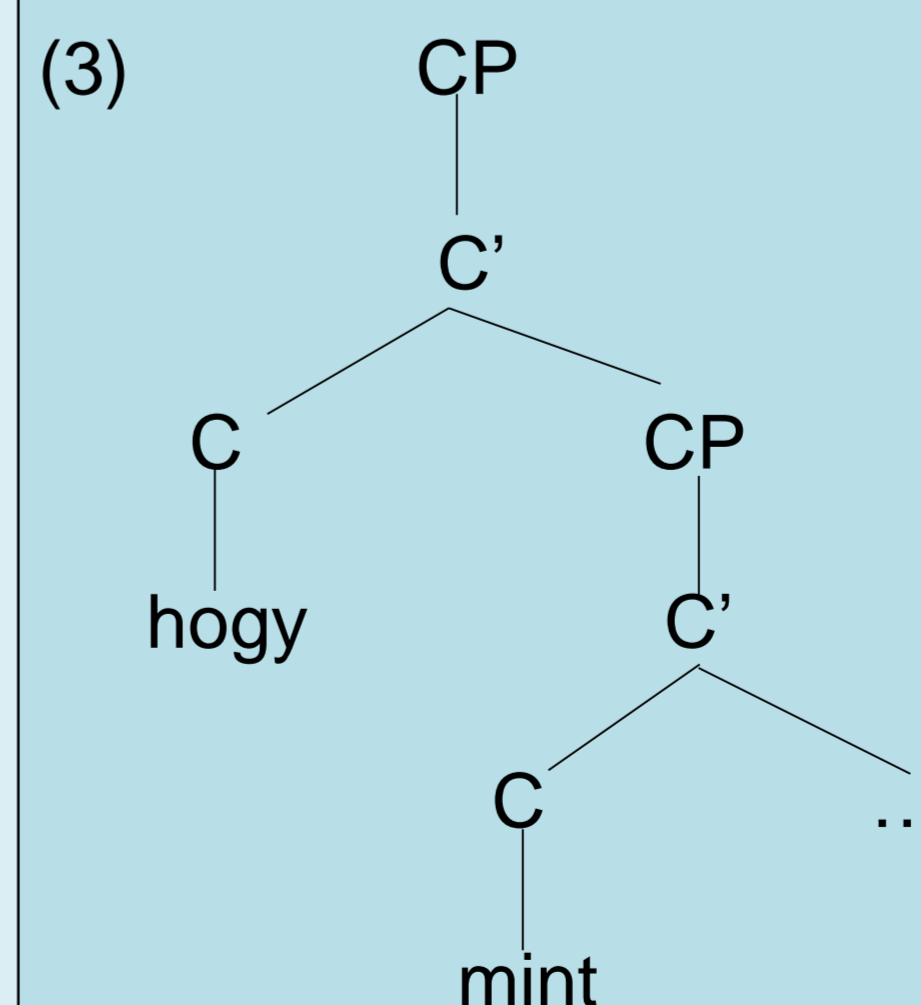
- for *mint* and *mert*: split only during the Old and Middle Hungarian periods

→ **position:** *mint* and *mert* either operators in the lower [Spec; CP] or in the lower C head

## Multiple Complementisers

**Two complementisers** in one Left Periphery allowed in Old/Middle Hungarian

(2) edesseget erze nagyoban **hogymint**  
 sweetness felt greater that.than  
 annak elotte  
 that before  
 '(s)he felt sweetness more than before'



### Fixed word orders:

*hogy* typically in the upper C head

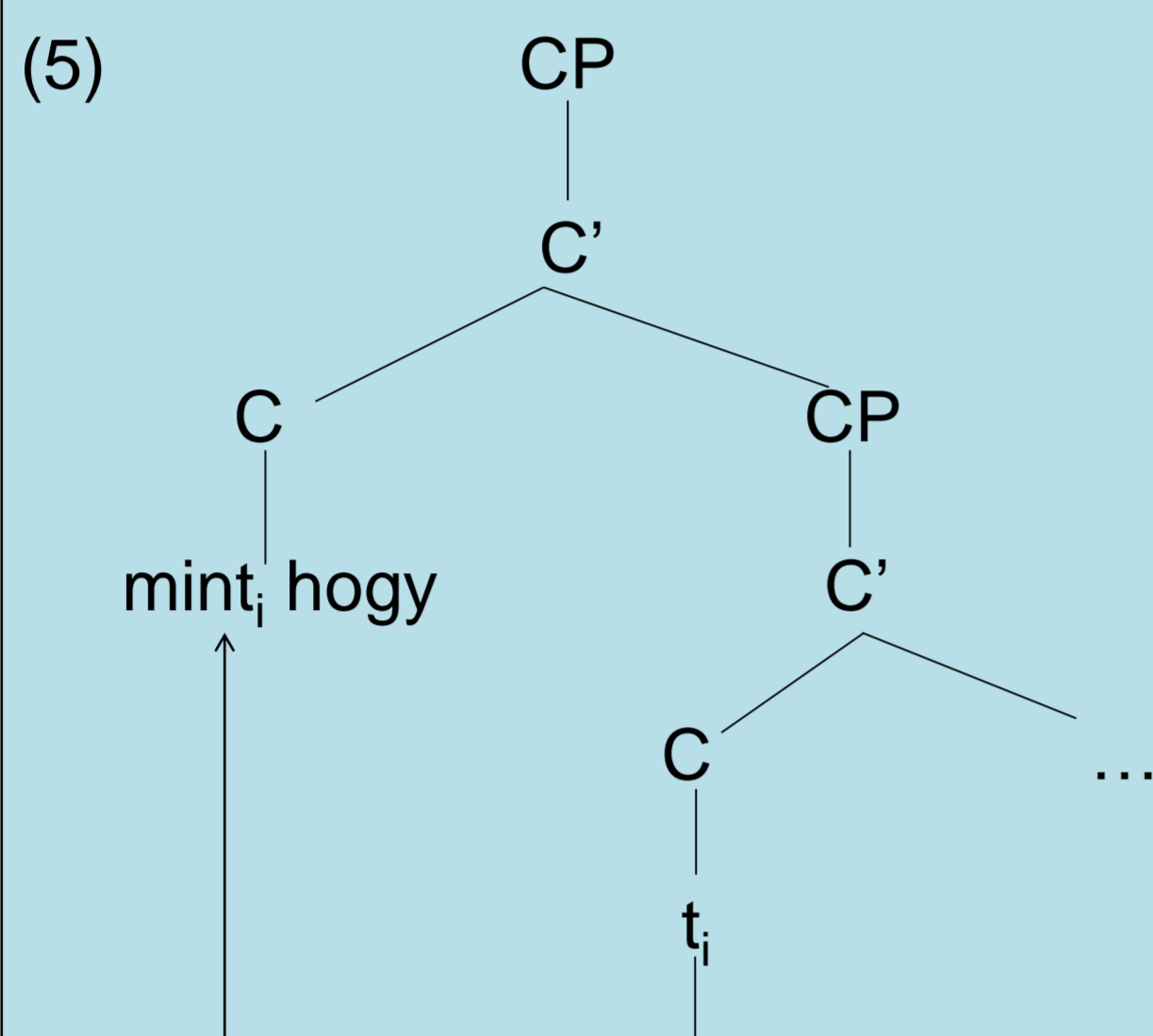
→ *hogymint* 'that than'

→ *hogymert* 'that because'

## Complex Complementisers

**Movement** of the lower C head to the upper one: adjunction results in the reverse order (← Linear Correspondence Axiom, cf. Kayne 1994)

- (4) semi    nagob    nem mondathatik:    **mint**    than  
 nothing greater not said  
**hogh** legon istenek ania  
 that be God's mother  
 'nothing can be said to be greater than  
 that she be the mother of God'



**Grammaticalization:** complex complementisers base-generated as such (← economy: base-generation preferred over movement)

→ reverse order combinations preserved even in Modern Hungarian, whereas original C+C combinations are no longer grammatical

## The position of *hogy*

**Underlying order:** typically of the form *hogy*+X

← *hogy* typically in the higher C head

→ generally combinations of the form X+*hogy* remain in the language

**Exception:** combinations of *hogy* and *ha* 'if'  
 underlying order: *ha*+*hogy*

**Evidence:** intervening elements possible:

- (6) **Ha** késen **hogy** el    nyugot az nap,  
 if late that PREV set the sun  
 hamar esot váry  
 soon rain expect  
 'if the sun has set late, expect rain soon'

**Explanation:**

*ha* invariably in the higher C head → *hogy* could only be base-generated in the lower C head

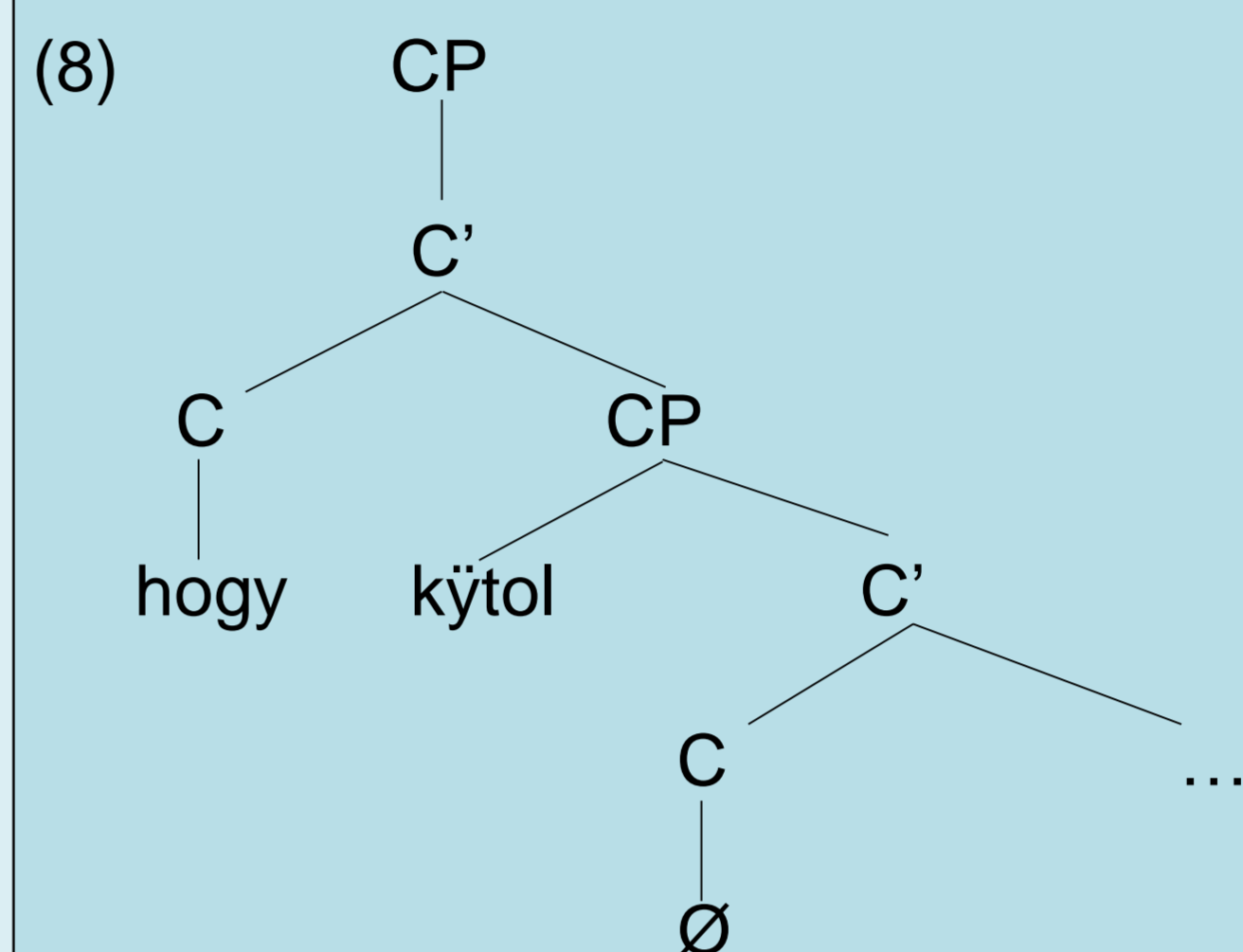
**But:** movement preferred for *hogy*

→ reverse order (*hogyha*) more frequent even in Old and Middle Hungarian

## Relative Clauses

**Relative clauses** containing *hogy* + a relative operator: possible in Old and especially in Middle Hungarian

- (7) olýaat tezők raýtad **hog** **kýtól** felz  
 such do you that who fear  
 'I will do such on you that you fear'



## Functions of *hogy*

**Comparatives:** originally *hogy* was the comparative complementiser too

- change in Old Hungarian: *mint* 'than' appeared in the subclause (cf. Bacskai-Atkari 2011)
- *hogy* lost the function of marking comparative Force

**Loss of specific functions** → *hogy* became the marker of declarative Force only

**Extension:** *hogy* appeared in other clauses functioning as a general declarative C head

- appearance in a wide range of clauses: conditionals, clauses of reason, relative clauses
- the meaning of a combination *hogy*+X or X+*hogy* did not (initially) differ from the meaning of X

**Later:** other complementisers consistently marking declarative Force besides their specific functions  
 → *hogy* no longer used as a general declarative marker

## References

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