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Atelic unaccusative verbs and cognate objects in Hungarian

Abstract

In the present paper we take a close look at the syntactic and semantic restrictions imposed on atelic unaccusative verbs occurring with a cognate object-like nominal in Hungarian. The starting point for our discussion is the proposal in Farkas (2019), according to which in Hungarian there are no objects which are literally cognate with the intransitive verb they accompany; instead, there are three classes of so-called pseudo-objects which fulfil the function of the aspectual cognate object in this language. We show that atelic unaccusative verbs in Hungarian are compatible, first and foremost, with members of one particular class of pseudo-objects, namely the ones that express or highlight the degree of the change of the event expressed by the verb such as (*egy*) *nagyot* '(one) big.ACC', (*egy*) *hatalmasat* '(one) huge.ACC' and (*egy*) *óriásit* '(one) gigantic.ACC'. We also demonstrate that, as opposed to the claims made in the literature, these verbs are not completely unacceptable with the light pseudo-object *egyet* 'one.ACC'.
Keywords: atelic unaccusative verb, pseudo-object, cognate object, VP, Hungarian

1   Introduction

In the present paper, we examine atelic unaccusative verbs in Hungarian. More precisely, we are interested in the syntactic and semantic restrictions imposed on these verbs occurring with a cognate object-like nominal in this language.

Several researchers (cf. van Valin 1990; Dowty 1991; Zaenen 1993; Centineo 1996; Sorace 2000; van Hout 2004; Borer 2005, among others) have claimed that there is a strong correlation between unaccusativity and telicity. As such, whereas (most) unaccusative verbs are telic and denote mainly bounded events (i.e. events with a natural endpoint); (most) unergative verbs are atelic and denote mainly unbounded events (i.e. events with no such natural endpoint). Given that the single argument of an unaccusative verb is an underlying object and the single argument of an unergative verb is an underlying subject, this correlation further supports the connection between (direct) objects and telicity, according to which telic interpretation can be induced by internal arguments (i.e. direct objects) but not external arguments (i.e. subjects). But according to Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995), there are two subclasses of unaccusative verbs that cannot be considered telic: (i) so-called degree achievement verbs (Dowty 1979), also known as atelic verbs of change of state (e.g. *cool*, *warm*, *heat*, *dry*, *widen*, *fatten*, *deepen*, *lengthen*) and (ii) atelic verbs of inherently directed motion (e.g. *rise*, *soar*, *fall*, *descend*, *increase*, *lower*). Although they are all characterized by

the fact that they can typically be used to indicate successive incremental stages along a given abstract dimension, the former verbs do not necessarily entail the achievement of an end state and the latter verbs do not necessarily entail the attainment of a particular end location. To be more precise, these verbs display both telic and atelic properties according to standard diagnostics (cf. also Abusch 1986; Tenny 1994; Hay, Kennedy & Levin 1999; and others).

This paper, which focuses exclusively on these two subclasses of unaccusative verbs in Hungarian, sheds light on some interesting properties of the Hungarian VP from the perspective of the cognate object construction (COC). Based on the proposal put forth in Farkas (2019), according to which in Hungarian there are no aspectual cognate objects (COs) in the proper sense of the word but only so-called pseudo-objects (POs) that fulfil the function of the aspectual cognate object in this language, we show that atelic unaccusative verbs are compatible, first and foremost, with members of one particular class of pseudo-objects, namely the ones that express or highlight the degree of the change of the event expressed by the verb, such as (*egy*) *nagyot* '(one) big.ACC', (*egy*) *hatalmasat* '(one) huge.ACC' and (*egy*) *óriásit* '(one) gigantic.ACC'.[1] We also demonstrate that, as opposed to the claims made in the literature (see Csirmaz 2008), these verbs are not completely unacceptable with the light pseudo-object *egyet* 'one.ACC'.

Before digging deep into our analysis, let us make a remark as some terminological confusion surrounds the use of the term 'pseudo-object'. In this paper, we use this term to refer to non-referential and non-thematic accusative-marked nominals, for which the verb does not subcategorize (cf. Kiefer 1992, 1994, 2006; Piñón 2001). Although their precise syntactic status (argument versus adjunct) is still under debate, with arguments both in favour of and against the two positions, we find it important to underline the idea that the term 'pseudo-object' is not equivalent to or synonymous with the term '(internal) argument'. On the contrary, this term remains neutral with respect to the precise syntactic status of these nominals. Although it is beyond the scope of the present paper to bring arguments that support either analysis, we refer the interested readers to Farkas & Kardos (2018), who argue that both the argument approach and the adjunct proposal seem to be problematic.[2] Instead, the authors propose that these nominals are neither merged in the canonical direct object position ((internal) argument) nor adjoined to *v*P/VP (adjunct) but they are base-generated in the specifier of AspP, between VP and *v*P (cf. MacDonald 2008 or Travis 2010). In a nutshell, given their semantic effects, the authors suggest that the aspectual role that POs play in the interpretation of the sentence is a direct consequence of their syntactic position. More precisely, as all elements that contribute to the computation of the Aktionsart of a predicate move to a position/are merged in a position within AspP and the primary function of non-referential POs is to delimit the event of the verb; they are claimed to merge in this position.

The paper is structured in the following way: Section 2 discusses COCs in Hungarian. Section 3 presents the data on atelic unaccusative verbs occurring with a cognate object-like pseudo-object in this language. Section 4 examines these two subclasses of verbs and provides an answer as to why they impose restrictions on the POs they take, especially on the

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[1] So far we have not found any other language in which such and similar POs fulfill the function of the aspectual CO when accompanying a prototypical unergative verb. However, COs with transitive or derived unergative verbs are not problematic in Hungarian either; cf. *énekelni egy éneket* 'to sing a song'.

[2] There is a long-standing debate surrounding the syntactic status of English aspectual COs as well, with some adopting the argument analysis, and others proposing the adjunct analysis. However, there are some problems which neither the argument nor the adjunct analysis can account for. For an excellent summary of these arguments, see Horita (1996) and the references cited therein.

light PO *egyet* 'one.ACC'. From a different perspective, this analysis also sheds light on some interesting differences between the three classes of Hungarian POs. Section 5 concludes.

2   Cognate object constructions in Hungarian

Taken in the narrowest sense, the terms 'cognate object' and 'cognate object construction' refer to those VPs where an intransitive verb takes an object expressed by a DP, the head noun of which is a nominalization of the verb stem. In the following canonical English examples, the CO is both semantically and morphologically related to the verb as it is derived from (i.e. cognate to) it; cf. Jones (1988); Moltmann (1989); Massam (1990); Macfarland (1995); Matsumoto (1996); Horita (1996); Mittwoch (1998); Kuno & Takami (2004); Real Puigdollers (2008); Horrocks & Stavrou (2010); Kitahara (2010) and many others.

(1) a. The child slept a sound sleep.
     b. The actor smiled a broad smile.
     c. The old man laughed an uproarious laugh.

According to the most recent classification of COCs (see Horrocks & Stavrou 2010; Lavidas 2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2018), such and similar constructions are called aspectual COCs because, as opposed to transitive and transitivizing COCs, in these cases (i) the matrix verb is a prototypical unergative verb expressing a certain involuntary bodily process (*sleep*) or a willed/volitional act (*smile*, *laugh*); (ii) the CO is non-referential and does not have the properties of a subcategorized (internal) argument (e.g. it fails the tests of passivization or pronominalization); (iii) the CO cannot be replaced by a similar noun (e.g. a hyponym or a synonym); and (iv) the (main) function of the construction is the expression of a limited event with beginning and end. In addition, the (indefinite) object is obligatorily accompanied by a (pre)modifier: without it, the CO serves no useful purpose; therefore, there is no justification for its use; cf. the ungrammaticality of **to sleep a sleep*, **to smile a smile* or **to laugh a laugh* (see Rice 1987; Horita 1996; Pustejovsky 2000; Kuno & Takami 2004). Its use, however, becomes justified in these cases precisely because of the presence of the modifier, which contributes new information about the action denoted by the verb. In other words, at least in English, the cognate object and the pre-modifier contribute information about the manner in which the action denoted by the verb takes place (and the CO also measures out the event of the verb). In this sense, these examples are roughly equivalent to the following intransitive sentences, which include the manner adverbial counterpart of the above modifiers (but the adverb does not measure out the event of the verb):

(2) a. The child slept soundly.
     b. The actor smiled broadly.
     c. The old man laughed uproariously.

Interestingly, the exact counterparts of these English cognate constructions are unavailable in Hungarian despite the fact that all these verbs have a zero-related nominal. This is shown below:

(3) a. *A   gyerek   aludt   egy   mély   alvást.
     the   child   slept   a   sound   sleep.ACC
     'The child slept a sound sleep.'

  b. *A színész mosolygott   egy   széles   mosolyt.
     the actor   smiled   a   wide   smile.ACC
     'The actor smiled a wide smile.'

  c. *Az öregember   kacagott   egy   harsány   kacagást.
     the old man   laughed   an   uproarious laugh.ACC
     'The old man laughed an uproarious laugh.'

Instead, as argued in Farkas (2019), Hungarian has non-referential and non-thematic pseudo-objects, which fulfil the function of the aspectual CO in this language. The author identifies three classes of such Accusative-marked constituents, where the ternary division is supported by syntactic facts such as the (manner) adverbial interpretation of (most of) the POs of class (c), which does not characterize the POs of class (b):

  (a) the lexically reduced PO *egyet* 'one.ACC'

  (b) POs with more lexical content, such as *(egy) jót* '(one) good.ACC', *(egy) nagyot* '(one) big.ACC', *(egy) hatalmasat* '(one) huge.ACC', *(egy) óriásit* '(one) gigantic.ACC' and their pluralized version

  (c) POs with lexical content, such as *(egy) mélyet* '(one) sound.ACC', *(egy) széleset* '(one) wide.ACC', *(egy) harsányat* '(one) uproarious.ACC', *(egy) lassút* '(one) slow.ACC', *(egy) isteneset* '(one) thorough.ACC', *(egy) félelmeteset* '(one) dreadful.ACC', *(egy) szelídet* '(one) tender.ACC', *(egy) hangosat* '(one) loud.ACC', *(egy) kecseset* '(one) gracious.ACC', *(egy) vidámat* '(one) joyful.ACC', *(egy) szomorúat* '(one) sad.ACC', *(egy) boldogat* '(one) happy.ACC', *(egy) gyorsat* '(one) quick.ACC', *(egy) hirtelent* '(one) sudden.ACC', *(egy) intenzívet* '(one) intensive.ACC', *(egy) öregeset* '(one) elderly.ACC', *(egy) hosszút* '(one) long.ACC', *(egy) bájosat* '(one) charming.ACC', *(egy) hangulatosat* '(one) intimate.ACC', *(egy) kellemeset* '(one) pleasant.ACC', among many others, and their pluralized version[3]

Whereas the PO *egyet* 'one.ACC' – together with the POs of class (b) – have received some syntactic and semantic attention in the literature (cf. Kiefer 1992, 1994, 2006; Piñón 2001; É. Kiss 2004; Csirmaz 2008; Halm 2012; Farkas 2017; Farkas & Kardos 2018, 2019a, 2019b), they have not been analysed as cognate object-like elements. Moreover, the wide variety of POs included in the third class, which have not been the subject of syntactic or semantic research, cast light on the fact that the class of these Hungarian POs is richer than previously thought and discussed in the literature.

    Consequently, the grammatical counterpart of the English VPs illustrated in (1) above are the following:

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[3] In postverbal position, POs must appear with the indefinite article in standard Hungarian (e.g. *aludni egy mélyet* 'to sleep a sound sleep'). In preverbal position, however, the (pronunciation of the) article is dropped (e.g. *mélyet aludni* 'to sleep a sound sleep'). In this paper, this variation is shown in the following way: *(egy) mélyet* '(one) sound.ACC'. Consequently, pluralized POs, which lack the indefinite article, may only occupy a preverbal position (e.g. *mélyeket aludni* 'to sleep sound sleeps').

(4) a. A   gyerek aludt   egyet/ egy   mélyet.
       the   child slept   one.ACC one sound.ACC
       'The child slept a sleep/a sound sleep.'
   b. A   színész mosolygott egyet/   egy   széleset.
      the actor   smiled   one.ACC one   wide.ACC
      'The actor smiled a smile/a wide smile.'
   c. Az öregember kacagott   egyet/ egy   harsányat.
      the old man   laughed   one.ACC one uproarious.ACC
      'The old man laughed a laugh/an uproarious laugh.'

That these VPs are built on an intransitive verb of the unergative type should come as no surprise as it has been argued that COCs, together with a number of other syntactic constructions, serve as a diagnostic test for the unaccusative–unergative distinction. Consequently, it has been claimed that unergative verbs – which subcategorize for one single argument initialised as subject and leave the object position vacant for a potential (cognate) object – are acceptable with this particular type of object, but unaccusative verbs – which subcategorize for one single argument initialised as object and do not leave the object position vacant for a potential (cognate) object and there is no other empty (underlying) position for the CO to occupy – are not acceptable with this particular type of object; see also Halm (2012) for Hungarian. This is formalized by the unergative restriction on the COC:

(5) Unergative Restriction on the Cognate Object Construction: Only unergative verbs can appear in the cognate object construction. No unaccusative verbs can. (Kuno & Takami 2004: 107)

This explains the grammaticality of the unergative-based VPs given in (1) and (4) above and the ungrammaticality of the unaccusative-based VPs given in (6) and (7) below, where the two nominals compete for the same syntactic position; see also Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995); Macfarland (1995); Kuno & Takami (2004); Farkas (2017) or Farkas & Kardos (2018, 2019a, 2019b):[4]

(6) a. *The glass broke a crooked break.
    b. *She arrived a glamorous arrival.
    c. *The actress fainted a feigned faint.
(7) a. *A   váza tört egyet/   egy   hirtelent.
       the vase broke one.ACC   one   sudden.ACC
       'The vase broke a break/a sudden break.'

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[4] Such and similar POs in Hungarian can occur not only with activity verbs (Vendler 1967) such as *mosolyog* 'smile', syntactically treated as unergative, but also with semelfactive verbs (Smith 1991) such as *kattan* 'click', syntactically treated as unaccusative (Csirmaz 2008), unergative (den Dikken 2018) or as exhibiting both unaccusative and unergative behaviour (Halm 2012). In the first case, the PO is claimed to be compatible with the unaccusative verb because it is regarded as an adjunct; in the last case, the presence of the PO emphasizes the unergative behaviour of the verb situated in the middle of the unaccusative–unergative continuum (Sorace 2000). In the present paper, we do not discuss PO constructions built on semelfactive verbs.

    b. *János   érkezett   egyet/   egy   elbűvölőt.
      John   arrived   one.ACC   one   glamorous.ACC
      'John arrived an arrival/a glamorous arrival.'
    c. *Az   ajtó   nyílt   egyet/   egy   hangosat.
      the   door   opened   one.ACC   one   loud.ACC
      'The door opened an opening/a loud opening.'

At first sight, the Unergative Restriction seems to provide the right descriptive statement. But upon closer inspection, it turns out that it poses at least one serious problem as there are some COCs built on unaccusative verbs. Interestingly, in case a CO is found with an intransitive verb other than unergative, it is found exactly with members of one well-defined subclass of unaccusative verbs, namely atelic unaccusative verb; cf. Jones (1988); Kuno & Takami (2004); Nakajima (2006); Kastner (2012); Oltra-Massuet (2013), among others. In this respect, Kastner (2012) argues that these are unaccusative verbs with obligatory degree modification, they are built from roots that necessarily modify the degree/extent or path of the action, and this is why they license a CO as in *drop its largest drop in three years*; cf. also below. In addition, the obligatory degree or extent may also be instantiated as a *by*-phrase (*drop by 250 points*) or a degree complement (*drop 250 points*). In sharp contrast to this, *break* in (6a), for instance, is a prototypical telic and result unaccusative verb describing the end state. As it is built from a change-of-state root, which specifies the end state, it cannot take a CO or a measure phrase. To put it differently, the compatibility of a CO with an unaccusative type distinguishes between *break/arrive*-type of verbs, which never take a CO, and *grow/drop*-type of verbs, which (can) take a CO.

    The following two sentences, built on an atelic unaccusative verb of change of state (*szélesedik* 'widen' in (8a)) and an atelic unaccusative verb of inherently directed motion (*emelkedik* 'rise/increase' in (8b)), are predicted to be unacceptable by the Unergative Restriction but they are both felicitous:[5]

(8) a. Igen   nagyot   szélesedett   a   kínálat   is.
        very   big.ACC   widened   the   offer   also
        'The offer also widened a big width.'
        (https://mobilarena.hu, January 2020)
    b. Óriásit   emelkedett   a   tojás   ára.
        gigantic.ACC   rose   the   egg   price.POSS.3SG
        'The price of the egg rose a gigantic rise.'
        (www.thepost.hu, January 2020)

These (and similar) sentences bring further evidence in favour of the idea that the Unergative Restriction encounters at least one problem and hence, it needs to be replaced with another (non-syntactic) restriction, which would go beyond the unergativity of the matrix verb and further narrow down the list of intransitive verbs compatible with a PO/CO. In this respect, de Swart (2007) proposes the aspectual restriction on COCs and argues that as the compatibility

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[5]   An anonymous reviewer draws our attention to the fact that it is not entirely straightforward that *emelked* is an inherently unaccusative verb. One might argue that *-ked-* is a (semi-productive) middle voice suffix, and *emel-ked* is the middle voice form of the transitive verb *emel*.

of atelic unaccusative verbs with a CO can distinguish between the unergative restriction and the aspectual one, the latter constraint should be considered the relevant one.

(9) Aspectual Restriction on the Cognate Object Construction: Only atelic verbs, i.e., verbs without an inherent endpoint, can occur in the cognate object construction. (de Swart 2007: 36)

As the verbs under consideration here are unaccusative but atelic (i.e. they do not necessarily entail the achievement of an end state and the attainment of a particular end location, respectively), in principle they can take a CO-like element. In the following section, we take a closer look at such and similar Hungarian VPs.

Before we go on with the presentation and analysis of atelic unaccusative verbs and POs in Hungarian, let us summarize some of the main features of English COs/COCs and their Hungarian PO counterparts (for more details on some apparent or real counterexamples, see Farkas 2019 and the references cited therein):

	ENGLISH COs/COCs (e.g. *sleep a sound sleep*)	**HUNGARIAN POs** (e.g. *aludni egyet/egy mélyet*)
syntactic classification of the verb	prototypical unergative verb	prototypical unergative verb
cognateness of the object	object cognate to the verb	object not cognate to the verb
modification of the object	modification is obligatory	modification is not obligatory (e.g. *egyet*)
semantic content of the object	object has semantic content (inherited from the verb)	object has/does not have semantic content (e.g. *egyet*)
referentiality of the object	object is non-referential	object is non-referential
theta-role assigned to the object	object is not assigned any theta-role	object is not assigned any theta-role
passivization of the object	object cannot be passivized	object cannot be passivized
indefiniteness of the object	object is indefinite	object is indefinite
aspectuality of the VP	telic VP (but it is marginal with the *in*-time adverbial)	telic VP (but it is marginal with the *alatt*-time adverbial)
adverbial interpretation of the VP	VP has adverbial interpretation	VP has/does not have adverbial interpretation (e.g. *egyet*)

Table 1. English COs/COCs and their Hungarian PO counterparts

As we have seen it already, Hungarian POs – besides sharing most of the properties of English aspectual COs, which is due to the fact that they are non-subcategorized, non-referential and non-thematic nominals – have language-internal properties, which differentiate them from canonical aspectual COs in constructions such as *to sleep a sound sleep*.

3   Atelic unaccusative verbs and cognate objects in Hungarian: the data

Recall that Hungarian lacks the English-type of CO, which is a morphological 'copy' of the intransitive verb. Instead, there are non-referential and non-thematic POs, which have the role of the CO in this language. As argued in Farkas (2019), the PO *egyet* 'one.ACC' is compatible with a wide variety of unergative verbs or verbs used in an unergative configuration (cf. (10) below):

(10) Mari mosolygott/ ásított/   sóhajtott/ aludt/ sétált/   futott/ kacagott
    Mary smiled   yawned   sighed   slept   walked   ran   laughed
    beszélgetett/twitterezett/vitázott/   bulizott/ imádkozott/reggelizett   egyet.
    talked   twittered   argued   partied prayed   had.breakfast one.ACC
    'Mary smiled a smile/yawned a yawn/sighed a sigh/slept a sleep/walked a walk/ran a run/laughed a laugh/talked a talk/twittered a tweet/had an argument/had a party/said a prayer/had a breakfast.'

This is due to the fact that it is a lexically reduced PO, which – similarly to light nouns in light noun constructions (cf. Simone & Masini 2014: 52) – has a weakened referentiality, its lexical content is bleached and it assumes a more grammatical (in this particular case, aspectual) meaning. Perhaps we can generalize the above statement and say that if a Hungarian verb takes one type of cognate object-like PO, that particular verb takes, first and foremost, the light PO *egyet* 'one.ACC'.

But there is one class of verbs the members of which are not compatible with this PO. This is the class of atelic verbs of change of state (e.g. *hűl* 'cool', *melegedik* 'warm', *szárad* 'dry', *szélesedik* 'widen') and atelic verbs of inherently directed motion (e.g. *emelkedik* 'rise/increase', *esik* 'fall/drop', *ereszkedik* 'descend'). It is not the case that these verbs are not compatible with a PO at all; at first sight, it seems that what they are not compatible with is the light nominal *egyet* 'one.ACC'. Instead, they must take a PO with lexical content, most frequently a PO of class (b) (see (11)) or, more rarely, a PO of class (c) (see (12)):[6]

(11) a. Magyarországon esett a legnagyobbat az adóbevétel   az   egész EU-ban.
      Hungary.SUP   fell the biggest.ACC the inland revenue the entire EU-INE
      'In the EU, the inland revenue fell the biggest fall in Hungary.'
      (https://g7.hu, May 2019)

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[6]   These verbs can also take accusative-marked measure phrases derived by means of the suffix *-nyi* (Schvarcz 2017) as in *a nappalok már kakaslépésnyit hosszabbodtak* 'the days have already become a little longer, i.e. by a measure that corresponds to the step taken by a rooster' or other accusative-marked measure phrases such as *kicsit* 'little.ACC', *keveset* 'little.ACC' or *sokat* 'a lot.ACC' as in *a nappalok sokat hosszabbodtak* 'the days have become a lot longer'. As opposed to Csirmaz (2008), we do not consider that these and similar measure phrases belong to the class of POs under consideration here. In addition, as shown in Farkas (2019), their distribution is different from the distribution of POs, therefore, we do not discuss them here.

b. Óriásit   emelkedett az   államadósság.
   gigantic.ACC rose   the   state debt
   'The state debt rose a gigantic rise.'
   (https://www.index.hu, May 2019)

c. Nagyot csökkent a   szegénység Magyarországon.
   big.ACC decreased the   poverty   Hungary.SUP
   'The poverty rate decreased a big decrease in Hungary.'
   (www.portfolio.hu, December 2019)

d. Nagyot erősödik   az ukrán   invázió.
   big.ACC become.strong the Ukrainian invasion
   'The Ukrainian invasion becomes considerably stronger.'
   (www.napi.hu, January 2020)

e. Hatalmasat nőtt a   Delta Air Lines   profitja.
   huge.ACC   grew the Delta Air Lines   profit.POSS.3SG
   'The profit of Delta Air Lines grew a huge growth.'
   (www.napi.hu, January 2020)

f. Nagyot gazdagodtak a   leggazdagabbak 2019-ben.
   big.ACC became.rich   the   wealthiest.PL   2019-INE
   'The wealthiest people became much richer in 2019.'
   (www.maszol.ro, January 2020)

g. Hirtelen egy nagyot   öregszik   az   arc.
   suddenly one big.ACC   grow.old   the   face
   'Suddenly, the face becomes significantly older.'
   (east-maskeppen.blogspot.com, January 2020)

(12) a. Borzalmasat zuhant   egy moszkvai   légtornász.
      terrible.ACC plunged   a   of Moscow   trapeze artist
      'A trapeze artist from Moscow plunged a terrible plunge.'
      (https://index.hu, March 2020)

b. Meredeket zuhant   a   bitcoin árfolyama.
   abrupt.ACC plunged   the   bitcoin exchange rate.POSS.3SG
   'The exchange rate of bitcoin plunged an abrupt plunge.'
   (https://index.hu, February 2020)

c. Történelmit zuhant   az elpusztíthatatlan sláger.
   historic.ACC plunged   the indestructible   hit
   'The indestructible hit plunged a historic plunge.'
   (https://24.hu, March 2020)

d. Látványosat nőtt 2010-ben a   Mitsubishi értéke.
   visible.ACC   grew 2010-INE the   Mitsubishi value.POSS.3SG
   'In 2010, the value of Mitsubishi grew a visible growth.'
   (https://www.napi.hu, May 2020)

e. a probléma megoldó készségük   rohamosat   javult
   the problem solving ability.POSS.3PL speedy.ACC   improved
   'Their problem-solving ability impoved a speedy improvement.'
   (https://cooljugator.com/hu/megold, June 2020)

This phenomenon has been noticed by Csirmaz (2008) as well, who claims that POs of class (b), which are called accusative adjectives in her account, "can also modify atelic unaccusative predicates with a degree argument" (2008: 188); cf. also den Dikken (2018: 133). Her examples are given below:[7]

(13) a. A   város   nagyot   változott/ *változott   egyet. (Csirmaz 2008: 188)
   the   city   big.ACC   changed   changed   one.ACC
   'The city changed a big change/changed a change.'
  b.Az   árfolyam   nagyot   esett/ *esett   egyet.
   the   exchange rate   big.ACC   fell   fell   one.ACC
   'The exchange rate fell a big fall/fell a fall.'

To put it differently, the author claims that the verbs *változik* 'change' and *esik* 'fall', together with other similar verbs, can take a PO with lexical content but not the lexically reduced PO *egyet* 'one.ACC'.

But as confirmed by native speakers, and as sustained by the analysis and explanation in Section 4, these verbs are not completely unacceptable with *egyet* 'one.ACC', contrary to these claims made in Csirmaz (2008) or similar claims made more recently in Farkas (2017). The sentences that were put to the test are illustrated below:

(14) a. ??/?/[OK] Az   időjárás   változott   egyet.[8]
    the   weather   changed   one.ACC
    'The weather changed a change.'
  b. ??/?/[OK] A   víz   szintje   csökkent/   emelkedett egyet.
    the   water   level.POSS.3SG   decreased   rose   one.ACC
    'The level of the water decreased a decrease/rose a rise.'
  c. ?/[OK] Az   üzemanyag   ára   esett egyet.
    the   petrol   price.POSS.3SG fell   one.ACC
    'The price of the petrol fell a fall.'
  d. ?/[OK] A   facsemete   nőtt   egyet.
    the   sapling   grew   one.ACC
    'The sapling grew a growth.'

These sentences were evaluated by 20 participants on a 1–5 Likert scale and they were judged to be neutral ('??', 10 participants), slightly acceptable ('?', 6 participants) or even perfectly acceptable ('OK', 4 participants) but not completely unacceptable or pragmatically infelicitous ('*'), as argued in Csirmaz (2008).

These examples can be completed with the following ones taken from the New Hungarian historical database (*Új Magyar történeti szövegtár*), an online collection of diverse texts belonging to different genres and written in different styles in the Early Modern Hungarian and Modern Hungarian periods (http://clara.nytud.hu/mtsz/run.cgi/first_form):

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[7] The author further argues that "modification of an unaccusative predicate without a degree argument is, however, ungrammatical" (2008: 188). Her examples are **nagyot folyt a víz* 'the water flowed a lot' and **nagyot vérzett a katona* 'the soldier bled heavily'.

[8] As remarked by an anonymous reviewer, (14a) is much worse than (14b), (14c) or (14d). This might be connected to the fact that with the latter three examples there is a clear linear scale (of water height, of price and of height), whereas the verb *változik* 'change' does not imply change along a similar linear scale.

(15) a. mintha   a   képe   világosodott volna egyet (Illyés Gyula, 1947)
          as if   the   figure.POSS.3SG lightened   had   one.ACC
          'as if his/her face had lightened to a certain extent'
    b. a második hazugságra megint nőtt   egyet   az   orra (Rónay György, 1967)
          the second lie.SUBL   again   grew   one.ACC the   nose.POSS.3SG
          'to the second lie his nose grew a growth again'
    c. még   egy kis   zsír és   a   koszt ismét javult   egyet (Bojtár Endre, 1972)
          more a   little fat   and the food   again improved   one.ACC
          'a little more fat and the food improved an improvement'
    d. tágul   egyet   a   fiú   pupillája (Sebeők János, 1980)
          dilate   one.ACC the boy   pupil of the eye.POSS.3SG
          'the pupil of the boy's eye dilates a dilatation'
    e. hol   meg   zuhant   egyet   a   hőmérséklet (Nádas Péter, 2005)
          where and   plunged   one.ACC the   temperature
          'sometimes the temperature plunged a plunge'

Moreover, as shown in Farkas & Kardos (2019b), there is a further distinction within degree achievements between the ones that are derived from an open-scale adjective and the ones that are derived from a closed-scale adjective, where it is standardly believed that the aspectual properties of deadjectival degree achievements can be attributed to the scalar structure of the base adjective.

(16) a. */??/^{OK}A   leves   hűlt/   melegedett egyet. (Farkas & Kardos 2019b: 302-303,
                      the soup   cooled   warmed   one.ACC   adaptation)
                      'The soop cooled a cooling/warmed a warming.'
    b. */?? A   tanár   sötétített   egyet   az   osztálytermen.
          the teacher   dimmed   one.ACC the   classroom.SUP
          'The teacher dimmed a dimming on the classroom.'

The difference between the way these two sentences were judged (i.e. the second sentence, which is used agentively, was not judged to be completely acceptable) is related not to the absence or presence of an animate Agent in the surface subject position but to the nature of the property scale associated with the adjective and the verb derived from it. To be more precise, degree predicates derived from an open-scale adjective (see (16a)) are more acceptable with the light noun *egyet* 'one.ACC' than predicates derived from a closed-scale adjective (see (16b)).

    These Hungarian data become extremely interesting especially if we view them from a cross-linguistic perspective. In this respect, the following English sentences built on an atelic unaccusative verb of inherently directed motion (17) and an atelic unaccusative verb of change of state (18), are all ungrammatical. In addition, it has been argued that the English verb *cool* simply does not have an NP which would represent a result state, hence the ungrammaticality of (18a); cf. de Swart (2007: 41).

(17) a. *The bird soared a graceful soar. (Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995: 173)
    b. *She rose a wobbly rise. (Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995: 173)
(18) a. *The soup cooled a quick cooling. (Tubino Blanco 2011: 91)
    b. *The clothes dried a dry. (Levin 1993: 246)

What is more, some atelic unaccusative verbs cannot occur in the COC configuration because of the lack of a rivalling transitive use of the verb in question. Take a look at (19), where the cognate reading the VP should have is the one where the nominal in the postverbal object position denotes the result of the action of descending. But the only interpretation possible is the one in which *a fast descent* is interpreted as an object which is or can be descended, similarly to a hill, a ladder or some stairs:

(19) #The tourists descended a fast descent. (de Swart 2007: 39)

Special mention should be made of the behaviour of the verb *fall* illustrated in the following three sentences:

(20) a. *The apples fell a smooth fall. (Kuno & Takami 2004: 124)
    b. ??The apples fell a short fall.
    c. The apples fell just a short fall to the lower deck, and so were not too badly bruised.

The sentence in (a) is considered ungrammatical because the CO describes the manner (and not the resultant event/state) of the falling event. This contrasts with the sentence in (b), which describes the resultant event of the falling of the apples or (c), where the speaker specifically explains why he/she has chosen to mention the resulting event (i.e., a short fall) of the apples falling by saying that the apples were not too badly bruised; cf. the discussion in Kuno & Takami (2004: 124).

These cross-linguistic challenges boil down to the basic difference between the way COs are expressed in the two languages. As opposed to English, in Hungarian there are no aspectual COs that are both semantically and morphologically related to the intransitive verb they accompany, but only POs that fulfil the function of the aspectual COs in this language and hence are not literally cognate with the matrix verb. To put it very simply, with the exception of *egyet* 'one.ACC', the pseudo-nominal that has the role of the aspectual CO in this language is expressed by an accusative-marked adjective. As this is not the morphological 'copy' of the main verb and there is not redundancy between these two building blocks of the construction, Hungarian CO-like nominals have a wider distribution.[9] Still, the question that needs to be answered is why these two subclasses of atelic unaccusative verbs impose restrictions on the POs they take and especially the light PO *egyet* 'one.ACC'. The answer to this question is given in the next section.

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[9] In addition to these unaccusative-based constructions, in Hungarian (but not in English) we also find VPs built on an unergative manner-of-motion verb that denotes the name of a vehicle; cf. the distinction between the ungrammatical **to helicopter a quick helicopter to the airport* (Macfarland 1995: 38-39) and the grammatical *vonatozni/kocsikázni/hajókázni/buszozni egyet a hétvégén* 'to travel by train/car/ship/bus on the weekend' (Farkas 2017: 126). The explanation for the ungrammaticality of the English sentence is that *helicopter* does not represent a result of the act of helicoptering but it rather names the instrument; see also de Swart (2007: 41).

4   Atelic unaccusative verbs and cognate objects in Hungarian: the analysis

The following contrasting sentences built on the verbs *esik* 'fall/drop', *emelkedik* 'rise/ increase' and *zuhan* 'plunge' summarize the data presented so far: atelic unaccusative verbs can take a CO-like nominal in Hungarian, most frequently a PO of class (b) – especially *(egy) nagyot* '(one) big.ACC', *(egy) hatalmasat* '(one) huge.ACC' and *(egy) óriásit* '(one) gigantic.ACC' but not so much the PO *(egy) jót* '(one) good.ACC' – or, more rarely, a PO of class (c), in which case we obtain a perfectly acceptable sentence (see (21a)).[10] But with the light noun *egyet* 'one.ACC', the sentence comes in varying degrees of acceptability ranging from unacceptable to grammatical (see (21b)).

(21) a. Az   árfolyam   nagyot esett/ óriásit   emelkedett/ meredeket   zuhant.
        the exchange rate big.ACC fell huge.ACC rose   abrupt.ACC plunged
        'The exchange rate fell a big fall/rose a huge rise/plunged an abrupt plunge.'
     b. */?/^{OK} Az árfolyam   esett/ emelkedett/ zuhant   egyet.
           the exchange rate   fell   rose   plunged   one.ACC
           'The exchange rate fell a fall/rose a rise/plunged a plunge.'

The question that we need to answer is why in cases such as (21b) we do not get a perfectly acceptable sentence with the light PO *egyet* 'one.ACC'. Our analysis is based on three arguments. First, as suggested by É. Kiss (p.c.), with atelic unaccusative verbs of change of state and change of location POs of class (b) behave differently than with atelic activity verbs such as *alszik* 'sleep'. As shown below, it is only in the previous case that the PO can constitute the answer to a question introduced by the degree phrases *mennyit* 'how much' or *mekkorát* 'how big':

(22) a. Mennyit/   mekkorát   esett/ emelkedett az árfolyam?   Nagyot.
        how much.ACC how big.ACC fell   rose   the exchange rate   big.ACC
        'How much did the exhange rate fall/rise? It fell a big fall/rose a big rise.'
     b. #Mennyit/   mekkorát   aludt János? Nagyot.
        how much.ACC how big.ACC slept   John   big.ACC
        'How much did John sleep? He slept a big sleep.'

In this respect the PO behaves similarly to non-subcategorized temporal POs such as *két órát* 'two hours' in a VP such as *két órát aludni* 'to sleep (for) two hours'; see also below:

(23) Mennyit/   mekkorát   aludt János?   Két   órát.
     how much.ACC how big.ACC slept John   two hour.ACC
     'How much did John sleep? He slept (for) two hours.'

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[10] The interpretation of the PO *(egy) jót* '(one) good.ACC' is different as it does not denote measure, degree or extent. Kiefer (2006: 56) defines it in the following (informal) way: it denotes an event with a comparatively longer duration, which rouses positive feelings in the referent of the Agent or Initiator. Whereas this PO is very rare with an atelic unaccusative verb, the PO *(egy) jókorát* '(one) considerable.ACC/(one) sizeable.ACC', which denotes measure, degree or extent, is possible with such a verb as illustrated by the following VP culled from the Internet: *jókorát zuhant az OTP* 'the OTP plunged a considerable/sizeable plunge' (https://privatbankar.hu, March 2020)

Second, sentences where the atelic verb is accompanied by a PO with lexical content (cf. (21a) above) are perfectly acceptable as when, for instance, the exchange rate drops or rises, we conventionally pay attention not to the change itself but to the resulting event with respect to how big the drop or increase is, that is, the degree of the change itself. With the exception of (*egy*) *jót* '(one) good.ACC', that is exactly what POs of class (b) express with atelic unaccusative verbs: they do not have a manner adverbial reading but an adverbial interpretation that expresses measure, degree or extent. In addition, POs of class (c) either provide further description to the change or, due to their (manner) adverbial interpretation, describe the way the change expressed by the verb occurred. In this respect, the sentence given in (12b) above, repeated here as (24a), can be rephrased as shown in (24b):

(24) a. Meredeket zuhant a bitcoin árfolyama.
    abrupt.ACC plunged the bitcoin exchange rate.POSS.3SG
    'The exchange rate of bitcoin plunged an abrupt plunge.'
 b. Meredeken zuhant a bitcoin árfolyama.
    abruptly plunged the bitcoin exchange rate.POSS.3SG
    'The exchange rate of bitcoin plunged in an abrupt way.'

In other words, the transitivized sentence in (a) is roughly equivalent to the intransitive sentence in (b), which includes the adverbial counterpart of the PO *meredeket* 'abrupt.ACC'.

In contrast, sentences where the same atelic verb is accompanied by the lexically reduced *egyet* 'one.ACC' (cf. (21b) above) only express that there has been a drop or increase in the exchange rate but they do not specify the (precise) extent or give details with respect to the degree to which this event has taken place. This is similar to English-type of COCs where, as we have already seen, without the pre- or post-modifier, the CO is semantically tautological and serves no useful purpose; therefore, there is no justification for its use as shown by the ungrammaticality of the VPs *to sleep a sleep*, *to smile a smile* or *to laugh a laugh*. Similarly, with these verbs the light PO *egyet* 'one.ACC' is semantically tautological and serves no useful purpose as it only expresses that there has been a drop or increase in the exchange rate. But the use of the POs of class (b), however, becomes justified precisely because of the presence of the modifier and of the lexical content of the entire pseudo-nominal, which contributes new information about the action denoted by the verb. In this particular case, the lexical content on the PO (*nagy* 'big', *hatalmas* 'huge' and *óriási* 'gigantic') contributes an important information to the change expressed by the matrix verb as it expresses the extent of the change. This is precisely the reason why Kuno & Takami (2004) argue that the following English sentences are perfectly acceptable without the speaker explaining why he/she has chosen to specifically mention the resulting event of the stock market falling.

(25) a. The stock market slid a surprising 2% slide today. (Kuno & Takami 2004: 116)
    b. The stock market dropped its largest drop in three years today.

With atelic unaccusative verbs, what Hungarian POs of class (b) do, first and foremost, is express or highlight the degree of the change expressed by the verb. Interestingly, as opposed to POs of class (c), which (can) have a manner adverbial interpretation, POs of class (b) do not have a manner adverbial interpretation and are not in free variation with their manner adverbial counterpart (cf. also Farkas 2019). Consequently, the sentence in (26a), where the

PO *nagyot* 'big.ACC' expresses the degree or extent of the change, is not equivalent to the sentence in (26b), where the adverb *nagyon* 'very much' underlines the intensity of the change.

(26) a. Az   árfolyam   nagyot   esett/ emelkedett/ zuhant.
         the   exchange rate   big.ACC fell   rose   plunged
         'The exchange rate fell a big fall/rose a big rise/plunged a big plunge.'
     b. Az   árfolyam   nagyon   esett/ emelkedett/ zuhant.
        the   exchange rate   very much   fell   rose   plunged
        'The exchange rate fell/rose/plunged very much.'

In addition, in this pair of sentences the singular PO in (a) expresses a single occurrence of change that had the property of being a significant or considerable change in terms of the degree. But the adverb in (b), in the absence of a delimiting particle/PP or another telicizing element, gives rise to an interpretation where the change occurred repeatedly or continually. This interpretation is also achieved by the pluralized PO *nagyokat* 'big.PL.ACC', where the plural marking on the PO refers not to the plurality of an already introduced referential entity (e.g. *árfolyam* 'exchange rate') but to the plurality (or repetition) of the event itself. Proof of this comes from the fact that such a pluralized PO can also accompany a verb the single argument of which is expressed by a nominal in the singular, as illustrated below:

(27) Az   árfolyam   nagyokat   esett/ emelkedett/ zuhant.
     the   exchange rate   big.PL.ACC   fell   rose   plunged
     'The exchange rate repeatedly fell a big fall/rose a big rise/plunged a big plunge.'

Third, keeping in mind the long-standing debate on the precise semantic status of the CO – which can denote an event (Massam 1990; Horita 1996; Marantz 2005; Horrocks & Stavrou 2006, 2010; Real Puigdollers 2008), a resultant state or object (Macfarland 1995; Kuno & Takami 2004) or both an event and a result in the sense that the result is an instantiation of the event (Melloni & Masini 2017) – we notice that *egyet*-VPs based on an atelic unaccusative verb can also be associated – besides a (possible) eventive interpretation – with a reading where the PO is interpreted as an elliptic measure, degree or extent phrase denoting one unit, stage or degree of change along a given abstract dimension such as temperature, length, price and others. According to this, the PO *egyet* 'one.ACC' in (21b) can also be interpreted as the elliptic nominal *egy pontot* 'one point.ACC', for instance, as shown in (28) (in such a case, in *egyet* 'one.ACC', in the absence of a head noun, the accusative case marking *-t* is attached to *egy* 'one' (and the linking vowel *-e-*)). That such and similar accusative-marked measure, degree or extent phrases, which explicitly express the degree of change, can accompany atelic unaccusative verbs is further illustrated in (29) below; cf. also Csirmaz (2008: 199):

(28) Az   árfolyam   esett/ emelkedett/ zuhant   egy   pontot.
     the   exchange rate   fell   rose   plunged   one   point.ACC
     'The exchange rate fell/rose/plunged one point.'
(29) a. Egy   fokot   hűlt   a   levegő.
        one   degree.ACC   cooled the air
        'The air cooled one degree.'

b. A   víz   szintje   egy   métert   csökkent.
   the water level.POSS.3SG   one   meter.ACC   decreased
   'The level of the water decreased by one meter.'

c. Az   üzemanyag   ára   egy   centet   esett.
   the petrol   price.POSS.3SG one   cent.ACC   fell
   'The price of the petrol fell one cent.'

d. A   kapcsolatuk   mélyült   egy   árnyalatot.
   the relationship.POSS.3PL deepened   one   nuance.ACC
   'Their relationship deepened to a small extent.'

In such and similar cases, the accusative-marked phrase names the precise measure, degree or extent of the change, and names the endstate that must be reached for the predication to be true; cf. also Hay, Kennedy & Levin (1999) and the references cited therein. To put it in Oltra-Massuet's (2013) terms, who discusses English and Spanish examples, in such and similar cases the CO-like element overtly lexicalizes or materializes the abstract scale encoded in these verbs that is used to evaluate their progress so that the event can establish a relation of measurement with its theme argument by assigning some value to it on that scale, hence the term 'degree cognate object' (2013: 23); cf. also Kennedy (1999) and Kennedy & McNally (1999, 2005).

In sum, atelic unaccusative verbs in Hungarian can take a PO of class (b), which, with the exception of (*egy*) *jót* '(one) good.ACC', expresses or highlights the degree of the change of the event expressed by the verb. In addition, these verbs can also take a PO of class (c), which either further describes the type of change the referent of the single argument undergoes or is associated with an adverbial interpretation and expresses the way the change takes place. As opposed to these, the light PO *egyet* 'one.ACC', which is not completely unacceptable with these verbs but comes in varying degrees of acceptability, only expresses that there has been a certain change in the referent of the nominal occupying the syntactic subject position but it does not specify the (precise) extent or degree of change.

5   Conclusion

In the present paper, we have taken a close look at Hungarian atelic unaccusative verbs occurring with a PO that fulfils the function of the CO in this language. The key question we have provided an answer to revolves around the restrictions these verbs pose on the type of PO they select: (i) the lexically reduced PO *egyet* 'one.ACC'; (ii) POs with more lexical content such as (*egy*) *nagyot* '(one) big.ACC', (*egy*) *hatalmasat* '(one) huge.ACC' and (*egy*) *óriásit* '(one) gigantic.ACC', which do not have a manner adverbial interpretation but express extent, or highlight the degree of the change of the event expressed by the verb; and (iii) POs with lexical content, which can also have a (manner) adverbial interpretation, such as (*egy*) *meredeket* '(one) abrupt.ACC', (*egy*) *borzalmasat* '(one) terrible.ACC' and others. We have showed that atelic unaccusative verbs in Hungarian are compatible, first and foremost, with POs of class (b) but, contrary to the claims made in the literature (cf. Csirmaz 2008), they are not completely unacceptable with the light pseudo-object *egyet* 'one.ACC' either.

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