1. Terminology

The term ‘adverbial participle’ is one of the most often used terms for Hungarian participles formed with the suffixes -va/-ve and -ván/-vén. These participles occur in free adjunct clauses that function as adverbials of time and cause. Other common terms are ‘converbs’, ‘conjunctive participles’, ‘gerunds’, ‘sentence equivalents’ etc. Given that the Hungarian ‘adverbial participle’ has different functions, not all of which can be considered adverbial, I will use the neutral terms va-participles and ván-participles in order to avoid confusion.

2. Data

2.1 Adverbial adjunct clauses

Va- and ván-participles occur in adverbial adjunct clauses. These adjunct clauses bear a structurally loose relation to the main clause. They generally appear in presentential position and are separated from the main clause by an intonation break and a comma. There is no adjacency condition on the participle and the main verb. The semantics of the relation between the main clause and the adjunct clause is vague and underspecified: The adjunct clause usually contains an empty subject that is coreferential with an argument of the finite verb in the main clause. The antecedent is most often the subject of the main verb (1a), but can also be the object, an implicit argument (1b) or can correspond to the ‘point of view’ (1c) of the main clause. In this construction any verb can serve as the base verb, irrespective of the number and type of its arguments and its aspectual properties. The aspect of the va-participle matches the Aktionsart of the verb from which the participle is formed. This shows that the suffix -va is not an aspectual operator. If -va attaches to a perfective verb, the participle expresses an
event preceding the event of the main verb (1a,c). When it attaches to an imperfective verb, it describes a simultaneous event (1b). The participial phrase always has active interpretation.\(^2\)

(1) a. A vonatot le-kés-vén/-ve, az moziról is lemaradtam.  

the train-ACC PV-miss-VÁN/-VA the movie too missed-1SG  

‘Having missed the train, I missed the movie as well.’

b. Ismer-vén/-ve a helyzetet, úgy tunik, hogy nincs megoldás.  

know-VÁN/-VA the situation so seemed that is not solution  

‘Knowing the situation, it seems (to me) that there is no solution.’

c. Későn érkezvén, minden hotel zára volt.  

late arrive-VÁN every hotel closed was  

‘Having arrived late, every hotel was closed.’

Van-participles also allow lexical DP subjects giving rise to absolutive constructions. Participles with \(-va/-ve\), on the other hand, never occur with an overtly realized subject. In these absolutive constructions the lexical subject of van-participial phrases receives nominative case. Apart from the availability of nominative case the absolutive exhibits the same structural characteristics as the adjunct clauses discussed above.

(2) Az elnök megérkez-vén/*-ve, elkezdödött a ünnepség.  

the president PV-arrive-VÁN/*-VA started the ceremony  

‘The president having arrived, the ceremony started.’

2.2 Predicative adjuncts (NP- and VP-modifiers)

As NP- and VP-modifier, in present-day Hungarian only \(-va/-ve\) can be used. These modifying adjuncts have either passive or active meaning depending on the base verb. Passive meaning arises when the participle is formed from transitive perfective predicates (3a). Active meaning arises in all other cases.

(3) a. János kötelekkel *(meg)-kötöz-ve ült a szobában.  

János ropes-with PV-tie-VA/ sat-3SG the room-in  

‘János was sitting in the room tied up with ropes.’

b. A munkától *(el)-fárad-va érkezett haza.  

the work PV-get-exhausted-VA arrived home  

‘He arrived home exhausted from work.’

c. A hajó lassan süllyed-ve közeledett a parthoz.  

the ship-NOM slowly sink-VA approached-3SG the shore-to  

‘The ship was approaching the shore, sinking slowly.’

d. Mari siet-ve olvasta a levelet.
Mary hurry-VA read-3SG the letter-ACC
‘Mary read the letter quickly.’

Sentences (3a–d) are neutral sentences and the participles occupy the same structural positions that VP-adverbs and NP-modifying adjectives can occur in. The main difference between examples (1a–c) and (3a–d) is that while in the former case there is no adjacency requirement, in the latter the participle must either be adjacent to the finite main verb, or if not, the only element that can intervene between the participle and the verb is a focused phrase or negation.

Semantically, the participles in these positions are secondary predicates modifying an argument of the main verb (the subject, the direct object, the causee complement of a causative verb, or certain thematically restricted oblique complements) with respect to circumstance (3a–c) or the event argument of the main verb with respect to manner (3d).

2.3 Be+va-participle: the stative resultative

In the be+va-participle construction only the formant -va/-ve can be used. The construction can only be formed from perfective transitive and unaccusative verbs. As (4c,d) show, unergatives and imperfectives cannot occur in this construction. When formed from transitives, the participle always has a passive interpretation:

(4) a. A levél meg van ír-va.
   the letter PV is write-VA
   ‘The letter is written.’

b. A kabát el volt szakad-va.
   the coat PV was tear-VA
   ‘The coat was torn.’

c. *A fiú el van úsz-va.
   the boy PV is swim-VA
   *‘The boy is swum away.’

d. *A levél van ír-va.
   the letter is write-VA
   ‘The letter is written.’

The va-participle in this construction does not have any verbal characteristics. It invariably refers to a state which came about as a result of the event expressed by the base verb. The subject of the construction is interpreted as the subject of resultant state. The fact that the construction does not have an eventive interpretation can be seen from the following:
i. Phrases compatible only with eventive readings such as *in a minute* cannot appear in this construction:

(5) *A levél egy perc alatt meg volt írva.
   the letter one minute during PV was write-VA
   'The letter was written in a minute.'

ii. Adverbials expressing an exact point in time (such as *at 4 o’clock*) can only indicate the moment when the state is in existence and cannot refer to the time when the preceding action took place.

iii. Adverbs of manner like *quickly* that can modify only eventive predicates cannot occur in the construction.

iv. No *by*-phrase can appear to express the agent of the action.

(6) *A fal le van fest-ve a fiú által.
   the wall PV is paint-VA the boy by
   'The wall is painted by the boy.'

As a consequence of the lack of an (implicit) agent, no adverbial expressing intentionality can modify the participle.

In some cases the construction contains an oblique marked argument or a *by*-phrase, but these elements differ from canonical agentive *by*-phrases. They are mostly non-human and their meaning is that of cause, instrument, manner of the event. If human, they acquire qualitative force characterizing the surface subject (typically with creative verbs such as *write, compose, found, build* etc.):

(7) a. Mari ki van merül-ve a sok munkától.
   Mary PV is get-exhausted-VA the much work-ABL
   'Mary is exhausted from work.'

b. A kérelem szakértő által van meg-fogalmaz-va.
   The petition expert by is PV-composed-VA
   'The petition is worded by an expert.'

Summarizing, we can distinguish three different syntactic constructions where *va*-participles and/or *ván*-participles can occur:

a. Adverbial adjunct clause (active diathesis)
   (including nominative absolute constructions (only *ván*-participles))

b. Modifying adjunct (active or passive depending on the base verb)

c. BE+va-participle: stative resultative
3. Analysis

3.1 Lexical uniqueness and underspecification of -va

As we have seen, va-participles can have several functions. The question now can be raised whether the differences between the above identified constructions imply distinct morphemes that happen to share the phonological shape /va/ or whether we are dealing with a single morpheme.

Although in many European languages there is no formal distinction between participles used predicatively, attributively or in adverbial subordination, participial phrases used in different constructions have inherent values for voice. In English, for instance, the multifunctional morpheme -ing always forms participles with active voice, while -en, when appearing without any auxiliary, can only receive passive interpretation.

The categorial and functional variation exhibited by participles has long been the topic of linguistic investigations. There are several analyses trying to unify different participial constructions involving the same morphological form (Ackema 1994, Borer 1988; forthcoming, Milsark 1988 see others). The basic tenet of these analyses is that there is only one lexical morpheme and it can occur in various constructions as a consequence of its underspecification in the lexicon.

I would like to propose that -va is lexically unitary and has a limited set of properties associated with it that are constant irrespective of the constructions in which it appears. It is freely inserted into head positions compatible with its lexically (under)specified features. The distinct properties of the derived structures follow from an interaction between general principles regarding Case assignment, (secondary) predication, the semantic properties of the base verb and the functional structure dominating the participle. An immediate consequence of this claim is that the participial morpheme itself cannot be held responsible for the attested voice alternation. A solution to this problem will be suggested in Section 3.4.

Let us suppose that the morpheme -va has the following lexical specifications:

\[(8) \quad \begin{array}{ll}
\text{i.} & \text{-va: } [\text{V}_-][-\text{finite}] \\
\text{ii.} & \text{it must be identified as predicative} \\
\text{iii.} & \text{it is categorially underspecified as [+V]} \\
\end{array}\]

From (ii, iii) it follows that va-participles are predicates that are categorially specified as verbal or as adjectival. Let us consider the possible scenarios that can arise.
3.2 **Clausal participles**

Assuming that functional categories can be categorially underspecified (see Borer 1988, forthcoming) the morpheme -va can be inserted into a functional head taking VP as its complement and receive full feature specification [+V, -N] from the verb through secondary percolation (cf. Lieber 1992) as a result of head incorporation. The lack of finite tense and person agreement precludes nominative case assignment therefore the participle has a PRO subject.

(9) \[ [TP \text{ PRO} \{ \text{T V}_j^{+va} [\text{VP} t_i [\text{V} t_j (\text{DP})...]] \}] \]

Adverbial adjunct clauses and nominative absolutive constructions have a clausal structure in the sense that functional projections above VP can be present (NegP, FP, QP, CP). The event argument of the verb is saturated by its own Tense projection after V-to-T movement takes place. T, in turn is anchored to the C head of the participial clause in the sense of Enç (1987). The participial phrase functions as a temporal adjunct clause and refers to an event simultaneous with or anterior to the main verb depending on the perfectivity of the base verb. The clause has either a lexical/pro or a PRO subject depending on the case-assigning properties of the participial form.

Since the adjunct clause is mostly in a presentential position, the c-command requirement for structural control is not met. Furthermore, in (1b) the antecedent is an implicit argument and in (1c) control obtains without any obvious antecedent. I propose that in such structures we are dealing with logophoric control and in case of va-participles the controlled argument is PRO (cf. Williams 1994). Ván-participles are different from va-participles in one important aspect: they license lexical subjects. I claim that the morpheme -n is an element functioning as an agreement marker and is responsible for nominative case assignment. When no overt DP subject is present in ván-participial phrases, we have a pro subject, which can also be logophorically controlled.

Evidence for the claim that -n is a subject agreement marker comes from both diachronic and synchronic considerations. In two codices (Vienna Codex and Munich Codex dating from 15th century) ván-participles bear overt subject agreement morphology. The subject agreement paradigm is identical to the agreement paradigm found on inflected infinitival forms in Hungarian. In 3rd person singular the predicted form would be -vája/-véje, yet such forms are not attested in the literature. 3rd person singular subject always goes together with the formant -ván/-vén. This strongly suggests that -n is the 3SG agreement marker and can therefore assign nominative case in absolutive constructions to overt DP subjects. Furthermore, in subjunctive mood -n also functions as marker of 3SG agreement.
3.3 **NP- and VP-modifying adjuncts with active meaning**

The derivation in case of NP- and VP-modifying adjuncts starts exactly like in the case of adjunct clauses discussed in the previous section. The participle has all the base verb’s characteristics and projects its own TP. If the base verb is transitive the participle can assign accusative case. However, contrary to the structure of adjunct clauses, no further functional projection is present. Since no nominative case is available, the participle has a PRO subject coindexed with one of the arguments of the main verb. The participle has no CP dominating it, therefore the event argument of the base verb is anchored to C of the main clause giving rise to an eventive interpretation of the participle, where the events described by the main verb and that of the participle must be simultaneous.

Finally, specifying the semantics of a modifying adjunct in the spirit of Davidsonian event semantics gives us the right result concerning the obligatory simultaneous interpretation of the participle (example (3c)):

Participle predicating of individuals:

\[(10) \exists e,e'[\text{sinking}(e) \& \text{Theme}(\text{PRO}_i) \& \text{approaching}(e') \& \text{Agent}(\text{boat}_i)]\]

It thus follows that only imperfective verbs can serve as base verbs in this construction. Particiles formed from perfective verbs always result in telic predicates and cannot express an event going on simultaneously with the event of the main verb.

The question can be raised here what excludes a derivation where -va takes the head V as its complement instead of the phrasal VP resulting in morphologically complex lexical head. If that were the correct derivation for all instances of va-participles, we could not account for the fact that va-suffixation is possible to verbs containing the causative morpheme -(t)at or the archaic (verbal) passive morpheme -(t)at. It can be argued on independent grounds that a verb containing (one of) these suffixes is a VP rather than a V.

In fact, lexical derivation is not excluded. I propose that this is the structure of va-participles functioning as manner adverbials, modifying the event argument of the main verb (see example 3d). In these cases we have a lexical derivation, the participle is dominated by a terminal node. No VP is present within the participle. This makes semantic drift possible as opposed to syntactically derived va-participles (see also note 7 on semantic drift deriving postpositions). Thus words like sietve (hurry-VA) ‘quikly’, fordítva (turn-VA) ‘upside down’, játszva (play-VA) ‘easily’, törve (break-VA) ‘not fluently’ are listed in the lexicon together with their special meanings. These items contain no event variable and the only property that remains constant is their predicative nature.
3.4 Passive modifying adjuncts and the stative resultative

The derivation of va-participles in case the of modifying adjuncts with passive meaning and in case of stative resultatives is identical. Differences follow from the presence of the copula in the stative resultative construction. The suffix -va is inserted into a lexical head. Given our assumptions about lexical categories, it must be fully specified. Since it is specified only as [+V], the full categorial specification [+V,+N] is also compatible with its inherent features, i.e. -va can also appear under A. It takes a complement VP projected by the base verb. Head movement of V takes place resulting in a participle with adjectival properties. The participle cannot have an eventive interpretation since predicative adjectives can only describe properties/states of their subjects. It becomes stative through the adjectival projection above VP.

As we have seen in Section 2.3, in stative resultatives no implicit external argument is present and the syntactic subject corresponds to the direct object of the base verb. Now it seems that we have reached a contradiction. While the presence of a full-fledged VP inside the A-head implies a syntactic derivation of the participle, the loss of the external (agent) argument signals that the derivation must be lexical to avoid a violation of the Projection Principle of Chomsky (1981). To solve the apparent contradiction, I follow Kratzer (1994) in assuming that the external argument is not part of the verb’s lexical specification. It is introduced by a separate functional Voice head which, at the same time also assigns accusative case to the direct object. From this it follows that the absence of an external argument and the lack of accusative case are compatible with the presence of VP and consequently with adverbial modification.

In case of stative resultatives a copula is present with tense and agreement features and the only syntactically present argument receives nominative case in Spec,TP and corresponds to the internal (patient) argument of the verb. In NP-modifying adjuncts with passive diathesis, there is no functional projection above AP that could make nominative case available. It follows that the internal argument of the base verb can only be realized as PRO in Spec,AP. AP is adjoined to VP of the matrix verb and PRO is controlled by one of the arguments of the main verb (see example (3a,b)). In other words, participles describing the resultant state of a telic predicate will exhibit characteristics associated with passive voice in that their surface subject corresponds to the internal argument of the base verb. Such correlation between predicates expressing a resultant state (stative resultatives) and passive voice is widely attested in completely unrelated languages (see Comrie 1981, 1984). Yet, the defining property of (verbal) passive is the presence of an implicit argument as a result of syntactic ‘demotion’ of that argument.
and va-participles discussed in this section do not have passive meaning in this sense. Note that this syntactic account does not explain two important and closely related characteristics of this construction:

a. When formed from transitive verbs the ‘affectedness’ constraint is at work. The participle is only acceptable if the object argument of the verb is affected. From unaccusative verbs the participle can always be derived since they have a patient argument. From unergatives the construction cannot be derived.

b. ‘Contextual’ factors can change the grammaticality of the construction. An example given by Alberti (1997) contains the transitive verb *see*. Objects of seeing are usually not affected. In a game of hide-and-seek, however, the following sentence is judged acceptable:

(11) Meg vagy látva.
PV are see-VA
‘You have been seen.’

Due to limitations of space I cannot go into a detailed explanation of these facts. Here I simply sketch a tentative explanation for these facts. Resultatives are adjectival in the sense that they describe a resultant state. From a functional point of view it becomes most useful to characterize something by means of a resulting state if that object or person is affected by the previous event. Thus the above characteristics follow from the semantics of the resultative participle. It is most natural with patient arguments as opposed to the passive participle which is direct-object oriented irrespective of the ‘affectedness constraint’.

3.5 Adjectival passive or stative resultative participle?

The characteristics of va-participles formed from perfective transitive and unaccusative verbs remind us of adjectival passive participles of Germanic and Romance languages. Yet, unlike adjectival passive participles, va-participles never occur attributively and differ from adjectives in several respects: they cannot receive case endings, and cannot be subject to further derivation. Furthermore, Hungarian has no verbal (periphrastic) passive containing the same passive participle. Analyses deriving adjectival passive participles from verbal passive participles by externalization would not predict the existence of adjectival participles expressing the resultant state of a preceding event without the simultaneous existence of verbal passive participle (see Levin and Rappaport 1986 for such an analysis). Hungarian seems to be one of those languages where the concept of resultative was grammaticalized (resulting in passive diathesis)
independently of the existence of a verbal passive.\textsuperscript{10} From a broader typological perspective Hungarian fits nicely together with a group of languages which have resultatives but no passive and where resultatives cannot be used attributively. Adjectival passives participle and resultative participle are two terms for the same concept. The latter, however, is more appropriate for the Hungarian \textit{va}-participle since the participle itself is not passive and does not share the distributional properties of adjectives.

The observation made here supports de Groot (1987), who also argues against analysing \textit{va}-participles appearing with the copula (predicative verbal adverbials in his terms) as passive and claims that “these constructions are aspectual, i.e., stative and resultative in the first place.”\textsuperscript{11}

\textbf{4. Focusing in \textit{va}- and \textit{ván}-participial phrases}

The claim made above that adverbial clauses are full-fledged CPs differing from finite (adjunct) clauses only in the absence of [+finite] Tense is supported by the following fact. Focusing and sentential negation exhibit the same characteristics as in finite clauses, implying that the functional projections FP and NegP are present in the adverbial clause:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(12)] a. \textit{FP Csak a felesége} \textbf{betegedvén meg}, János a gyerekeit elvitte sielni.
\begin{flushright}
\textit{only the wife-his fall-ill-\textit{ván} PV John the children-poss took ski-INF}
\end{flushright}
\textquote{‘Only his wife having fallen ill, John took his children to ski.’}

b. \textit{*[FP Csak a felesége] megbetegedvén}, János a gyerekeit elvitte sielni.
\end{enumerate}

In (12a) the focusing results in the preverbal element following the \textit{va}-participle just like in finite clauses the preverbal elements must follow the finite verb when a focused element is present.

In contrast to the examples in (12a,b), when the participle functions as a resultative participle no functional projections are present above VP. Consequently there is no place for a focused element within the participial constituent:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(13)] a. \textit{*[FP Csak papirba] csomagol-va be} el-küldtem/küldtem el az ajándékot.
\begin{flushright}
\textit{only paper-ILL wrap-VA PV PV-sent-1SG/sent-1SG sent the present the present}
\end{flushright}
\textquote{‘I sent the present wrapped up only in paper.’}

b. \textit{[FP Csak papirba becsomagol-va] küldtem el az ajándékot}.
As (13b) shows only the whole participial phrase ‘wrapped up in paper’ can be focused forcing the main verb to precede its preverbal element.

5. Summary

Much of this paper has been devoted to the study of a morphological derivation where identical morphological forms display different syntactic and semantic properties. It has been argued that the ambiguous behaviour of va-participles with respect to category and voice can be derived from an interplay of the (idiosyncratic) lexical specification of the morpheme, universal properties of verbal and adjectival predicates and the widely attested correlation between passive orientation of stative resultative constructions. The possibility of semantic shift accompanied with recategorization and/or loss of the verb’s argument(s) has been made to follow from the availability of va-suffixation both pre-syntactically (lexically), and syntactically.

Notes

1. The difference between -va/-ve and -ván/-vén will be discussed below. Whether the form -va/-ván or -vel/-vén occurs is determined by vowel harmony.
2. I use the notation PV for preverbal element. Preverbs, among other things, perfectivize verbal predicates.
3. Defining ‘adverb’ as modifiers of verbs, or in Davidson’s terminology as “simple predicates of events” allows us to unify NP- and VP-modifying va-participles. Adjunct va-participles are one-place predicates and depending on the lexical semantics of the base verb they can predicate either of an individual (x) or of an event/state (e) argument.
4. For reasons to use this term see Section 3.4 and 3.5.
5. In this section I use -va when the distinction between -va and -ván is not relevant. See Section 3.2 for discussion of the difference between the two formants.
6. This can be seen in reduced relatives and in participles used attributively, where we can get rid of the semantic contribution of the auxiliaries that are present in finite contructions. (For analysis deriving the active properties of perfect participles from the presence of the auxiliary have see e.g. Hoekstra 1984.)
7. The few -va/-ve forms that acquired prepositional status (e.g., múlva “after”, kezdve “beginning from”) do not represent arguments against the validity (i-iii) above. We can assume that these prepositions are listed lexically together with their categorial feature specifications and their derivational history is not transparent. In these lexicalized items recategorization of a verbal participle took place.
8. Since accusative case is available, presence of AgrO or some other functional projection responsible to accusative case assignment must be allowed for. See below in main text for the assumption concerning presence of VoiceP assigning accusative case and introducing the external argument.

9. See Kratzer (1994) for detailed argumentation supporting this assumption. This assumption implies, of course, a slight modification of the structure in (9). PRO is not inside VP but rather in [spec, VoiceP] and T takes (minimally) VoiceP as its complement.

10. Both Borer (forthcoming) and Kratzer (1994) argue that adjectival passives are not derived from a verbal passive. Their analyses make the right prediction concerning the possibility of adjectival passives independently of verbal passives in some languages.

11. For an opposing view see Alberti (1997). He claims that 'predicative verbal adverbials' are formed by the application of passive defined on the basis of preferring the patient instead of suppressing the agent. Due to limitations of space a detailed critique of his analysis cannot be given here.

References


Borer, H. (forthcoming) Parallel Morphology


