

ON THE HUNGARIAN VERBAL PARADIGM WITH THE SUFFIX *-IK*. A FUNCTIONAL APPROACH

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Abstract

In this paper I would like to discuss the -ik paradigm (associated prototypically with passive, reflexive, reciprocal and middle voice in Hungarian) in the framework of functional semantics based on Langacker's meaning and composite structure model and the prototype theory. After summarizing the theories of traditional historical linguistics, I propose a new possible explanation of the paradigm by concentrating on the procedure of attention shift. By focusing on the starting point of the paradigm, the 3rd person singular -ik element, I highlight the causes of the semantic changes of the paradigm, its appearance in new verbal groups as compared to its original function, on the basis of the hypothesis that the -ik element has not only inflectional but also derivational properties. I conclude my study by outlining possible directions of future research, including questions and problems about the afore-mentioned hypothesis; the relationship between the -ik element and other derivatives; the concerns of aspectuality; and particularly the question of the middle voice, as developed in Suzanne Kemmer's monography (1993).

1. Introduction

In this paper I would like to offer a new approach to investigating the *-ik* paradigm, its birth and changes throughout the history of the Hungarian language, within the framework of functional cognitive linguistics. Langacker's semantic and composite structure model and the prototype theory allow us to answer the questions about the paradigm's birth and semantic changes. I attempt to explain the birth of the paradigm (at any rate of the paradigm's basic element, the 3rd person singular *-ik*) with the help of a metonymic semantic procedure referred to as attention shift. My hypothesis is that the *-ik* element as the basis of a new paradigm has not only inflectional but also derivational properties; its derivational properties allowed the paradigm to occur in different verbal groups in the course of the history of Hungarian.

This paper does not attempt to answer all the questions it raises, rather it reports on interim results of an ongoing research project. But I think it is important to raise these questions because they may bring us closer to understanding the functioning of this extraordinary paradigm.

1.1. Verbal inflections in the Hungarian language

The properties and relations of finite verbs are represented by inflectional elements (suffixes) in Hungarian. Not only are the morphemes for denoting tense and mood added to the base form of a verb but person and number are also expressed this way. In the Hungarian language three (or more precisely two and a half) paradigms exist to express number and person relations: the definite one, the general one (they are full paradigms), and the defective *-ik* paradigm. Their historical evolution is closely connected to each other and to the problem of marking the object as well. The defi-

nite paradigm is used in the case of transitive verbs when their object is definite (e.g. *Péter a húga naplóját olvassa* ‘Peter is reading his sister’s diary.’). The general paradigm is used with intransitive verbs (*Péter fut* ‘Peter is running.’), and with transitive verbs with an indefinite object (*Péter egy könyvet olvas* ‘Peter is reading a book.’). These two paradigms are complete, i.e. they have their own conjugations in every person, number, mood and tense (see Table 1 for the conjugation of verbal paradigms). They represent a total opposition to each other.

The third paradigm is the so-called *-ik* paradigm. It is not complete, namely it does not have its own suffixes in every number and tense (in past and future tenses and in the plural the verbs take the general paradigm’s suffixes). In respect of form, it can be distinguished from the other two paradigms; however, its function is harder to define, it is associated prototypically with the passive, reflexive, reciprocal and middle voices. The current descriptive grammars define its function as identical to the general paradigm; on the standpoint of historical linguistics see 3.3. The *-ik* paradigm may be used both with intransitive verb and transitive ones with indefinite objects, thus it is indeed synonymous with the general paradigm. In contrast, the *-ik* paradigm cannot occur with any intransitive or transitive verbs without an object. Nowadays, only 4% of Hungarian verbs can be conjugated in this way. The general and the *-ik* conjugations are interchangeable only in one direction: the *-ik* conjugated verbs may appear with the suffixes of the general paradigm in each person, mood and tense, except for third person singular, declarative mood, present tense. (Moreover, from the 16–17th century there has been a tendency in the Hungarian language to replace the morphemes of the *-ik* paradigm by the morphemes of the general paradigm.) Nevertheless, the morphemes of the *-ik* paradigm cannot occur on non-*-ik* verbs. For example, the present tense first person singular in declarative mood form of the verb *eszik* may and does appear in language use both in the forms of *eszem valamit* (‘I am eating something’, with the suffix of the *-ik* paradigm) and *eszek valamit* (with the same meaning, with the suffix of the general paradigm). (The question of whether both forms are “appropriate” would lead to the question of norms, an issue that is beyond the scope of the present article. Suffice it to state that native speakers know, use and understand both versions.) Still, non-*-ik* verbs like *olvas* are only used in the form of *olvasok valamit* ‘I read something’, but **olvasom valamit* is odd for native speakers. It is important to note that in dictionaries, the lexical forms of the verbs are given in the general conjugation in present tense third person singular in declarative mood, but *-ik* verbs represent an exception: the lexical forms of these verbs are given in *-ik* conjugation in the third person singular, in present tense in declarative mood.

	general paradigm	definite paradigm	-ik paradigm
S/1	-k <i>írok</i> ‘I write (sg)’	-m <i>írom</i> ‘I write (that)’	-m <i>úszom</i> ‘I swim’
S/2	-sz/ l <i>írsz</i> ‘you write (sg)’	-d <i>írod</i> ‘you write (that)’	-l <i>úszol</i> ‘you swim’
S/3	Ø <i>ír</i> ‘he/she writes (sg)’	-ja/-i <i>írja</i> ‘he/she writes (that)’	-ik <i>úszik</i> ‘he/she swims’
P/1	-unk <i>írunk</i> ‘we write (sg)’	-juk <i>írjuk</i> ‘we write (that)’	– <i>úszunk</i> ‘we swim’
P/2	-tok <i>írtok</i> ‘you write (sg)’	-játok/-itek <i>írjátok</i> ‘you write (that)’	– <i>úsztok</i> ‘you swim’
P/3	-nak <i>írnak</i> ‘they write (sg)’	-ják/-ik <i>írják</i> ‘they write (that)’	– <i>úsznak</i> ‘they swim’

Table 1: The Hungarian verbal paradigms (cf. Keszler ed. 2000, Kiss–Pusztai eds. 2003)

The verbal paradigm with *-ik* has been studied relatively rarely in Hungarian linguistics over the last few decades. As regards its study from a historical aspect, it was last dealt with in detail in the dissertation of Magdolna R. Hutás (1972), and by Erzsébet E. Abaffy (1978 and 1992). Of the descriptive grammars, *Magyar grammatika* (Keszler ed. 2000) and *Új magyar nyelvtan* (É. Kiss – Kiefer – Siptár 2003) discuss the paradigm, but they do not distinguish the paradigm with *-ik* from the other two paradigms beyond their formal characteristics. Kiefer's *Strukturális magyar nyelvtan* (Kiefer ed. 2000) does not even discuss the paradigm with *-ik*, it concentrates only on the main rules of inflection, and regarding those rules the authors' opinion is that the *-ik* paradigm is not different from the other two paradigms. In addition to the characteristics of the form, however, it is useful to examine the functional characteristics, which make the paradigm with *-ik* unique in the Hungarian language.

1.2. The structure of the paper

In the following sections, I will first review the theories of classical historical linguistics before turning to the possibilities and problematic issues raised by the line of research which examines the emergence and functional changes of the paradigm with *-ik* within the framework of functional cognitive linguistics. This framework makes it possible to examine the instantiations of the paradigm as it functions within a clause (cf. Langacker 1987). By applying the continuum-principle (of lexicon, morphology and syntax, cf. Langacker 1987), some features of the paradigm, for which there is no explanation in the traditional structural approach, can also be studied. Such a characteristic feature is, for instance, that the paradigm appears only on certain groups of verbs (e.g. the reciprocals). The dynamic approach, which makes no distinction between synchrony and diachrony, presents the complete history of the paradigm in unity. After the presentation of the framework and the current results of my research, I will point out possible directions for further research in this field.

It has to be noted that although the expression 'the paradigm with *-ik*' is adopted in the title, this paper deals mainly with the 3rd person singular *-ik* form. The reason for this is that the most important characteristics of the paradigm are mostly linked to this element, and it is also the starting point of the emergence of the paradigm. Moreover, currently it can be regarded as the only stable element of the paradigm. I think that this feature results exactly from the typical derivative-like content of the paradigm. The other elements of the paradigm will hopefully also be the subject of further research.

2. The views of the classical historical linguistics

2.1. The birth and history of the paradigm with *-ik* is closely connected to the problem of the markedness of the grammatical (direct) object.¹ At the beginning of the Proto-Hungarian age² it was only the definite object that had a marker, originally an *-m* element (during the Proto-Hungarian age it changed to *-t* by unit-change). There was only one verbal paradigm (its suffixial elements were grammaticised from personal pronouns) to denote person and

¹ The Hungarian language recognizes a 'direct' object in definite and indefinite versions. Instead of 'indirect' object, there are nominals with adverbial case endings.

² The periods of Hungarian historical linguistics: Proto-Hungarian age (from the beginning of the Hungarian language till 895; there are no linguistic records from this period); Old Hungarian age (895–1526), Middle Hungarian age (1526–1772), New Hungarian age (1772–1920) and Newer Hungarian age (1920–).

number of the subject. The simplest transitive sentences comprised a verb, a subject (unmarked) and an object (marked only if it was definite):

(1)	Asszony	kenyeret	vág.
	woman	bread.ACC	cut.3SG
	S	O	V
	‘Woman cuts the bread.’		

(2)	Asszony	kenyér	vág.
	Woman	bread	cut.3SG
	S	O	V
	‘Woman cuts a bread.’		

The lack of the indefinite object’s marker caused no problem because of the rigid SOV word order. But when word order was no longer restricted, marking the indefinite object was immediately necessary. The formation of the paradigm with *-ik* can be regarded as a kind of answer to this problem, in the following way.

In sentence (3)a. according to the SOV word order *emberek* is the subject and *fa* is the object.

(3) a.	Emberek	fa	török.
	man.PL	tree	break.3PL
	S	O	V
	‘men break a tree.’		

With the disappearance of rigid word order, the syntactic (and semantic) functions would have to be made unambiguous in three ways:

- a) by marking the indefinite object particularly,
- b) by developing an inflectional morpheme or even paradigm referring to the object,
- c) by developing a class of middle verbs derived from transitive ones.

During the historical development of the language the *-t* object marker began to designate the indefinite object too (a). In the verbal inflection there also appeared a new line of morphemes aside the existing one, and from that time both the original paradigm, which became later the definite paradigm, and the new one, the general paradigm had the same function to refer to the definiteness of the object (b). But these two processes demanded a long period of time to be accomplished.

However, middle verbs existed already in the proto-Hungarian language. The main characteristic of this verb class is that no Agent is allowed to appear with the verb. The subject position was filled by the Patient in these sentences.

The historically primary transitive sentence, *Emberek fa török* changed as follows: by dropping the Agent (for example because it is known from the context) the sentence turned into *Fa török* ‘(sys/sgs) break tree’. Actually, this sentence *Fa török* had originally an OV word order. But in this case *fa* can be identified also as subject in singular person, by the analogy of sentences with intransitive verbs and SV word order (*Eső es* ‘rain falls’; *Ég dörög* ‘sky thunders’). Consequently, the semantic structure of the verb *török* was transformed into

the middle voice: *Fa török* ‘tree breaks’. The third person plural *-ik* morpheme changed too and became third person singular, and at the same time the formal exponent of the middle voice (c).

(3) a.	Emberék man.PL S	fa tree O	>	török. break.3PL V	(3) b.	Fa tree O	török. break.3PL V
	‘Men break a tree.’						
(3) b.	Fa tree O	török. break.3PL V	>	(3) c.	Fa tree S	török. break.3SG V	‘(A/the) tree breaks.’

2.2. The extension of the paradigm with *-ik* to other classes of verbs (beyond the middle voice) started already in the Proto-Hungarian age. In one of the primordial Hungarian linguistic records, the *Halotti beszéd és Könyörgés*³ ‘Funeral Sermon and Prayer’ there are instantiations of the *evéc* verb ‘he/she ate’ in both transitive and intransitive use, where the *-ec* ending (pronounced: *-ék*) is the past form of *-ik*. There developed verb pairs in which the version without inflectional morpheme in the *-ik* paradigm is a transitive verb in the active voice, while the version with the paradigm with *-ik* is in the middle voice. These pairs generally perished during the Middle Hungarian age, like *tel* ‘fill’ : *telik* ‘to be filled’.

The paradigm with *-ik* often appeared on verbs already in the middle voice, too; in these cases the usage varied, as *fogy* ~ *fogyik* ‘lessen’.

Verbs denoting a state started to take *-ik* endings in the Old Hungarian age (*alszik* ‘sleep’, *fekszik* ‘lay’). The paradigm with *-ik* also plays a role in the formation of the passive. The passive structure evolved from the causative structure, also using the *-ik* verbal endings, maybe as early as during the first half of the Proto-Hungarian age.

The *-ik* ending appears on active verbs too, first of all on the reflexives. It was also possible to attach it to motion verbs as in these verb classes there is a great variability between forms with and without *-ik* (*lép* ~ *lépik* ‘step’). There are many other intransitive verbs that take the *-ik* paradigm. The transitive–intransitive pairs (*gyón* : *gyónik*; ‘confess sg : confess’) obscured the earlier conventionalized conceptual structures, and facilitated the appearance of transitive verbs with the *-ik* paradigm. This functional diversity played a great part in the decomposition of the paradigm; actually the appearance of *-ik* suffixes on different classes of verbs is part of the decomposition process.

3. The functional approach

3.1. My first remark to the previous overview is in connection with the decomposition of the paradigm, which is the result of functional diversity. In fact, it was this phenomenon that made me turn towards the functional approach. I find it crucial to make a distinction between the two processes of change: the spread of the paradigm, and its decomposition. The

³ The ‘Halotti Beszéd és Könyörgés’ [Funeral Sermon and Prayer] is the eldest known coherent linguistic record of the Hungarian language. See in Benkő 1980.

first one is a functional change, a kind of **polysemy extension**, while the other one is purely a **morphological reduction**. Of course, there is a correlation, moreover, an interaction between the two, but they cannot be identified with each other (Schultz 2005). Historical data show that functional changes had already begun in the Proto-Hungarian age, and continued in the subsequent period as well. As a result of the functional changes, the paradigm was productive throughout these periods, which it still continues to be at present. As opposed to the above the first signs of the decomposition of the morphological structure appeared only in the second half of the Middle Hungarian period (for more detail see: Schultz 2006). In the present work I will focus on the functional changes of the paradigm, that is why the changes of its form will only be examined in so far as they have a direct connection to functional changes.

3.2. As stated above, the revaluation of the grammatical structure (and through this the emergence of the paradigm) took place in order to avoid homonymy, because with the disappearance of the fixed word-order in the sentence *Emberek fa török* ‘people tree break’ it was not clear anymore which noun was the subject and which one was the object. Yet, the subject-verb agreement in number was compulsory already at this stage of the historical process. This agreement makes it clear that only the plural noun *emberek* ‘people’ can be the subject of the plural verb *török* ‘break’. In reality, the possibility of homonymy is present only in the sentences *Emberek fák török* ‘men trees break’ and *Ember fa tör* ‘man tree breaks’. But these sentences could not have functioned as the starting point of the change. In the first case, the revaluation of the 3rd person plural inflectional suffix to 3rd person singular could not have happened, and in the second case there is no *-ik* ending to reevaluate. Moreover, instead of the disappearance of the homonymy, further ambiguous situations would have been generated, since e.g. the sentence *Fa tör* ‘tree breaks’ in the two senses ‘(someone) breaks a tree’ and ‘a tree breaks’ is quite a disturbing homonymy.

In my view, pragmatic attention shift had a more prominent role in the emergence of the paradigm than the effort to eliminate homonymy. That is, the difference between the event expressed by the active voice and the one expressed by the middle voice derives from a difference in perspective. The speaker focuses on the Patient instead of the Agent in the middle voice version, which is mapped onto the linguistic expression.

3.3. The explanation for the appearance of the *-ik* paradigm on various groups of verbs can be found in its various functions. The inflection with *-ik* is mentioned in the literature of historical linguistics

as a marker:

- a) the mere emphatic marker of middle voice: „The words *romol* ‘decline’, *omol* ‘come down’, *bomol* ‘desintegrate’, *ömöl* ‘pour’ etc., later on receive the suffix *-ik*, to stress their meaning which is in contrast with the meaning of the causative form of verbs of the same root, for example, *ront* ‘worsen sg.’, *ont* ‘shed sg.’, *bont* ‘break up sg.’, *önt* ‘pour sg.’ etc.” (Bartha 1991: 89);
- b) the marker of reflexivity: „the verb *fürdik* ‘bathe’ with a reflexive meaning may also be a heritage from the previous age, the visible sign of its reflexive nature is obviously the suffix *-ik*” (Bartha 1991: 96). But: „Later the suffix *-ik* became an integral

part of the derivative in the lexical form of the word and, together with it, became the marker of the reflexive function” (Bartha 1991: 97);

- c) the marker of intransitivity: „Because of their semantic features, most of the instantaneous verbs are intransitive. Their intransitivity is in many cases overtly marked by the suffix *-ik*, attached to the derivative” (Bartha 1992: 105);

as a certain function:

- d) a middle function expressed by a suffixial item (Abaffy 1978: 298);
- e) a reflexive function expressed by a suffix: „The derivation of the passive voice can be traced back to the causative; it is derived by attaching the reflexive personal suffix *-ik* to the causative *-at/-et* and *-tat/-tet.*, like *olvas* ‘read’ > *olvastat* ‘make read’ > *olvastatik* ‘to be read’” (Bartha 1991: 94).

I made a distinction between the definition of the *-ik* ending as a function and as a marker of a given quality; they seem to be two distinct roles. In the first case, the paradigm is placed in a middle, reflexive, and intransitive semantic content, thus, it becomes part of the verb by receiving inflectional suffixes with *-ik*. In the second case, the function of the paradigm is to highlight semantic content which is already present in the verb.

The primary reason for the inconsistent use mentioned in a)–e) seems to be the following. Although the authors of earlier studies clearly recognise those features of the paradigm that point further than simply the indication of number, person, and the definiteness of the object (such a feature is for example that the paradigm can change the syntactic relations of the verb, which is clearly a characteristic of derivatives), but the theoretical framework does not make it possible for them to explain such features of an inflectional suffix. Thus, analogy is used as an explanatory principle. When it cannot be used, inconsistent language use comes as an explanation. „The fact that the same active verb is transitive without the suffix *-ik* and intransitive when *-ik* is attached to it (*gyón valamit* : *gyónik* ‘confess sg : confess’) may have confused language use, and made the use of the form with *-ik* possible in the case of transitive verbs as well” (Abaffy 1992: 220). I do not intend to contest the role of analogy, but as I see it, the functional semantic approach can go further and also provide an answer to the question of what motivates analogy. The exploration of the common features of verb-groups determines the domain in which analogy prevails. Moreover, a more satisfying answer can be given to the appearance of the *-ik* ending on transitive verbs than „inconsistent language use”.

4. The theoretical background and results of the research

4.1. Langacker’s meaning and composite structure model claims that morphology and the lexicon are not separable, direct sets, but they form a continuum: „There is no meaningful distinction between grammar and the lexicon. The lexicon, morphology, and syntax form a continuum of symbolic structures, which differ along various parameters but can be divided into separate components only arbitrarily” (Langacker 1987: 3, see also Tolcsvai 2005a, 2006).

Both the phonological and semantic components of the linguistic expression are of experiential origin; the semantic component is basically conceptual, experience is processed through abstraction and categorisation, the basic procedure of the prototype-principle. „Cog-

nitive grammar posits three basic types of structures: semantic, phonological, and symbolic. Symbolic structures are obviously not distinct from the others, but rather combine the two. A symbolic structure is bipolar, consisting of a semantic pole, a phonological pole, and the association between them" (Langacker 1987: 76).

Through frequent use, a symbolic relationship is entrenched in the users' mind, and becomes conventional in the speech community. „A unit is a structure that a speaker has mastered quite thoroughly, to the extent that he can employ it in largely automatic fashion, without having to focus his attention specifically on its individual parts or their arrangement. Despite its internal complexity, a unit constitutes for the speaker a »prepackaged assembly«...” (Langacker 1987: 57). The complex linguistic expressions as larger assemblies are construed through partial semantic correspondences of the composite structures. The schematization of these relationships creates the grammatical structures in which, as in a supporting matrix, the linguistic items receive their processing parameters.

The meaning of basic linguistic categories (such as noun, verb, suffix or morphemes) is semantically complex. Linguistic expressions of higher complexity (e.g. verb + subject) are composite structures with two component structures in a semantic relation.

Such composite structures are, for instance, the semantic juncture of the noun and the verb in a sentence, or the verb stem and the suffix. Schematically, a verb profiles a process, it maps the temporal relation of (at least) two entities. These entities are only schematically present in the semantic structure of the verb, they are elaborated by the nouns attached to the verb in valence relationships (Langacker 1987). The verb is not autonomous semantically. As a consequence, the verb stem + *-ik* constructions can be described adequately in the clausal structure.

Language is both a structure and a process simultaneously: „Structure is a mental model, which describes the constituents of a linguistic item as a static structure of entities from the aspect of construction of meaning. Operation is the (mental) process during which the speaker and the listener create or understand linguistic structures, and recognise them in their process-like, dynamic nature” (Tolcsvai Nagy 2006). Any type of function of a linguistic expression is conceivable by the interlocutors in the process of a verbal interaction: i.e. from the mental processes of the interlocutors through the processing of information in the dynamics of a communicative event.

4.1.1. Cognitive linguistics studies the structure of linguistic categories within the framework of **prototype theory**. The principles of categorization in prototype theory are the following (cf. Rosch 1977, 1978, Lakoff 1987: 12–76, Taylor 1991, Geeraerts 1997):

- the categories are not defined by necessary and sufficient attributes, but rather by features;
- membership in a category is a matter of degree, there are „good” and „less good” members of a category;
- the entities are put in a category according to family resemblance, the semantic structure of a category „takes the form of a radial set of clustered and overlapping readings” (Geeraerts 1997: 11).;
- the categories have no clear-cut boundaries, i.e. they have fuzzy edges.

4.2. Results of the research

On the basis of the above, let us see how the emergence and the semantics of the paradigm with *-ik* can be interpreted. Let us use the sentence from our previous examples as a starting point:

(3) a.	Emberek	fa	török.
	man.PL	tree	break.3PL
	S	O	V
	‘Men break a tree.’		

This sentence is supposed to be a conventionalized expression, used for representing a prototypical transitive situation: an Agent carries out an action in physical space on a Patient. The components of the structure develop each other, so the presence of the Agent elaborates the element of volition as one semantic substructure of the verb, and the Patient specifies that entity without volition to which the action is directed. Attention is focused on the active figure.

There is also another kind of construal, however: an event takes place, but we do not know who or what carried it out, or generated it. Already in the Proto-Hungarian period a conventionalized mode of expression was used: the *Eső es, Ég dörög* ‘Rain falls, Sky thunders’ type of sentences with SV word order. Based on this pattern, in the (3)b. sentence, the *Fa török* ‘(some people/things) break the tree’ structure with an unspecified subject (which is an OV structure with impersonal subject, expressing that someone or something does something, but it is not important to indicate who they are, because it is assumed that everyone knows that) may be reevaluated: the attention of the conceptualizer is shifted from the Agent to the Patient. This way the (3)c. sentence evolves: *Fa török* ‘The tree breaks (as a result of something/somebody’s actions)’. The focus is not on the person/thing that carried out the action, but on the action itself; an **attention shift** takes place (see Lakoff–Johnson 1980, Panther–Thornburg 2007, Langacker 2008: 69–70).

The clause profiles a process within the construed scene. Moreover, the clause focuses attention on the most important participant of the scene. Likewise our visual attention is turned to a prominent physical object to which something is happening (cf. Langacker 1987, Tolcsvai 2006). Figure-ground alignment, known from psychology, is present in linguistics as well. The interlocutors as conceptualizers choose one of the figures present in the profiled relation (in a clause or sentence), and profile it as a primary figure with the other participants as secondary figures, serving as relational figures to the primary one. The background serves as a reference point, in relation to which the figure is located. In a linguistic relation, the primary, salient entity is the trajector, and the secondary one is the landmark. Trajector and landmark belong to the inner structure of the predicate, irrespective of its combinatorial characteristics. For instance, the schematically represented landmark belongs to the profile of a transitive verb even when the verb is used intransitively, and it has no linguistically expressed nominal object. (The landmark may remain unelaborated in many cases: if, due to its universal character, it is not necessary to provide information beyond the schematic meaning which is expressed by the predicate itself; or if it is clearly identifiable from the context or the content of the predicate; or if it is identical with the trajector, so that naming it would be redundant. Trajector and landmark are normally distinct entities, but in some cases they can be identical. See section 5.2.1., Langacker 1987: 231–242.)

So the starting sentence changes as follows:

from

(3) a.	Emberek	fa	törik.
	man.PL	tree	break.3PL
	S	O	V
	tr	lm	
	‘Men break a tree.’		

to

(3) c.	Fa	törik.
	tree	break.3SG
	S	V
	tr	
	‘(A/the) tree breaks.’	

In the case discussed here attention shift manifests itself linguistically through the exchange of the trajector and landmark roles. In the original sentence *Emberek fa törik*, *emberek* ‘people’ is the trajector, the salient entity on which attention is focused. In sentence (3)c. *Fa törik*, however, *fa* ‘tree’ comes to the centre of attention, while the most prominent element of the original sentence becomes part of the background, and it is present only schematically. Thus, by the exchange of the trajector and landmark roles, an attention shift modifies the syntactic relations as well; the conceptualizer applies his experiences, and reevaluates the grammatical constructions of the sentence. A different conceptualisation results in a different linguistic expression.

Because of the lack of an overt Agent, volition is not specified in the semantic structure of the verb in (3)c. as a substructure: as for the complete clause, there is no expectation of volition. So, if the semantic structure of sentence (3)c. *Fa törik* corresponds to the semantic structure of the sentence *Esõ es* ‘Rain falls’, the revaluation of the grammatical structure is to be considered likely. The 3rd person plural verb becomes 3rd person singular, the suffix *-ik*, originally having the function of 3rd person plural, becomes semantically empty, and it is given a new content by the new structure.

4.2.1. But the schematic denotational content of the 3rd person singular is only part of the new content. While in sentence (3/a.) *törik* = ‘‘TÖR’+‘3rd person plural, present tense, declarative, indefinite object’’, it is different in the new structure of *törik*. The difference between the two contents is typically a derivative-like content, which can only be carried by the *-ik* suffix. In the sentential composite structure (3)c. *Fa törik*, the suffix *-ik* comes to indicate the lack of volition (just as in the meaning of the verb *tördel* ‘split up’, the derivative *-del* specifies the meaning that somebody splits a physical object into several smaller units, not simply into two, as in the meaning of *tör* ‘break’). It is also due to the suffix *-ik* that the nominal expression with earlier object function was not transformed into the Agent subject. Also, the element of intransitivity (i.e. the initiator and the end point of the action is the same) is due to the *-ik* suffix as well.

4.2.2. Functional linguistic theories pay special attention to **the permeability of the categories** of derivation and inflection and also to the historical aspects of the continuum formed

by the two categories (cf. Bybee 1985). „[...] the categorization according to derivation or inflection is a matter of degree. Derivation and inflection form a continuum, the complete and excessive division of morphology into inflectional and derivational morphology („split morphology”) is unacceptable to these theories. It is generally characteristic of natural linguistic theory – similarly to prototype-theory – that instead of drawing strict borderlines they assume the contact of relating categories, including the graduality of the typical and less typical members of categories, and the overlapping of the categories. The two poles of the scale are the prototypical members of the two overlapping or related categories, in which the differences dominate, while towards the middle of the scale the categories flow into each other, so the similarities dominate [...]” (Ladányi 1999: 168). In Bybee’s work (1985), the distinction made between derivational and inflectional categories is not discrete but it is characterised by graduality. The basis of the distinction is relevance, in other words, the degree to which the meaning of the suffix directly influences the meaning of the base form. The difference in the degree of relevance creates a distinction between the inflectional and derivational elements the same way as in single categories. Three other factors play an important role in the process of separation: the first one is generality; the second one is that the applicability of the inflectional categories needs to be of complete generality. The third factor is the degree of semantic change: the larger the difference between the base form and the derived form is, the more probable it is that the suffix is of derivational nature.

Prototypical characteristics of derivatives in the Hungarian language	Prototypical characteristics of inflections in the Hungarian language
They can be followed by other suffixes	They cannot be followed by other suffixes
Defective paradigm	Complete paradigm
They change grammatical category	They do not change grammatical category
They are not productive in all domains	They are productive in all domains
They change the syntactic environment	
They create new words	They do not create new words
Lexicalisation	Inflected form is not lexicalised

Table 2: Prototypical characteristics of derivatives and inflections in the Hungarian language (cf. Keszler ed. 2000, Kiefer 2000, É. Kiss – Kiefer – Siptár 2003)

If we take a look at the characteristics of the paradigm with *-ik* from the time of its emergence and spread, the following can be observed:

- it cannot be followed by other suffixes,
- it is a defective paradigm (if we disregard the question of plural, this point is verifiable from the emergence of the *-t* suffix denoting past tense onwards),
- it does not change its grammatical category,
- its productivity is semantically restricted,
- it changes the verb’s syntactic environment,
- it creates new words (this feature is not always present during the spread of the paradigm, since very often it also appears on originally middle verbs, and in such cases there is no difference in the meaning of the two forms e.g. *fesél~feslik*, *romol~romlik* ‘fray, decline’, etc.).

On the basis of the list of properties above, it can be concluded that at the time of its emergence the *-ik* paradigm had both inflectional and derivative characteristics. This phenomenon (which is not characteristic of the Hungarian language, cf. Kiefer 2000: 716) accounts for the fact that there is no synonymy between the inflection with *-ik* and the general inflection. If the paradigm with *-ik* possessed only inflectional characteristics, they would be freely interchangeable; but, at least in the 3rd person singular, this is not possible. In certain cases the forms with and without *-ik* show synchronic variability e.g. *omol, romol* ~ *omlik, romlik* ‘pour, decline’. In most cases, however, they are not freely interchangeable: *Péter olvas* : **Péter olvasik* ‘Peter reads’, *A malac hízik* : **A malac hizik* ‘The pig fattens’; *A kezem eltörik az eséstől* : **A kezem eltör az eséstől* ‘My hand breaks from falling’, *A kezem eltör egy ceruzát* : **A kezem eltörik egy ceruzát* ‘My hand breaks a pencil’ etc. (Full synonymy would probably have resulted in the disappearance of the paradigm with *-ik*.) The 3rd person singular form is of great importance in the paradigm, further exploration of the reasons for this should be the subject of future studies. (Pragmatic function, added to the use of the paradigm, such as politeness in the 2nd person singular imperative also works against the elimination of the paradigm; here, instead of changing the inflection with *-ik* to the inflection without *-ik*, the inverse process can be examined. Although this function exists only in certain dialects, it affects language use in general.)

4.2.3. Consequently, on the one hand, the meaning of *-ik* changes inside its category (as a verbal inflectional element) by the revaluation of the structure, because the subject elaborates in the sentence the schematic number/person of *-ik* as 3rd person singular; on the other hand, it is extended as well, because it takes on the above mentioned derivative-like semantic content. As a result, an element with a dual or transitory mode of existence comes to life, which moves towards derivatives in the continuum of inflection and derivation, carrying the characteristics of derivative and inflectional suffixes simultaneously. In the course of its historical development the *-ik* ending co-existed in quasi-derivative clusters – with various other derivatives; it is characteristic of derivatives when they are no longer able to express on their own the semantic content they are carrying. It is probable that a function-change started to occur, but because the suffix *-ik* still possessed inflectional content in addition to the derivation content, the process was not finished. If it had been finished, *-ik* would have become an „everyday” deverbative verbal suffix, not indicating number/person, and always present in the paradigm of the verb.⁴

5. Directions for further research

5.1. At this point another problem needs further examination: if these derivative-like contents are marked by the *-ik* paradigm in verbal structures, how can we distinguish between the verbs of the following sentences?

⁴ There is one feature among the prototypical derivative ones, which is usually not described, but regarded as an obvious characteristic: the derivative is present in all further derived forms of the word. If in the revaluation of the structure that a possible analogy had prevailed according to which the suffix *-ik* would have been interpreted as a pure derivative, and as a result the word *törik* would have been interpreted as a φ form with 3rd person singular derivative suffix (which was an existing solution in Proto-Hungarian period), then there would be nothing for me to write about, since *-ik* would be an average derivative.

- (4) a. Az ág letört a szélben.
 the branch brake.PST.3SG the wind.in
 S V Adv
 ‘The branch broke off in the wind.’
- (4) b. A gyerek letört egy darabot a kalácsból.
 the child brake.PST.3SG a piece.ACC the cake.from
 S V O Adv
 ‘The child broke off a piece of cake.’

That is, in cases in which the primarily *-ik* verbs have no inflections with *-ik*, because they have not developed historically (like in the past tense indicated by the suffix *-t*), or because of the decomposition of the paradigm the inflections with *-ik* were exchanged for inflections without *-ik*, what carries the semantic content of the paradigm with *-ik*? Can it be stated that there is no need for a visible marker because the suffix *-ik* with its derivative-like characteristics developed the middle meaning of the verb, which stands on its own, and the semantic (and syntactic) structure of the sentence shows clearly that a middle event is represented? If this is true, it should also have the same effect on other deverbal derivatives, which modify the valence relations of the verb to a great extent by affecting the trajector–landmark roles (they invert the two roles or influence the elaboration of the landmark). It should also be examined which derivatives modify the environment of the verb to such an extent, or whether the phenomenon can be observed in connection with them at all.

5.2. As I already mentioned in connection with the general paradigm, the inflectional forms with *-ik* cannot be freely exchanged for the elements of the general paradigm, and it is not possible the other way round either. While the elements of the general paradigm can be attached to every intransitive verb and to verbs with an indirect object (see in 1.1.), the use of verbs with *-ik* has **semantic limits**. When the suffix *-ik* emerged, it appeared only on middle verbs, later it appeared on passive, reflexive, reciprocal verbs, and also on certain active verbs, it was attached to other derivatives. In connection with the basic meaning and the history of the paradigm, the middle voice is of crucial importance.

5.2.1. The semantic-based boundary of the middle verbs is mentioned first by Abaffy (1978) in the Hungarian linguistics literature. She notes that whether a given verb is middle or active is only defineable when the verb is used in context. The verb *köhög* ‘caugh’ for example is middle in the sentence *Péter köhögött a füsttől* ‘Peter caughed because of the smoke’, but it is active in the sentence *Péter köhögött, hogy észrevegyék* ‘Peter caughed to call the others’ attention to himself’.

Suzanne Kemmer (1993) describes the semantic map of middle events. She defines the middle (and the reflexive) „as semantic categories intermediate in transitivity between one-participant and two-participant events” (Kemmer 1993: 3). In her system the middle domain is a coherent but somewhat diffuse category, formed by semantically linked minor domains settled round the reflexive events.

The semantic property which is crucial to the nature of middle verbs is the relative elaboration of events. It comes under the notion of granularity and indicates the degree of accuracy with which the speaker conceptualizes an event. Relative elaboration is an aspect of granularity in two respects: on the one hand, it can refer to the number of participants, on the other

hand, to the particular substructures of the events. Accordingly, the variations of elaboration reflect the speaker's different conceptualisations as s/he may choose to construe an event as a non-differentiated whole or focus on the internal structure of the components (the attention shift mentioned in 4.2. is an aspect of this choice).

The other crucial semantic property of the middle voice is self-affectedness (it closely correlates with relative elaboration). The two-participant events have an Initiator and an Endpoint participant; the semantic roles of the sentence are connected to them. Self-affectedness means that the act is carried out on the actor, thus the two participants are in fact only one semantic entity.

The different situations elaborated to a low degree are semantically related. Their common morphosyntactic marker is the Middle Marker (henceforth MM). The low degree of elaboration as a common property allowed the MM to express different middle situations during its historical advance.

„Most languages have a special marker to indicate that the Agent and Patient (or analogous semantic roles) in an event ordinarily involving two such roles are the same entity. Such markers [...] are called Reflexive Markers [hereafter called RM]” (Kemmer 1993: 24). There are languages in which the MM is morphologically identical to the RM, they are of the one-form middle system type of language. The two-form middle system type of languages has two different forms for MM and RM. In the second type the RM has more phonological „body”, usually it is expressed by a nominal or pronominal form, while the MM is a verbal affix. RM is termed the heavy form, and the MM is termed the light form (Kemmer's terms). According to this, the heavier the phonological/morphological appearance is, the higher is the degree of distinguishability of participants and events. The Hungarian language applies the two-form, more precisely the two-form non-cognate middle system; i.e. RM and MM are morphologically and historically (etymologically) distinct.

RM derives historically from an emphatic marker, which served to single out a participant. The Hungarian RM is the pronoun *maga-*, while MM is a formative element (Kemmer claims that the Hungarian MM is the *-kOdik* ending). Kemmer notes that there is a synchronic variability between Middle Marked and non-marked verb forms. Kemmer's Hungarian example to this variability is the synonymy of the verbs *kéredz* and *kéredzkedik* 'ask sy's permission to go somewhere'; and although this is not a perfect example, the variability indeed exists, for example in the cases of the above-mentioned *omol* ~ *omlik* 'come down', *romol* ~ *romlik* 'decline' verbs. Moreover beyond the *-kOdik* ending there are other verbal structures in the Hungarian language where the synchronic variability also exists; for example *betegül* : *betegedik* verbs: both mean 'become ill' and both existed in Old Hungarian.

In the direct reflexive situations, the Agent/Experiencer and Patient are in a co-referential relationship, i.e. „two participants in a single event frame designate the same entity in the described situations” (Kemmer 1993: 44; event frame is „a given event in combination with all of its associated participant roles” – p. 9.). The event has, in fact, one participant who is the Initiator and the Endpoint at the same time (like *látja magát* 'saw himself', *borotválja magát* 'shave himself'). Hungarian reflexives like *borotválkozik* 'shave', *öltözködik* 'get dressed', etc. are similar; the difference is that the actions carried out by somebody on his/her own body or part of the body tend to be simple actions, not complex ones with distinguishable participants. This way of conceptualisation uses intransitive morphology, the object acted on is not designated explicitly in the sentence. The Hungarian so-called reflexives are middles in Kemmer's system (see the most typical examples below).

The use of RM highlights the difference from those possible situations (i.e. prototypical transitive situations) where the Agent and the Patient are distinct entities. Here the coreference of the two participants is not evident. On the other hand, the use of MM shows that the coreference is obvious, the Patient must be the same entity as the Agent. Using the reflexive form, the speaker can express a greater conceptual difference between the participants, so in these situations there still remains some distance between the Initiator and the Endpoint in spite of the coreference. In contrast, the middle form emphasises that the Initiator and the Endpoint refer to the very same entity.

The lack of discrimination infiltrates the semantics of middle verbs; thus they are similar to the verbs expressing one-participant, intransitive events. The morphosyntactic consequence of low distinguishability is that middle verbs take intransitive patterns. Reflexive and middle events are distinguished along the degree of elaboration of the participants and/or the events: reflexives are medial (transitives are highly elaborated), middles are low. The middle domain is settled round the reflexive domain, like a doughnut.

The more important groups of Kemmer's middle domain (Kemmer's Hungarian examples are marked in bold by the author; the other Hungarian examples are those of the author):

- Body Action Middles:
 - Grooming and Body Care: The most typical middles. ***Borotválkozik*** 'shave', ***vetkőzik*** 'undress', ***mosakodik*** 'wash oneself'.
 - Change in Body Posture: *feláll* 'stand up', *leül* 'sit down', ***emelkedik*** 'rise, get up'.
 - Non-translational Motion: ***hajol*** 'bow', *nyújtózik* 'stretch oneself'.
 - Translational Motion: self-induced motion of an animate entity along a path in space. *Úszik* 'swim', ***menekedik*** 'flee'.
- Mental Events: Single mental events have two participants: A) the participant with usually Experiencer semantic role, with the mental event, and B) the participant who activates this process, and whose semantic role is Stimulus. But the Stimulus is usually not coded in the sentence, either because there is no emphasised entity that brings on the event (like in cognition verbs: ***gondolkodik*** 'think'), or because the speaker pragmatically de-emphasises the Stimulus and by that the Experiencer becomes more salient (like in Emotional Middles: ***gyűlölködik*** 'bear malice', ***dühösködik*** 'rage', ***bánkódik*** 'grieve, mourn'). These events become one-participant events: the Experience is both the Initiator and the Endpoint.
- Spontaneous Events: spontaneous changes in the state of an entity, but here no Agent receives coding. (In the Hungarian language these events are designated by verbs regarded as typical middles together with Kemmer's passive middles.) Their chief property is the lack of volition (in Hungarian linguistics, lack of volition is a crucial property of middles). Kemmer says that this type is different from other middle types because of the complete lack of volition making them similar to the passive situations. Examples: ***növekedik*** 'grow', *hízik* 'fatten', *öregszik* 'age', *nyílik* 'open' etc.
- Naturally Reciprocal Events can be defined in opposition to the prototypical reciprocals. The latter are related to reflexive verbs. The prototypical reciprocal is a two-

participant event with two relations. Both participants are Initiators in one relation and Endpoints in the other one. Many languages use the RM to express this situation. Among those languages that have special reciprocal marker(s), Kemmer (referring to Haiman 1983) distinguishes one- and two-form languages according to their patterns for expressing a reciprocal relationship (Kemmer 1993: 103). In the two-form type (Haiman called it Hungarian type) one of the two reciprocal forms is heavier, nominal or pronominal in form (in Hungarian the pronoun *egymás* ‘each other’), the other one is lighter, usually a verbal affix, identical to the MM. Kemmer’s hypothesis is that the historical advance of the MM made it possible for it to express this relationship too. The heavy form may be used to create prototypical reciprocal verbs from transitive ones (like *see* : *see each other*, *kiss* : *kiss each other* etc.), while the light form’s use has semantic restrictions. It creates verbs denoting naturally reciprocal events which have a reciprocal meaning, like *birkózik* ‘scuffle’, *ölelkezik* ‘embrace’, *találkozik* ‘meet’. The difference between the two reciprocal situations can be defined in their temporality: prototypically reciprocal verbs describe sequential events, while the naturally reciprocal verbs express simultaneous ones. Because of the low distinguishability of events the naturally reciprocals seem to be simple events, not complex ones.

Kemmer’s system presents a wide but coherent domain, where the open categories show prototype effects. Thus, Kemmer regards as middle several verbs (more precisely verbal phrases) while they are absolutely not considered as middles in Hungarian linguistics. The exploration of the semantic relations between these groups makes it possible to follow and explain the semantic changes and novel formation of different types of verbs of the paradigm with *-ik*, because all the verbs with *-ik* can be located in Kemmer’s doughnut structure or linked to the domain like the passive verbs, which are formed with the *-ik* paradigm. The semantic relation between the middle and the passive is clear. There are a few transitive verbs with *-ik* too, but these constitute exceptions (*eszik* ‘eat’ and *iszik* ‘drink’). In other words, the semantic constraints for the suffixes of the *-ik* paradigm coincide with the boundaries of Kemmer’s middle domain. This middle domain and its connections with other domains of events will be one of the crucial fields of my further investigations of the verbs with *-ik*, because it helps to map the semantic content of the *-ik* element.

5.3. It follows from the above that special attention needs to be paid to studying the **relationship of the *-ik* paradigm to various derivatives**. There are, on the one hand, derivatives formed with the paradigm and, on the other hand, there are derivatives that have similar functions, but no *-ik* suffix can be attached to them.

Another important point in my research is the question of the passive voice. It is constituted from active verbs by passive derivative, which is suffixed to the verb:

- (5)a. Péter könyvet olvas. > A könyv olvastatik Péter által.
 Peter book.ACC read.3SG the book read.PASS.3SG Peter-by
 S O V S V Adv
 ‘Peter reads a book.’ > ‘The book is read by Peter.’

We can identify the *-ik* element in the *-tatik* ending. So if the *-ik* paradigm had possessed only inflectional characteristics, the derivative of the passive voice would have been the *-tat* element in this case, and the verb should have constructed this way: *olvas* (verb) + *-tat* (passive derivative) + *-ik* (inflectional). However, this *-tat* element is the derivative of the causative voice:

- (5)b. Péter könyvet olvas. > A tanár könyvet olvastat Péterrel.
 Peter book.ACC read.3SG the teacher book.ACC read.CAUS.3SG Peter.INSTR
 S O V S O V Adv
 ‘Peter reads a book.’ > ‘The teacher makes Peter read a book.’

That means that *-tat* derivative should contain elements of volition, transitivity (as a causative derivative), and at the same time elements of lack of volition and intransitivity (as a passive derivative). This would result in a hardly acceptable homonymy. I think that it is more probable that the meaning of the causative derivative is modified by the semantic content of the suffix *-ik*, and the two together give a new meaning to the structure, which then carries some elements of the original denotational content of both of them, but it is not identical with either of them. (This is a possible case of so-called derivative clustering, see Kiss–Pusztai ed. 2003: 144).

It would also need to be studied in detail whether the other derivatives with *-ik* have the same meaning as without it (*-kOd(ik)*, *-kOz(ik)*, *-Ód(ik)*, *-z(ik)*, *-l(ik)*, *-d(ik)*, *-sz(ik)* middle, reciprocal, reflexive derivatives). Do they have the same function with or without the *-ik* function? For example, the *-kOd* without *-ik* is mainly a frequentative derivative: *levegőt kap* > *levegőt kapkod* ‘take breath > gasp breath’. But with *-ik* it never derives a frequentative verb but middle, reciprocal or reflexive.

The formulation that the derivatives and not the verbs take the paradigm with *-ik* is intentional; in my opinion, the denotational content of *-ik* modifies the meaning of the derivative, and the unit of the original derivative and the paradigm with *-ik* are attached to the verb as a new derivative. Otherwise, the derivatives would be attached to the verbs which originally have the suffix *-ik*. For instance, the reflexive *mosakodik* ‘wash oneself’ would have been formed by attaching the *-kod* derivative to the verb **mosik* (there’s no *mosik* verb in the Hungarian and probably never was.) The *-kod* without *-ik*, as I mentioned above, carries an iterative meaning; the reflexive meaning is carried by the *-kOdik* derivative suffix.⁵

Another interesting point is the following: when an *-ik* verb is further derived, with the exception of the derivative *-hAt* (this suffix can express several meanings: ‘somebody can / is allowed to do sg’), it no longer permits the suffix *-ik*. This phenomenon cannot result from the inflectional content of the verb, but from the contrast between the derivative contents, which excludes the simultaneous use of *-ik* and another derivative (e.g. *eszik* ‘eat’ > *ehetik* ~ *ehet* ‘can eat’ but *etet* ‘make eat’, *eszeget* ‘pick’; note the *ehetik* is rather dialectal/archaic). Similarly, trying to attach the derivative of the causative and the derivative of the passive to the same verb would be impossible because they completely exclude each other.

⁵ This latter marking is the norm for representing verbs with the suffix *-ik*; the inflection *-ik* is put in brackets, since it is „only” an inflection, at the same time it is clearly part of the derivative.

5.4. In connection with the derivative-like features of the paradigm, its **characteristic of preserving grammatical category** also needs to be mentioned. Namely, the paradigm with *-ik* appears only on verbs, as opposed to the derivative suffix *-ul/-ül* (which is synonymous with the original meaning of the *-ik* paradigm), which can be attached to nominals (to adjective: *beteg* ‘ill’ > *betegül* ‘become ill’, to noun: *szégyen* ‘shame’ > *szégyenül* ‘loose face’). There is only one exception, which also has the function of changing grammatical category, but it is quite an obscure case: „The derivatives from the Proto-Hungarian period formed either verbal or nominal derivations. As an exception the *-ász/-ész* ‘-er’ derivative needs to be mentioned, the derivations created by it have dual grammatical categories. It was not a very productive derivative: according to our data it was the nominal that appeared earlier. As a counterpart of the infinitive, which appeared earlier, a derivational verb emerged. Its appearance may have been supported by its special meaning, and the possibility, offered by the suffix *-ik*, to distinguish it through formal differentiation from the noun” (Bartha 1991: 78).

5.5. The appearance of the paradigm on the transitive active voice raises one more question. It can be observed that within the group of those verbs which can be inflected both with and without *-ik*, the ones that take the suffix *-ik* are used in the progressive aspect have a progressive component of their meaning and tend to take no object, while the forms without *-ik* appear in a transitive pattern usually with a perfectivating suffix/affix, and in the perfect aspect e.g. *zongorázik ~ elzongoráz valamit* ‘play the piano ~ play sg. on the piano’, *virágzik ~ felvirágoz valamit* ‘bloom ~ decorate sg. with flowers’, etc. This brings up the issue of **aspectuality** which can be observed also at sentence level in the Hungarian language. It seems that if there is an object in the sentence, it can specify the temporal restriction in the meaning of the verb. If the object is not present, the verb in the sentence is used in the continuous aspect. As Kiefer puts it: „Although in the Hungarian language the basic aspectual categories are present in the lexical meaning or meanings of the verb, they can change at different levels of the sentence: in verb phrases or at sentence-level they may alternate, depending on the type of the object or subject, the tense, and the modifiers” (Kiefer 2006: 14–15). Intransitivity can also be found among the original functions of the *-ik* paradigm, because the middle view goes hand in hand with intransitivity, which does not allow the object to occur in the sentence. So, it is possible that the progressive aspect was attached through irradiation to the paradigm with *-ik*. From the cognitive aspect, the historical notion of irradiation can be interpreted through the meaning structure of linguistic items: since we handle the symbolic linguistic items (also the forms with suffixes) as wholes, we separate them only during secondary processing. The stem+suffix forms are composite structures formed from the meaning structures of the stem and the suffix as component structures; the meanings of the composite structures react upon the meanings of the component structures. Thus, the meaning of the unit and a change in its meaning also affect the meaning of the components, separated during secondary processing. (A group of middle verbs are originally in the imperfect aspect, since they express in a certain state.) So, the paradigm with *-ik* indeed played a part in the linguistic expression of process-like experiences as well, even in the case of transitive verbs.

6. Conclusion

In this article I dealt with the history of the paradigm with *-ik* from the functional point of view, and examined the possibilities and difficulties connected to its study. Compared to the traditional descriptive and historical studies, the framework discussed in this paper sheds new light on the birth of the *-ik* paradigm: the procedure of attention shift generates the linguistic change that results in the new paradigm. This point of view allows us to consider and explain the features that stem from its derivative-like content, in addition to its inflectional characteristics. This way the controversies between the formal and functional features of the paradigm can be resolved. The most important of these features are limited productivity, that is, the semantic limits of the adaptability of the paradigm, and its ability to transform the syntactic relations of the verb. We need not only study the verbs that take the suffix *-ik*, but also the events which are conceptualized in the verbs with *-ik*, because the semantic structure of the verb can be interpreted in the sentence as a supporting matrix. By taking into consideration the semantic limits of applicability, and by assessing these limits, the set of those events which are conceptualised through verbs with *-ik* can be defined, and on the basis of the common features, the spread of the paradigm from its original environment to these verb-groups can be explained. By analysing the original semantic content, exploring the relationship with various derivatives, and the examination of the aspectual relations, the process of the semantic shift of the paradigm can be explored.

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