

Irén Hegedűs

On the grammaticalization of CHILD:

The case of Hungarian *fia* ‘son’, *fióka* ‘nestling’ and *fiók* ‘drawer’?¹

Abstract

The lexeme CHILD tends to become grammaticalized in languages of the world, and in this process, it serves as Source for three main Targets: 1) classifier, 2) diminutive and 3) partitive (Heine & Kuteva 2004). This paper intends to examine whether these cross-linguistically frequent grammaticalization patterns are reflected in Hungarian. By analysing the etymological development of the lexeme *fia* ‘son’ and its derivatives, I argue that the Hungarian data a) fit into the established grammaticalization patterns; b) reflect the semantic shifts represented in the radial category model (Jurafsky 1996). The investigation highlights the etymological connection between the Hungarian lexemes *fia* ‘son’, *fióka* ‘nestling’ and *fiók* ‘drawer’, which is no longer transparent for the native speakers.

Keywords: grammaticalization, historical semantics, metaphorical transfer, diminutive, radial category model

1 Introduction: grammaticalization targets of the lexeme CHILD

In their *World Lexicon of Grammaticalization* Heine and Kuteva (2004: 65–67) also discussed cases of the grammaticalization of the lexeme CHILD and – on the basis of data from various language families – identified three main grammatical functions that CHILD can obtain in the process. Thus, CHILD can serve as Source in the grammaticalization process for Targets such as 1) diminutive, 2) partitive and 3) classifier. In a later study analyzing noun-noun compounds, Heine and Kuteva (2009: 153f) provided further evidence demonstrating that the lexeme CHILD frequently recurs in compounds and it tends to follow the canonical steps of grammaticalization and can end up as a derivational element. The patterns of conceptual shift involved in the grammaticalization process reveal that CHILD in compounds with nouns referring to animates expresses – not surprisingly – ‘a young X’, while combined with inanimates, CHILD becomes a marker of diminutives referring to a ‘small X’, e.g. in the Awtuw language of Papua New Guinea a puppy is literally dog-CHILD_{DIMIN}, while knife-CHILD_{DIMIN} refers to ‘small knife’, or in Ewe (Niger-Congo) stone-CHILD_{DIMIN} means ‘pebble’ (Heine & Kuteva 2004: 65).

To this observation I would add that the animate ‘a young X’ naturally entails the size dimension, since perceptual experience shows the young of an animate is perceived as the

¹ This paper goes out to the honourees in the hope that they may find some interest in it: to Jóska this is a small token of the many interesting discussions we have had, especially recently on account of classifiers, and to Sanyi as a tribute for his enthusiasm for cognitive semantics and conceptual metaphors (especially concerning animal-based metaphors analysed e.g. in Martsa 1998, 2007).

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small-size version of the original animate being. Although psychology is right to emphasize that children are not small adults, this does not negate or disqualify the ubiquitous visual experience of perceiving a child or the young of an animal as a small-size version of the respective adult form. This perceptual experience provides the basis for the conceptual extension, which proceeds from the concrete domain of physical size towards the more abstract domain of age (and even gender). Thus it is not surprising that the adjectives *small* or *little* in various languages can be synonyms of *young* in some contexts, e.g. *his little sister* may refer to a younger sister, who in fact may be taller or bigger than the brother.

Data collected from languages belonging to different languages families² demonstrate that lexemes with the meaning 'child', 'son' are frequently involved in diminutive formation and tend to become grammaticalized as a diminutive suffix with a rich potential for semantic extension to a wide range of senses, which are – paradoxically – often opposites, such as diminutive / augmentative or affection / contempt. In a cross-linguistic study of diminutives covering 60 languages, Jurafsky (1996) created the radial category model of the evolution of diminutives (see Figure 1), and demonstrated that the diachronically prior sense of CHILD gets extended by way of metaphorical and inferential extensions, as well as by lambda-abstraction-specification.³

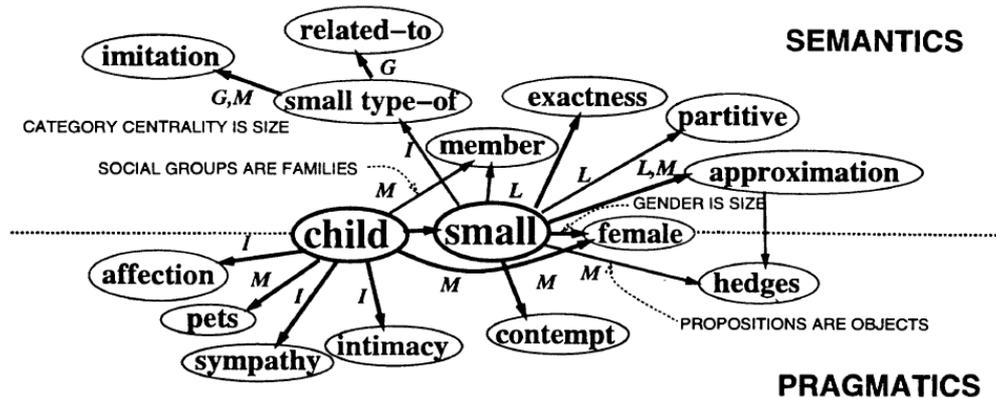


Figure 1. The radial category representation of the semantic extensions of the diminutive⁴
 (Jurafsky 1996: 542)

Jurafsky argues that the advantage of positing lambda-abstraction over resorting to metaphorical extension is in its being a more economical tool for explaining semantic shifts. Without doubting the acceptability of metaphorical shifts, he explains that while

² Primarily from the Niger-Congo and Bantu languages of Africa, Chinese, Thai, Tibeto-Burman in Asia or Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan), etc., see Jurafsky 1996: 562f.

³ Lambda-abstraction-specification is a new type of semantic change proposed by Jurafsky (1996: 554 passim); it is respecification of the prototype along a scale (i.e. an item/phenomenon is described in comparison with the prototype x on the basis of a certain aspect such as size, duration, etc.). This change is characteristic in adjective diminutive formation.

⁴ Abbreviations in the figure: G = generalization, I = inferential extension, L = lambda-abstraction/specification, M = metaphorical extension.

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the metaphorical account requires a separate metaphor for each transfer; there is no motivated explanation of why this particular set of metaphors is employed. With the lambda-abstraction account, on the other hand, a single process accounts for each sense. The different contexts of each domain impose type constraints on the lambda-abstracted expression as it respecifies (Jurafsky 1996: 559).

The metaphorical transfer from animate to inanimate becomes most intriguing when grammaticalization leads to the emergence of CHILD as a marker denoting “the subpart of some item”, or – going even further down the cline – CHILD obtains a partitive sense when referring to the smaller part of an entity. Examples from the Niger-Congo language, Ewe (spoken in Ghana) will highlight how such metaphoric transfers operate. The Ewe word *ví* ‘child’ occurs in compounds such as *afɔ-ví* (lit. ‘foot-child’) meaning ‘toe’ or *alɔ-ví* (lit. ‘arm-child’) meaning ‘finger’.⁵ In these cases CHILD serves to designate part of a larger unit, and when it combines with a mass noun, the partitive meaning is enhanced: *súkli-ví* (lit. ‘sugar-child’) ‘a piece of sugar, sugar cube’ (for a detailed discussion, see Heine & Hünnemayer 1988).

Furthermore, CHILD also shows another type of conceptual shift in which it refers to ‘member of a social unit’, such as the inhabitants of a village or a country, e.g., in Akan⁶ the diminutive suffix *-ba* (from *ɔba* ‘child, offspring’) occurs in *ɔheneba* ‘prince/princess’ (lit. ‘child of a king’) or *aponkyeba* ‘kid (offspring of a goat)’ as well as in *asɔreba* ‘a church member’ (lit. ‘child of a church’) and *ɔmamba* ‘citizen’ (lit. ‘child of a nation’) (Appah & Amfo 2011: 87–88). The same type of using the morpheme CHILD_{DIMIN} is attested in another African language, Koyraboro Senni⁷ *koyra-yze* (lit. ‘town-child’) means ‘citizen, native of town’ (Heine & Kuteva 2009: 159). Further examples can be adduced from several Southeastern Mande languages spoken in Liberia and Ivory Coast, e.g. Wan *zē-né* ‘initiate of a cult’ (lit. ‘cult child’) (Nikitina 2019: 21).

When the grammaticalization of CHILD advances and its original meaning becomes bleached, while its functional load increases, the lexeme obtains the role of classifier. Heine and Kuteva (2004: 65) provide only two examples:

- a) the Kilivila⁸ word *gudi* (< *gwadi* ‘child’) functions as a classificatory particle for child, immature human;
- b) in Vietnamese *con* ‘child’ is used as a classifier for “living beings conceptualized as moving objects, frequently for females of inferior status” (Heine & Kuteva 2004: 65).

Since classifiers typically occur in the Southeast Asian hotbed of classifying languages, we can add further examples, e.g., in the Yi branch of the Tibeto-Burman family a bimorphemic numeral classifier is used when referring to a group of family members. The second element in this classifier is always the word ‘child’, so a phrase such as ‘a father and two sons’ is rendered as (three + CLASSIFIER-father-child) (Bradley 2001: 2f). The Thai language has *lúuk*

⁵ The pattern of naming the finger as the child of the hand/arm is also attested in other African languages, e.g. in the Katcha language of Sudan, as well as in some Mesoamerican languages, e.g. in the Itzaj language (Guatemala) *alk'ab'* ‘finger’ is literally ‘child arm/hand’ (Urban 2012: 332).

⁶ Akan is a language, which belongs to the Niger-Congo language family and it is spoken in Ghana and Ivory Coast.

⁷ Koyraboro Senni, spoken in Mali, belongs to the Songhay group of languages, which earlier used to be classified as Nilo-Saharan but their genetic affiliation is still debated, and thus remains uncertain (for details see Souag 2012 and <https://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/song1307>).

⁸ A language spoken in the Trobriand Islands, Papua New Guinea.

‘child, offspring, fruit’ used as “a rather productive classifier for fruits and three-dimensional objects in general” (Bisang 1999: 129).

In the following sections I am going to focus on the history of the Hungarian lexeme *fia* ‘son’ in order to demonstrate how the above described trajectories of grammaticalization and Source–Target relations apply in the case of Hungarian.

2 The etymology of Hungarian *fia* ‘son’, *fiú* ‘boy’

Some languages have two independent lexemes for male child: one used in general contexts and another one as a kinship term, e.g. English *boy* vs. *son*. In Hungarian, however, the lexemes *fiú* ‘boy’ vs. *fia* ‘son’ are etymologically related: they both derive from the same Proto-Hungarian stem **foγ*. The form *fia* is a reflex of **foγ-á*, in which a possessive suffix is added to the stem (see Benkő 1993: 350), while the final vowel in *fiú* can be identified as a diminutive suffix. Cognates of **foγ* are widespread in other Finno-Ugric languages, and they can be traced back to a protoform **pojka*, for which the reconstructed meaning is given as ‘son, boy,’ (see Rédei 1987: 390; Uralonet №785). I provide an overview of the cognates and their meanings in Table 1.

language	dialect		meaning
Finnish		<i>poika</i>	‘son, boy, child (human); lad; offspring’
Estonian		<i>poeg</i>	‘son, young of an animal’
? Mordvin	E	<i>bujo</i>	‘grandchild’
	E	<i>pijo</i>	‘grandchild’
? Mari/Cheremis	KB	<i>pü: püerγə</i>	‘(in compounds only); boy, male’
	JU		
Udmurt/Votyak	S	<i>pi</i>	‘child; young of an animal; son, man, lad’
	G	<i>pi</i>	‘son, boy; young of an animal’
Komi/Zuryen	S	<i>pi</i>	‘boy; son’
	PO	<i>pi·n</i>	‘young of an animal’
Khanty/Ostyak	V	<i>pǎγ</i>	‘boy; son’
	DN, O	<i>pǎχ</i>	
Mansi/Vogul	TJ, KU, P	<i>püw</i>	‘son, boy; young of an animal’
	So	<i>püγ</i>	
Hungarian		<i>fiú</i>	‘son, boy; child; young of an animal’
		<i>fī</i>	‘son, boy; child; young of an animal’

Table 1. Attested forms of PFU **pojka* ‘son, boy’ (based on Uralonet №785)

The semantic distribution in the majority of the reflexes of PFU **pojka* covers reference to both human child and young of an animal. This circumstance suggests an underlying conceptual prototype ‘child, offspring’,⁹ which is not necessarily marked for gender. The gender-specific meaning (‘son, boy’) probably developed secondarily, conditioned by the fact

⁹ I discussed a similar semantic distribution in a paper surveying words meaning ‘son’, ‘young of an animal’ in Nuristani languages (Hegedűs 2002).

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that in strongly patrilineal societies only male children were valued as actual offspring. For positing a more comprehensive meaning as ‘child, offspring’ I also find support in Mészöly’s (1955: 92)¹⁰ suggestion that Old Hungarian *-fi(a)* originally did not entail gender distinction.¹¹ Another circumstance that points in the direction of a more general semantic content of the etymon is provided by the etymological connection of *fi(ú)* with the Hungarian word *faj* ‘race’ (as well as its derivative *fajta* ‘type, kind, sort’). In fact, Hungarian *fi(ú)* and *faj* are etymological doublets that emerged by word-split due to dialect differentiation in the Ugric protolanguage: one Ugric dialect preserved the back vowel, which is reflected by Khanty (Ostyak) *pǎχ, pǎγ* ‘boy, son’, the other dialect changed it to a front vowel, as shown by Mansi (Vogul) *püw, piγ* ‘son, boy; young of an animal’ (see Table 1). Interestingly, both Ugric dialect variants survive in Hungarian providing two distinct lexemes: *fi(ú)* and *faj*, as suggested by Mészöly (1955: 94) and maintained by Zaicz (2006, s.v. *faj*).¹²

In Old Hungarian, *fiú* had a variant *fió* ‘son, boy’, and in both forms the final vowel can be historically analyzed as a diminutive suffix, which – though no longer transparent morphologically – used to be a highly productive diminutive suffix in the Ancient Hungarian period¹³ (see Szegfű 1991: 242). The lexeme *fiú* ‘boy’ was first attested in 1138, and its meaning was probably ‘son’, ‘descendant’. Reference to ‘young of an animal’ is attested in 1395, and by 1564 *fiú* was already recorded with the conceptually shifted meaning ‘drawer, compartment, cell’. In Figure 1, I provide a chronological overview of the attested meanings (based on the dates of written evidence listed in Benkő 1993: 396–397).

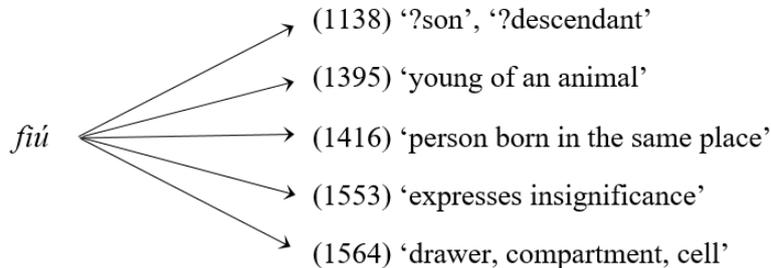


Figure 2. Chronology of attested meanings of Hungarian *fiú*

¹⁰ Earlier also Czuczor and Fogarasi (1862: 838) stated that in a wider sense *fi* simply refers to the offspring, progeny of some animal without gender differentiation, while in more specific use for humans, it designates a male descendant.

¹¹ Note also, that in conservative, somewhat old-fashioned language use a husband would turn to his wife as *fiam* ‘my son’, and this word may also occur in addressing a daughter.

¹² According to Zaicz (ibid.), the word *faj* ‘race’ emerged by backformation from *fojá*, evolving phonetically from *foá* < *foya*, and it used to be a variant of *fiú* in Pre-Hungarian. As evidence of the semantic relatedness and etymological identity, he listed word-pairs such as the adjectives *fias* : *fajos* and the verbs *fiazik* : *fajzik*. By the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries the derivatives of *faj* had obtained pejorative meanings referring to degeneration, as (*el*)*fajul* (e.g. of a situation).

¹³ I use the label Ancient Hungarian for the period following the split-off of Hungarian from other related languages, while Old Hungarian refers to the period beginning in the tenth century A.D. For discussions on periodization see Benkő 1966 (esp. p. 248) and more recently Kiss 2017.

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The lexeme *fiú* developed diminutive forms *fióka* and *fiók* ‘small boy’, which used to be interchangeable until a metaphoric transfer from the animate to the inanimate domain took place (for a chronology of the attested meanings of *fiók* see Figure 3).

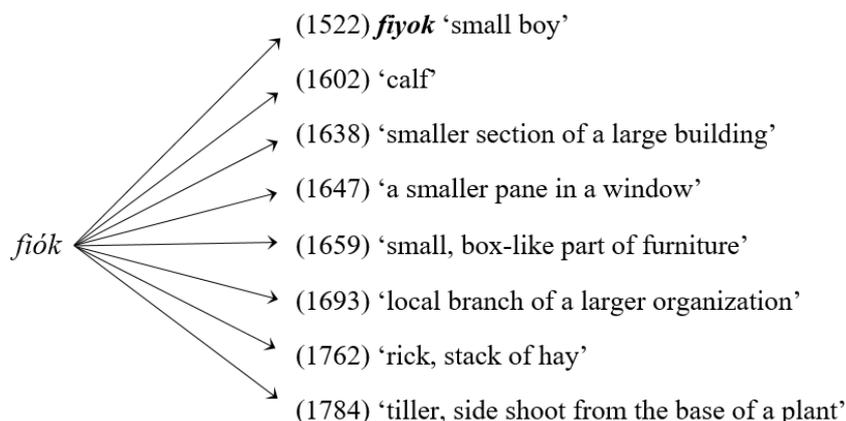


Figure 3. The chronology of attested meanings of Hungarian *fiók*

In the following subchapter I am going to track the development of the diminutive forms *fióka* and *fiók* ‘small boy’ and the metaphoric transfer that affected them.

2.1 The development of *fióka* and *fiók* as alternative diminutives of *fiú* ‘boy’

Both the word *fióka*, which in present-day Hungarian means ‘young of an animal (especially that of a bird)’ and *fiók* ‘drawer, division’ were derived from *fiú* ‘boy’ (< Old Hung. *fió*) by adding the diminutive suffix *-k(a)*. Since *-ka* is a composite morpheme of two diminutive endings (*-k* + *-a/-e*, see Somogyi 2017: 295), *fióka* and *fiók* were originally in parallel use in the sense ‘small boy’. When combined with animal names, *fiók(a)* referred to the ‘young of an animal’,¹⁴ as in *madárfióka* (lit. bird-child) ‘nestling’ or in the now obsolete *borju fiók* ‘calf’ (lit. calf child). The variants *fiók* and *fióka* gradually became semantically dissociated: *fióka* survives only with the meaning ‘nestling’, while *fiók* ceased to be applied in the animate context. Once confined to the inanimate domain, *fiók* lost the transparency of its etymological relationship with its Old Hungarian base, *fió* ‘boy’). The following subchapter will survey examples of the metaphorical transfers of *fiú* ‘son’ and its diminutive form *fiók* to the inanimate domain.

¹⁴ Derivational parallels reflecting the change {SON + dimin.} → ‘young of an animal’ can be found in Indo-European languages, e.g. the diminutive form of Latin *putus* ‘boy’ gives *pullus* ‘foal, chick, young of an animal’ (for more details, see de Vaan 2008: 502–503). Similarly, Latin *iuvenis* ‘young man’ is the basis for the diminutive form *iuvenus* ‘young bull’, *iuvenca* ‘young cow, heifer’. The latter example seems to reveal a rather archaic derivational pattern, since it is a reflex of the reconstructed common Indo-European diminutive **h₂iu-h₁n-ko-* ‘young one, young animal’ (ibid. 317).

2.2 Metaphorical transfers of *fia* ‘son’ and *fiók* ‘small boy’ to the inanimate domain

The lexemes meaning ‘child’, ‘father’ and ‘mother’ frequently occur in compounds, and they may become generalized to such an extent that their function in the compounds appears to be “on the borderline between compounding and derivation” (Heine & Kuteva 2009: 155). This development is observable in compounds, in which *fia* ‘son’ or *fiók* ‘small boy’ appear as the head combined with a dependent noun referring to an inanimate object. Such compounds demonstrate the conceptual shifts and the metaphorical transfers that lead to the change of *fiók* ‘small boy’ to present-day Hungarian *fiók* ‘drawer, compartment’. The following sets of examples will illustrate the semantic changes in compounds of the type {object X + *fia* ‘son’} and {object X + *fiók* ‘small boy’}.

A) SEMANTIC EXTENSIONS

(1) DIMINUTIVE

- a. small type of (N.B. in archaic use):

pajta fia (= barn + son) ‘small barn’,
torony fia (= tower + son) ‘small tower’,
tükör fia (= mirror + son) ‘small mirror’;

- b. small type of (as part of a larger object):

asztalfiók / (archaic) *asztalfia* (= table + son) ‘drawer of a table’,
ládafiók / (archaic) *ládafia* (= chest + son) ‘small box in a chest’,
ablakfiók (obsolete) (= window + son) ‘windowpane’;

A recent addition to this type is *ágyfiók*, which designates a roll-out container under a bed. This compound is an analogical creation based on the pattern of *asztalfiók*, and obviously lacks a form ⁺*ágyfia*.

N.B. A further semantic shift occurred when *fiók* started to combine with names of institutions, and thus gave rise to new lexemes such as *postafiók* (lit. post-drawer) ‘post-office box’ (which in fact still refers to a box in a set of small boxes). The meaning of *fiók* is further extended to refer to premises used by a subsection of a larger institution as in *bankfiók* ‘branch of a bank’, or as first element in the compound *fiókiroda* ‘an office representing a larger organization’. These compounds show that the semantic development has progressed from the feature SMALL to refer to the part of a larger object and then to refer to a section of a larger institution’, i.e. from ‘a small type of’ towards ‘related to’ as implied in Jurafsky’s radial category model (see Figure 1 above).

- c. small type of (as a small offshoot of a plant, tiller):

fiókhagyma ‘bulbel, small separable bulb’,
fiók ‘tiller of corn, sunflower (unwanted offshoot growing from the stem of a plant)’;
 this noun served as the base for the derivation of the corresponding verb *fiókol*, which refers to the agricultural activity of singling, i.e. removing unwanted offshoots to allow maximum growth for the main stem of the plant.

(2) PARTITIVE (part of a mass)

szalmafiók (= straw + small boy) ‘bundle of straw’,
szénafiók (= hay + small boy) ‘bundle of hay’.

The role of *fiók* in these lexemes is obviously individuation, and it functions as a unitizer, i.e. it renders a mass noun quantifiable, countable. A unitizer is not necessarily a numeral classifier though, because – as Lucy (1992: 73) pointed out – “numeral classifiers serve to specify the unit or boundedness of the referent of the lexical noun, that is, they are unitizers which supplement the meaning of the lexical noun head so that it will accept numeral modification”. On the basis of a comparison between Yucatec Mayan (a classifier language) and English (a non-classifier language), Lucy (ibid. 73-75) convincingly argued that while a language like English requires unitizing only in the case of mass nouns, in Yucatec individuation is compulsory with all nouns. With mass nouns in English unitizing is carried out by a pseudo-partitive construction, which requires the presence of a ‘partitive noun’ next to the mass noun, e.g. *a taste of honey, two rashers of bacon*. As opposed to this, classifiers group the nouns on a conceptual basis. That *fiók* is a unitizer is also confirmed by the fact that these compounds can pass the *-NYI* test (see Szabó & Tóth 2015): *egy fióknyi szalma* (a bundle+-ful of hay) as in *egy maroknyi homok* ‘a handful of dust’. From the diachronic viewpoint it seems easy to grasp the role of the *-NYI* test in distinguishing between unitizers and classifiers: the suffix *-nyi* derives adjectives from nouns that refer to measure and quantity (Bartha 1958: 124–125).

(3) RELATED TO (place or event) / (comes from a place or event):

vásárfia (= market + son) ‘a gift brought home from a market’,
búcsúfia (= kermis + son) ‘a gift brought home from a kermis, parish-feast’,
angyalfia (= angel + son) ‘Christmas gift’.¹⁵

The meaning of these words imply the spatial notion that the gift items are brought from a place related to an event, and thus – as opposed to the genitive/partitive construction seen in the examples in (1.b), (2) and (3) – here it is rather a locative-relative relation that is conceptually entailed in these compounds. In the absence of a morphological partitive in Hungarian, one of the separative cases, the elative (formed with the suffix *-ból/-ből*) serves as one way of expressing partitive relations (see Tamm 2014).

B) PRAGMATIC EXTENSION

CONTEMPT (evaluative, ‘bound to ...’)

The pragmatic context modifying the semantic content of compounds with *fia* as headword is also observable in examples such as *szerecséfia* (also *szerecséfi*) (= luck + son) ‘person bound to be lucky, pet of fortune’, or *halálfia* (= death + son) ‘bound to die’. These compounds express a negative evaluation of the referent either because the referent of *szerecséfia* enjoys an undeserved felicitous situation, or because that of *halálfia* is fatally threatened for breaching some rule.

¹⁵ This is a rarely used lexeme, though it is on the rebound due to the popularity of Christmas fairs nowadays referred to as *angyalfia vásár*.

3 Hungarian *fia* ‘son’ grammaticalized as *-fi*

By backformation *fia* ‘son’ developed a variant lexeme *fi* (Benkő 1993: 397), which no longer appears as a free morpheme but survives as the base of diminutive forms originally meaning ‘small boy’, such as *fióka*, *fiók* as well as the now obsolete noun *fial*¹⁶ recorded in 1395 with the meaning ‘stepson, child’. *Fi* also survives in compounds such as e.g. *fiág* ‘male branch’, *fiörökös* ‘male heir’ or – perhaps less transparently – in *fivér* ‘brother’ (lit. son-blood¹⁷) and *fitestvér* ‘male sibling’ (lit. son + body-blood). The grammaticalized form, *-fi*, however, has gained productivity in word-formation. The main concept added by *-fi* is the notion of ‘related to’ or ‘belonging to’; and the context can also entail the meanings ‘a young X’ or a ‘small X’ (as shown by the examples in (1b) and (1c)).

(1) RELATED TO

- a. (name + son) grammaticalized as surname suffix, e.g. *Pál fia* (Paul’s son) > *Pálfi*;
 This is a very frequent derivational pattern, see also *Jakabfi*, *Sándorfi*, *Petőfi*, etc., not just in Hungarian but several other languages.¹⁸
- b. (noun_{ANIMATE, HUMAN} + son) ‘son of X; young X’:
királyfi (= king + son) ‘prince’,
úrfi (= master + son) ‘young man, young master’.
- c. (noun_{ANIMATE, NON-HUMAN} + son) ‘young of an animal’ or ‘small X’ (in old fashioned use):
rókafi (= fox + son) ‘fox-cub’,
kecskefi (= goat + son) ‘kid’,
verébfí (= sparrow + son) ‘small sparrow’,
halfi (= fish + son) ‘small fish’,
baromfi (= cattle + son) ‘poultry’; originally ‘young of cattle’, which later was narrowed down to refer to ‘small cattle (goats and sheep)’; this example illustrates the semantic transfer to ‘small type of’.

(2) MEMBER

(noun_{INANIMATE} + son) → (metaphorical transfer) ‘member of’:

The compounds in this group used to be overt possessive phrases but the possessive relationship between head and dependent has faded. Since in Hungarian it is the head that carries the possessive marker, the grammaticalization of *fia* → *-fi* annulled the possessive marker. The metaphorical extension of ‘son’ to ‘member of a social unit/group’ is operating on the basis of the metaphor SOCIAL GROUPS ARE FAMILIES, which can be illustrated by the following lexemes:¹⁹

¹⁶ The form *fial* contains the diminutive suffix *-l* (~ *-ly*), also attested e.g. in *homály* ‘twilight, mist’ derived from PFU ‘cloud’ (Uralonet № 397). In present-day Hungarian *fial* is used as a verb meaning ‘to bring forth’ (used in connection with animals only).

¹⁷ *Fivér* is a nineteenth-century neologism, and it correlates with *nővér* ‘sister’ (li. woman-blood’) and (archaic) *leányvér* ‘sister’ (lit. girl-blood), see Benkő 1993: 397.

¹⁸ The pattern of attaching the words meaning ‘boy’, ‘son’ or ‘child’ to the parent’s name (in patrilineal societies generally to the father’s name) must be an archaic device in naming, e.g. in Germanic (suffixed as *-son*¹⁸), in Celtic (prefixed as *mac(c)-*). Scandinavian languages can also suffix ‘daughter’, e.g. in Icelandic *-s-dóttir* (meaning the daughter of X). Moreover, matronymic patterns are also possible, e.g., *Helga(s)dóttir*.

¹⁹ This metaphorical transfer is the exact parallel of that in the African languages, Akan and Koyraboro Senni discussed in Section 1.

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atyafi (= father + son) originally meant siblings of the same father, then the meaning generalized to refer to relatives and even friends
egyházfi (= church + son) ‘sacristan’ (with earlier recorded meanings such as ‘coreligionist’ (1650); ‘monk; nun’ (1474); related (by blood) (1416); ‘brother; sister’ (1372) (for more details see Benkő 1993: 59);
hazafi (1638, attested in 1607 in the form *hazafia*) (= home + son) ‘patriot’;
honfi (= homeland + son), ‘compatriot’ (note the gender-marked pair *honleány*),
világfi (= world + son) ‘man-about-town’;
kurafi (*kura* < *kurva* ‘whore’) ‘worthless person’; the pejorative sense here is not a pragmatically obtained feature but derives from the meaning of the noun to which *-fi* is added.

4 Conclusion

This paper investigated the history of the Hungarian word *fia* ‘son’ – as well as its diminutive variants *fiók(a)* – and surveyed the semantic extensions that lead to the loss of semantic transparency of their etymological connection with the lexemes *fióka* ‘birdling’ and *fiók* ‘drawer’. In compounds, *fia* as head is relatively frequent and as such – similarly to languages belonging to various language families of the world – it often reaches the degree of semantic bleaching which facilitates its departure for grammaticalization. Of the three Source–Target relations (diminutive, partitive, classifier) established for the grammaticalization processes affecting the lexeme CHILD (Heine & Kuteva 2014), it is possible to identify the following:

- a) The diminutive function is served by *fia* (e.g. *ablak fia* ‘windowpane’), by its bound form *-fi* (e.g. *kecskefi* ‘kid’), as well as by its diminutive variants *fiók(a)* (e.g. *madárfióka* ‘birdling’ or *ládafiók* ‘small box in a chest’).
- b) For partitive role of *fiók* is also attested (e.g. *szénafiók* ‘bundle of hay’) and an elative partitive (separative) function can be identified in examples such as *vásárfia* ‘a gift brought home from a market’.
- c) In old-fashioned, almost obsolete compounds, *fiók* (referring to bundles) functions as a unitizer. In this capacity *fiók* might be interpreted as a type of classifier, if one accept the analyses suggesting that Hungarian is a classifier language (first proposed by Beckwith 1992 and more recently promoted by Csirmaz & Dékány 2014, but challenged by Schvarcz & Rothstein 2017).

The semantic extensions in the Hungarian examples surveyed here seem to fit smoothly into the radial category model of diminutive polysemy developed by Jurafsky (1996). The metaphorical extension based on the metaphor SOCIAL GROUPS ARE FAMILIES is observable in the type *honfi* ‘patriot’, which is conceptually and structurally congruous with the use of CHILD to refer to members of a social group in several African languages. The inferential extension (‘related to’) is exemplified by the onomastic role of *-fi* in deriving surnames (e.g. *Jakabfi*), a pattern widespread in European (especially Germanic and Celtic) languages. The pragmatic aspect of negative evaluation is also attested in Hungarian by the type *szerecskefi(a)* ‘pet of fortune’.

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