

On structural variation and change of the intensifier *annyira* ‘so (X, that)’

Studies on intensifiers and other degree modifiers usually focus on the distribution of variants across time periods, contexts, and registers, as well as the changes in their frequency (e. g. Hiltunen 2021, Claridge–Jonsson–Kytö 2024, Varga 2024a, 2024b). Nevertheless, the structural characteristics of certain intensifiers can also be subject to various changes. The aim of the present study is to investigate the syntactic change of *annyira* (‘so, so much’). Regarding the Old Hungarian period, it has been observed that a group of resultative clauses not only highlight the manner of a given activity but also its intensity and consequences. This applies to clauses with *annyira* (‘so, so much’) as well (Klemm 1928–1942: 553–554, Haader 1995: 624, 641–642, Rácz 1995: 701). The following periods require further research, exploiting historical corpora. Preliminarily, data were taken from ÓMK (Old Hungarian codices and Middle Hungarian Bible translations, 3.2 million tokens, including word fragments; query was made for [word="an.*ra"] in order to have access to the non-normalized occurrences as well) and TMK (documents of witch trials and private correspondence from Middle Hungarian, 1.1 million tokens, fully normalized and morphologically analysed) and KED (memoirs and dramas from Middle Hungarian, more than 200 thousand tokens, tokens, fully normalized and morphologically analysed). *Annyira* (‘so’) were already present in Old and Middle Hungarian in structures, such as complement (*amennyire* X, *annyira* Y ‘as much as X, so much Y’, ÓMK: 6%) or negation with contrast and comparison (*nem annyira* X, *hanem / mint* Y ‘not so X, but rather / as Y’ or *annyira nem* X, ‘not so X’, ÓMK 5%, TMK and KED 13%). Nevertheless, the majority of the intensifier uses of *annyira* occurred in resultative complex sentences. In Old Hungarian data, there are a total of 317 occurrences (83%, based on ÓMK) and in Middle Hungarian, there are 349 occurrences (77.5%). Thus, in this case, the sentence structure often supported the expression of intensity. Additionally, *annyira* primarily collocated with verbal targets even in Middle Hungarian with 432 occurrences (96%, based on TMK and KED). For example.

- (1) a. Verfenfeegh **tamada** azert hű kőztők **anneera**, **hogy** el tawoznanak egy maftwl (ÓMK, JordK. ApCsel_15/39)
‘And the contention **was so** sharp between them, **that** they departed asunder one from the other’ (King James Bible)
b. Éppen, édesem, **annyira elmerültem vala** a szorgalmatosságba, **hogy** Matuzsálem sem jobban
‘Currently, my love, I have been **so heads down** doing hard work **that** even Methuselah would be no more’ (TMK, Bark. 188.)

The infrequent adverbial and adjectival targets were used either in negative or resultative contexts. Therefore, the present study argues that during the 19th century, the use of the intensifier *annyira* expanded toward non-embedded clauses, and the preference for verbal targets has been changed as well. During Modern Hungarian period, *annyira* also occurs in coordinated clauses and even in stand-alone sentences with adjective and adverbial targets. The latter uses appear to be more recent and occur more frequently in the personal subcorpus (both in the Hungarian Historical Corpus or MTSZ, e.g. (2a) and Hungarian Giga Word Corpus or MNSZ, e.g. (2b)).

- (2) a. Talán az volna legbölcsebb, ha nem beszélnék. Hiszen **annyira távol** esnek tőlem a divatos törekvések!
‘Perhaps the wisest thing for me would be not to talk. For the fashionable endeavours are **so far** from me.’ (MTSZ, 1910)

- b. Lehet, hogy vannak fontosabb dolgok is, mint macskás képeket megosztani. De ezek akkor is **annyira jók!**
'There might be more important things than submitting pictures on cats. But these are **so good!**' (MNSZ, pers, 2013 #214277723)

Instances seen in (2a) and (2b) are more direct functional and structural equivalents of the meaning 'very' compared to resultative uses, such as (1a) and (1b). The analysis contrasts and compares the ratios of main versus embedded clauses of *annyira* across subperiods as well as across personal, press, and disciplinary discourse subcorpora from MTSZ, which contains data between from 1772 to 2010. The change in the preference for the word class of the target is also examined, based on the assumption that there is a relationship between non-verbal targets, especially certain collocations, such as *annyira jó* 'so good' and the presence of non-embedded syntactic structures. Historical data are also compared in this respect with queries of certain collocations of *annyira* in personal, spoken, and press subcorpora of MNSZ. The observed variety and the entrenchment of the coordinated and stand-alone uses of *annyira* presumably shows similarities to a pattern observed in the case of *so* in varieties of English, which has also recently become a popular variant as an intensifier (compared to *very*, *really*, and *pretty*, cf. Tagliamonte–Roberts 2005, Tagliamonte 2008, Bulgin et al. 2008). The study also raises the question whether unembedded uses of *annyira* can be considered as a case of insubordination (Mithun 2016, Bulgin et al. 2008).

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Mónika Varga

HUN-REN Hungarian Research Centre for Linguistics, Institute for Historical and Uralic
Linguistics