

Partial synonymy of terms: Diverse labels for, and interpretations of, light verb constructions^{*}

Éva Hrenek

ELTE Eötvös Loránd University,
Budapest, Hungary

hrenek.eva@btk.elte.hu

Abstract

The point of departure of this paper is the hypothesis that, by examining the various labels used for the verbal expressions (also) known as light verb constructions (e.g., *periphrastic constructions*, *pleonastic expressions*, *semi-compositional constructions*), it is possible to pinpoint the features that the various approaches dealing with that particular category and that phenomenon interpret as definitive, essential specificities of the linguistic units in question (cf. 2.1). In addition, the exploration of the differences across categories referred to by terms that are synonymous (at least in some of their uses) might contribute to outlining the features of prototypical and non-prototypical light verb constructions, and refining the systematization of the above-mentioned expressions.

In this article, I will first review the general characteristics of denomination (2.1), and those of terminology formation (2.2). After that, I will briefly sketch the approaches typically connected to the terms that are occasionally used synonymously with the term *light verb construction* (3). Then, on the basis of the intersection of the different approaches, I will outline a definition of light verb constructions that can currently be regarded as being the most general and accepted (4). Finally, combining several views found in the literature, I will attempt a prototype-based approach to the construction type under discussion and determine the features of prototypical light verb constructions (5).

1. Introduction: Terminology and approaches

1.1. General characteristics of denomination

Denomination, the creation of names – including terminology formation – takes place on the basis of a feature or component of the entity or phenomenon at hand that is important (or believed to be important), specific, or requiring emphasis. This component can be considered to be a name-providing feature in a sense that, although the name explicitly refers to only one, highlighted feature of the thing (*pars pro toto* ‘part standing for the whole’), it is meant to include all the (recognized) details or components of the particular entity, that is, also the unit perceived as a whole (*synecdoche* ‘simultaneous understanding’). It is exactly the complex nature of the particular phenomena that makes their different denominations possible,

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including intralingual clusters of synonyms as well as names diverging from language to language. The existence of different names for the same entity can be traced back to the fact that a particular phenomenon is represented from diverse points of view by the different languages and the different (synonymous) names within the same language. Thus, they emphasize different features (parts) of the entity as a whole (perceived as a cluster of features) and make it a denominating mark.¹ (For this interpretation of denomination, see Horváth 2000.) Thus, synonymous denominations represent an aspect of reality from different viewpoints, prioritize different specificities, and consequently categorize it in different ways.

1.2. The specificities of terminology formation

The formation of linguistic terms – contrary to the usually spontaneous development of non-specialized expressions – is a typically conscious and planned process (cf. Fóris 2005) during which a phenomenon interpreted in a particular way and a (scientific) category formed and outlined in accordance with specific aspects has to be named within a particular framework, preferably in a way that the denomination shall refer to the property or properties of the category in question interpreted as decisive in that framework. However, the various scientific fields, or the diverse approaches, tendencies, attitudes within a scientific field, can place certain phenomena among different circumstances and with this, not only the denomination of a particular phenomenon or range of phenomena may change according to which specificities are regarded as decisive by which framework but, not independently of the denomination, the range of the phenomena that the individual approaches sort out into categories marked by particular denominations may also be different. Thus, the diverse linguistic frameworks do not only speak differently but they often speak *about* something different even when they interpret the same range of linguistic facts in different approaches (cf., e.g., Imrényi 2009).

2. Terms and categories

In what follows, I will examine some of the typical denominations (highlighting a decisive feature of either the verb or the entire construction) of the verbal expressions that can be named light verb constructions, and briefly, and summarily, I will outline the approaches behind the individual denominations and the major specificities of the categories marked by the terms.

2.1. Terms referring to the detailed nature of locution

2.1.1. Pleonastic expressions

It was the purists who first noticed the occurrence of expressions that did not synthetically grasp a certain process, that is, not with one single word, but in a detailed analytical way² – i.e., the first Hungarian descriptions and analyses of constructions of that type were prescriptive (cf., e.g., Dengl 1938). In this approach, such expressions were qualified as

¹ For instance, a table can be named based on different features by different languages: German *Tisch* highlights the feature ‘round plate, disc’, English *table* accentuates ‘plate, sheet, board’, Russian *stol* emphasizes ‘standing’, while Greek *trapedza* singles out ‘four legs’ from the characteristics of the object as a nominating mark (Horváth 2000).

² This phenomenon cannot be regarded as a Hungarian specificity, though. During the 19th century, the same prescriptive approach was primarily typical of works dealing with the topic in English: generalization of meaning was typically interpreted as desemantization or bleaching and hence “decay” in English-speaking countries, as well (see Aitchison & Lewis 2003). Until the 1960s, the same purist attitude characterized the specialized literature of light verb constructions in German and Russian, too (see, e.g., Dobos 2009: 14–16).

faulty and to be avoided, and strangeness and exuberance were pointed out as their main features (e.g., Prohászka 1956). Besides, purists believed that these linguistic units were not only objectionable from a stylistic point of view, but also – in some cases, especially in legal and official texts, text types –, they made the interpretation of utterances significantly more difficult (Károly & Zsembery 1960).

This purist attitude is reflected by the Hungarian term *terpeszkedő kifejezés* ‘pleonastic expression’ [literally: ‘sprawling expression’]. It has to be noted, though, that the category of pleonastic expressions does not only include verbal constructions (cf. Grétsy & Kovalovszky 1985): the term may refer to any construction that is regarded as magniloquent, meaningless, and/or too official by the purist approach. In accordance with this, besides verbal expressions such as *bevásárlást eszközöl* ‘make some purchases’ (for *bevásárol* ‘do the shopping’), *reményt táplál* ‘feed the hope’ (for *reménykedik* ‘hope’), *feltűnést kelt* ‘create a sensation’ (for *feltűnő* ‘(be) sensational’), the same category can include postpositional constructions like *a tárgyalás során* ‘during the trial’ or *a környezetvédelem érdekében* ‘in the interest of protecting the environment’ that can, in principle, be substituted with suffixed nouns (cf. Balázs 2001) and even some constructions which cannot be replaced by a single lexical element (e.g. *eljárást indít* ‘initiate proceedings’, *hadjáratot folytat* ‘engage in war’; for further examples see Lanstyák 2019).

The specificity of the latter constructions is that in their case, there is no simpler expression compared to which their detailed nature might be resented, thus, labelling them “pleonastic expressions” contradicts the definition of the *Handbook of linguistic purism* (Grétsy & Kovalovszky 1985), which considers the existence of a synonymous synthetic expression to be a determining feature of the category. This categorization of multi-word constructions that cannot be substituted for by a single word may be motivated by the facts that (a) the meaning of the verb included in them is general and, in some cases, heavily grammaticalized; and (b) the particular verb may occur in large numbers in constructions that can be interpreted as actual light verb constructions (cf. 3.2.2).³

This purist tradition still affects the assessment of the constructions in question; however, in the meaning of the term *terpeszkedő kifejezés* ‘pleonastic expression’, the connotation ‘exuberant, magniloquent [expression]’ has faded to some extent by today, so this term, although it cannot be regarded as neutral, does not necessarily betray a prescriptive approach clearly (see, e.g., Heltai & Gósy 2005, Szathmári 2004).

2.1.2 Periphrastic constructions, descriptive expressions, and verbal periphrases

One of the most important and least debated characteristics of the type of verbal constructions in question – as I have referred to it earlier – is that the constructions that can be categorized into this type indicate processes that can usually be interpreted more directly and simply, with one single verb (or noun). A process is usually marked by a single word, so (at least in present-day standard Hungarian) this way of expression is considered the default case – the specific cases, where the speaker does not choose the conventional synthetic expression but describes the particular event by a longer verbal

³ For instance, the verbal element of *hadjáratot folytat* ‘engage in war’ is clearly a light verb in expressions like *vitát folytat* ‘engage in debate’, *megbeszélést folytat* ‘engage in discussion’, and also in other uses, it typically contributes to the meaning of the construction primarily with the notion of ‘continuation’, while the process which the construction refers to is specified by a nominal element (e.g., *folytatja az írást* ‘continue writing’, cf. Hrenek 2016).

construction that consists of multiple units and has a metaphorical meaning, can be interpreted in comparison to it.

Both *körülíró szerkezet* ‘periphrastic construction’ and *leíró kifejezés* ‘descriptive expression’ are word-for-word translations of the corresponding Russian terms – the former was first applied by Sziklai (1986), and the latter by Dobos (1991; 2009: 16) for describing light verb constructions. Their purpose was to introduce a neutral term free of negative connotations instead of *terpeszkedő kifejezés* ‘pleonastic expression’ into the Hungarian specialized literature, making it possible to interpret this particular phenomenon and the category objectively, free of prejudices. The term *igés körülírás* ‘verbal description’ used by Károly (1970: 390–391) also reflects a definitely descriptive approach.

All three terms direct attention to the fact that the expressions included in this particular category describe the relevant process – that could, in principle, be referred to more simply – in a linguistically detailed, explanatory way. However, these terms suggest neither the generality of meaning of the verbs occurring in the construction, nor to their (assumed) range of use or stylistic value, so they can refer to an extremely wide range of linguistic constructions.⁴

2.1.3. Semi-compositional constructions

The type of verbal constructions with metaphorical meanings discussed here includes two-term expressions that consist of a verb and a nominal (usually a noun) that relatively frequently cooccurs with it. Based on this feature, such constructions can be said to belong to the system of noun + verb complexes – within which larger category these constructions can be interpreted as the middle section of the scale between semantically completely transparent, productive linguistic units (e.g., *könyvet olvas* ‘read a book’) and clearly idiomatic expressions (e.g., *törbe csal* ‘lure into a trap’). Therefore, they can be understood as constructions that are not (or are to a very limited degree) productive, are not idiomatic, and can be considered of partially compositional meaning (cf., e.g., Langer 2005, Vincze 2008).

Similarly to the terms mentioned previously, the term *félig kompozicionális szerkezet* ‘semi-compositional construction’ does not regard the particular construction type from the point of view of the verb it includes; neither does it name the construction in terms of a specific (or allegedly specific) feature of the verb: it regards the construction as a single unit and describes it as a whole (cf. Vincze 2008). This term and the approach behind it, however, are closely linked to formal approaches to linguistics, so its prevalence and range are quite limited currently (it appears, not exclusively but primarily, in articles on language technology and/or lexicography, e.g., Vincze et al. 2010).

2.2 Terms referring to the generality of the meaning of the verbal element

2.2.1 Light verb constructions

The term *könnyű igés szerkezet* ‘light verb construction’ directs the reader’s attention to the relatively general nature of the meaning of the verbal element, and regards this trait as the definitive feature of the category (cf. Forgács 2015, Lázár 2017) – therefore, it interprets

⁴ The meaning of the term *verbal description* is, of course, narrower than that of the other two terms – as it can only include verbal constructions –, however, even so, it is too general to clearly outline a particular category.

the constructions in question from the point of view of a semantic peculiarity of the verbal element. The term appeared in the Hungarian literature as the translation of the English *light verb construction*, however, it has not been able to become widespread yet – instead of it, the term *funkcióigés szerkezet* ‘function verb construction’, focusing on mainly the grammatical features (function) of the verb, has become accepted.

2.2.2 Function verb constructions

The term *funkcióige* ‘function verb’ (which was coined as a word-for-word translation of the German *Funktionsverb*) was first used in the Hungarian literature by Keszler (1992: 131–134) for the description of expressions containing such types of verbs from a word-class perspective.

The terms *funkcióige* ‘function verb’ and *funkcióigés szerkezet* ‘function verb construction’ refer to the fact that – according to this interpretation – the verb is primarily present in the construction as the carrier of grammatical features, it has no meaning (or not necessarily has one), and it can typically be characterized by a grammatical function. In this approach, the meaning of the particular construction is clearly and (almost) exclusively determined by the nominal element next to the verb, and the role of the verb is merely the “verbalization” of the noun and its integration into the sentence (cf., e.g., Keszler 2000). Thus, the denomination – similarly to the term *könnyű igés szerkezet* ‘light verb construction’ – highlights a feature of the verbal element of the given constructions which is considered to be decisive and interprets the type of structure in question on that basis.

According to the examples in the literature, the category of function verb constructions can basically be equivalent with the category of light verb constructions, although, in principle, the two categories could be separated from each other – since their semantic and grammatical aspects, although they are closely linked, cannot be identified with each other completely. The term *könnyű igés szerkezet* (if only what the name suggests is considered) can potentially encompass a wider range of verbal constructions, as this term allows, but does not presume, the meaning (function) of the verbal element to be of a primarily grammatical nature. However, the terms are typically present in the specialized literature as synonyms (cf., e.g., Lázár 2017).

There is an overlap between the categories of the linguistic units called light verb constructions and pleonastic expressions as well; but these two groups (although they intersect) are separated from one another more clearly – on the one hand, due to the prescriptive approach linked to the term *pleonastic expression*, and on the other hand because not every expression considered pleonastic can be interpreted as a light verb construction at the same time (see e.g. postpositional constructions like *vmi érdekében* ‘in the interest of sg’ ~ *vmiért* ‘for sg’).

2.3 Overview: approaches reflected in the terms

From the terminological overviews of Langer (2005), Dobos (2009: 14–16) and Forgács (2015), it can be seen that in the terms referring to light verb constructions (whether starting from the Hungarian or the foreign terms), basically three different – partially connected and linkable – aspects may become a naming feature:

- (1) The terms *könnyű igés szerkezet* ‘light verb construction’, *könnyű ige* ‘light verb’ and *üres ige* ‘empty verb’ emphasize the generality and schematic nature of the verb in the construction. A similar approach is reflected by the Portuguese term

construções com verbo leve ‘light verb constructions’, and the English terms *light verb construction* and *empty verb*, or the German terms *leichtes Verb* ‘light verb’ and *neutrales Verb* ‘neutral verb’ as well.

- (2) The terms *funkcióigés szerkezet* ‘function verb construction’ and *támasztóiigés szerkezet* ‘support verb construction’ refer to the fact that the role of the verbs in these constructions is secondary, and it can only be interpreted in relation to the noun component. This feature is emphasized in the German *Funktionsverbgefüge* ‘function verb constructions’, the English *support verb constructions*, the French *constructions à verbe support*, the Italian *costruzioni a verbo supporto* and the Portuguese *construções com verbo suporte* ‘support verb constructions’.
- (3) The terms *körülíró szerkezet* ‘periphrastic construction’, *leíró kifejezés* ‘descriptive expression’, *igés körülírás* ‘verbal periphrase’ and in some sense – with a negative connotation and focusing on the (assumed) stylistic features of the constructions – the term *terpeszkedő (igés) kifejezés* ‘pleonastic (verbal) expression’ draw attention to the complexity, i.e., the detailed, explanatory, descriptive nature of the constructions in question. The same feature is emphasized by the English term *complex verb structure* and the German *Streckform* ‘stretch form’. The Russian terms meaning ‘descriptive/periphrastic expression’ refer to it as well.

3. The interpretation of the concept of light verb constructions in the literature

Currently, the category of light verb constructions – as it is also apparent from the diversity of the names listed in the previous section – has no uniform definition that would also take the internal diversity of the category into account, and there are no aspects identified with the coherent vindication of which a nuanced description of the category would be possible. The literature typically distinguishes the constructions in question from other types of verbal constructions on the basis of two main features: they usually consider an expression to be a light verb construction if

- the meaning of the verbal element in the expression is a significantly generalized and grammaticalized one, and
- the process(es) or piece(s) of reality indicated by the expression can be referred to more simply, with a single word (usually: with a single verb) in the Hungarian standard.

Thus, the literature interprets light verb constructions as verbal constructions that can be substituted for by a single word, the meaning of which is primarily determined by the nominal element of the construction (e.g., *javaslatot tesz* ‘make a suggestion’ ~ *javasol* ‘suggest’). According to this interpretation, the verb in these constructions is a desemantized “light” verb of incomplete value, which can be characterized by merely a grammatical function (cf., e.g., Keszler 2000, Hegedűs 2004: 246, Forgács 2007: 48, 85–87), and the constructions as units describe, in a linguistically periphrastic manner, certain pieces of reality which could also be displayed more simply.

These two aspects – the semantic factor and the substitutability by a simpler expression – are usually mentioned by the available explicit definitions as a prerequisite of belonging to the category, not assuming a hierarchy between them. However, examining the examples given in the literature, it can be seen that the relevant works do not regard

these two criteria equally important when they circumscribe the category. Among the examples listed, there are several expressions in which the meaning of the verb is not restricted to components of a merely grammatical nature (e.g. *foglyul ejt* ‘take hostage’, *rendszerbe foglal* ‘incorporate in a system’ – Forgács 2007: 85–87, *békét/barátságot köt* ‘make peace/friends’ – Hegedűs 2004: 248). Therefore, in these cases, the description of the expressions as light verb constructions can only be justified by their substitutability by a single lexical element (usually a verb, e.g., *rendszerbe foglal* ‘incorporate in a system’ ~ *rendszerez* ‘systematize’, *összeesküvést sző* ‘weave a plot’ ~ *összeesküszik* ‘conspire’), and not by the general, grammatical nature of the verbal meaning.

On the one hand, this clash between the explicit interpretations (included in the definition) and implicit ones (suggested by examples) makes obvious the heterogeneity that is typical of the category, and on the other hand, it directs attention to the fact that a descriptive method that assumes rigid category boundaries and operates with criteria that are considered to be equivalent but occasionally lead to conflicting results is not suitable for capturing the diversity of light verb constructions.

However, the controversies can be resolved if the semantic factor and substitutability are not interpreted as equivalent criteria, or as necessary and sufficient conditions, but – assuming categories organized on the basis of the prototype principle – regard them as features that provide an opportunity to explore the similarities and differences across the various verbal constructions. In this approach, the aim is not to clearly distinguish light verb constructions from other construction types: the emphasis is, on the one hand, on the exploration of some (prototypical and less prototypical) items of the categories, and on the other hand, on the connections, transitions and possible interfaces between the diverse categories and construction types.

4. A prototype-based approach to the category of light verb constructions

In what follows, I will make a suggestion for the systematization of light verb constructions that uses the prototype principle, which interprets the features creating the basis of the terms (cf. Section 3) and the definitions (cf. Section 4) mentioned in the literature review in relation to each other, and assumes scalarity in the case of the semantic aspects. This approach – following the principles of prototype-based categorization – does not rely on crisp category boundaries, does not rigidly distinguish light verb constructions from other construction types, and does not aim to state conditions with the mechanical use of which it could be obviously decided whether or not a particular expression is a light verb construction. Assuming central/prototypical and peripheral category elements, and taking the inherent heterogeneity of the category into account, I interpret category membership to be a matter of degree.

Applying the aspects demonstrated in Sections 3 and 4, Lanstyák’s (2019) examples and prototype-based definitions (2019: 63–64), and the results of my own previous research (cf. Hrenek 2016, 2019a) I present the following assumptions as requiring further, targeted examinations. I consider the prototypical light verb constructions to be verbal expressions with metaphorical meanings,

- the meaning of the verbal element of which is largely general (schematic),⁵ and primarily contributes to the meaning of the construction with grammatical meaning

⁵ In my interpretation (cf. Hrenek 2017, 2019a, b), the generality of the light verbs’ meaning is not the result of processes of generalization or desemantization: in the cases I have examined, this meaning does not largely differ from the other meanings of the particular verb in complexity or in the extent of its generality. In

components (such as the component ‘continuously’ of the verbal elements of constructions like *előadást tart* ‘deliver a lecture’ or *vitát folytat* ‘have a debate’);

- the noun element of which
 - is a noun morphologically related to the verb that is synonymous with the construction – for instance, a noun derived from the given verb or a noun that can be interpreted as having the given verb as its root word (e.g., *előadást tart* ‘deliver a lecture_N’ ~ *előad* ‘lecture_V’, *vitát folytat* ‘carry on a debate_N’ ~ *vitázik* ‘debate_V’),
 - is a noun which itself is related to a process or event (e.g., *előadás* ‘lecture’, *vita* ‘debate’) (of course not referring to its temporal aspects),
 - and appears as a direct object in the construction (e.g., *előadást tart*, *vitát folytat*);⁶
- that are in a relation of synonymy with a verb that is morphologically linked to the noun element of the construction (e.g., *előadást tart* ~ *előad*, *vitát folytat* ~ *vitázik*);
- and are conventionalized.

Prototypical light verb constructions exhibit all the above-mentioned features, and the semantic and functional characteristics with respect to which different degrees are taken into account – such as generality of the verbal meaning⁷ or conventionalization – are true of the given expressions to a large extent. Non-typical light verb functions, on the other hand – as it is implied by the above-mentioned system of criteria –, may differ from the central elements of the category in several respects, and their position within the category is basically determined by which (or what combination) of the above-mentioned features they exhibit. For instance, *barátságot köt* ‘make friends’ is a less peripheral (more prototypical) light verb construction than *kérdésekkel bombáz* ‘bombard with questions’: the only aspects that distinguish the former from prototypical light verb constructions is that the meaning of the verbal element in it – although it is relatively general – is clearly a lexical meaning, and that its nominal element is not the name of an event. Contrary to this, the meaning of the verbal element in *kérdésekkel bombáz* is highly specific, and *kérdésekkel* ‘with questions’ is not the name of an event, and does not appear in the construction as a direct object.

The individual criteria, however – as I have mentioned –, are probably not equivalent, and not equally decisive with regards to categorization. The existence of a verb that is synonymous with the construction and is morphologically related to its nominal

addition, it is worth mentioning here that – although prototypical light verb constructions contain light verbs with prototypical, hence also largely general meanings (e.g., *tesz* ‘do’, *folytat* ‘carry on’) – the constructions containing prototypical light verbs cannot be automatically considered to be prototypical light verb constructions at the same time (e.g., the expression *feledésbe kerül* ‘get into oblivion’ is not a prototypical light verb construction despite including a prototypical light verb).

⁶ This assumption is primarily based on the fact that constructions containing direct object nominal elements occur in high proportions in my above-mentioned (not representative) collection. However, the assumption is also theoretically well-founded since there is an especially strong semantic link between the verb and its direct object complement, therefore such constructions form a close-knit unit semantically as well, which can contribute to their conventionalization as a unit.

⁷ It can be suggested that not only the generality of the meaning of the verb, but also the fact that the nature of the nominal element expressing the event can be seen as a scalar feature – although the corroboration of this assumption requires further, more systematic examinations.

element seems to be a highly significant criterion,⁸ while the meaning of the verb may be of various types moving on a large scale of generality/semanticity (cf., e.g., Hrenek 2019a), and the occurrence of the noun as a direct object is presumably merely a common, rather than an essential, feature of the particular category.

Based on my previous analyses, whose detailed review is outside the scope of the present paper, I assume that the existence of a relationship of synonymy with a verb morphologically related to the nominal element (that is, the existence of a parallel synthetic expression) is a definitive feature of the category in question, while the degree of generality/specificity of the verbal meaning is an organizing principle within that category and a scalar property that allows the integration of light verb constructions into the system of verbal constructions with metaphorical meanings (cf., e.g., Hrenek 2016).

In terms of the function and semantic schematization/grammaticalization of verbs appearing in light verb constructions, several types can be distinguished (cf. Hrenek 2016, 2019). These types can be arranged on a scale of increasing degrees of generality/grammaticalization (e.g., *szövetséget köt* → *tanácsot ad* → *vitát folytat*). The scale is open on one end toward constructions with verbs of highly specific meaning (e.g., *kérdésekkel bombáz* ‘bombard with questions’) and on the other end toward patterns involving verbs of highly schematic (grammatical) meaning (e.g., *nehézzé tesz* ‘make sg difficult’) as well as morphologically complex verbs featuring grammatical components (derivational suffixes) (e.g., *nehéz-ít* ‘make difficult, lit. difficult-ify’).⁹ The scale is illustrated by Figure 1:

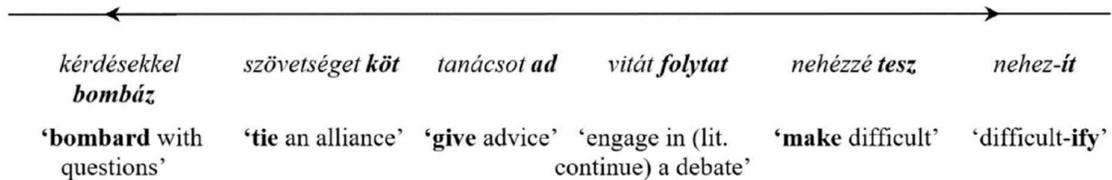


Figure 1. Light verb constructions in the system of verbal constructions having metaphorical meanings

However, further exploration is required to determine which of the listed aspects contribute, in which cases and to what extent, to a verbal construction being identified as a light verb construction.

5. Summary

In the present paper, I briefly reviewed the various (partly synonymous) terms referring to light verb constructions, taking into consideration what typical approaches and interpretations belong to which terms. I also attempted to determine what categories the

⁸ Lanstyák (2019) distinguishes light verb constructions with verbal vs. nominal content – in the case of the latter, the element that is synonymous with the construction is not a verb, but a nominal (noun or adjective); for instance, *közhelyszámba megy* ‘qualify as commonplace’ ~ *közhely(es)* ‘commonplace’, *kivételt képez* ‘constitute an exception’ ~ *kivétel* ‘exception’, *határt alkot* ‘create a border’ ~ *határ* ‘border’. I ignore this type of expressions in the present paper, although I do not impugn the possibility that, as peripheral category elements, they could also be integrated into the (broadly interpreted) category of light verb constructions.

⁹ The scale presented here is aimed at capturing relationships between verbal constructions from a synchronic perspective. The grammaticalization process of light verbs and a diachronically oriented description of light verb constructions are beyond the scope of the present paper (but see, e.g., Ittész 2015; Bower 2008; Butt & Lahiri 2013).

individual terms typically describe, and what linguistic phenomena they are related to. After that, based on the overlaps between the different interpretations, I commented on the main aspects of the definitions usually connected to the term *funkcióigés szerkezet* ‘light verb construction’ and the usual definition of that category. Finally – combining the aspects discussed and applying the prototype principle – I set out some of the features of the construction type based on which the range of prototypical light verb constructions may be outlined. This approach can not only bring the exploration of the internal organization of the category closer but – by partially modifying the interpretation of the phenomenon – it may also contribute to modifying the definition of the term *funkcióigés szerkezet* ‘light verb construction’. However, the present paper can be interpreted primarily as a preparation of further research; the validity and the significance of the aspects raised here must be the object of further exploration.

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