Variation in the size of nominal ellipsis in Hungarian: evidence from nouns and pronouns

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22nd Seoul International Conference on Generative Grammar (SICOGG 22)
12-14 August 2020
Introduction

▶ In Hungarian, number and case morphemes only occur on the noun:

(1) a. a piros játék-ok-at
    the red toy-PL-ACC
    ‘the red toys (acc)’

   b. *a piros-ak-at játék(-ok-at)
      the red-PL-ACC toy-PL-ACC
      Int: ‘the red toys (acc)’

▶ In nominal ellipsis, number and case attach to the remnant (here, adjective):

(2) a piros-ak-at ∅
    the red-PL-ACC
    ‘the red ones (acc)’

→ Saab and Lipták (2016): Hungarian nominal ellipsis targets the nP and is licensed by Num
Observation: contra existing claims, possessor morphology can survive nominal ellipsis and be stranded on the remnant.

→ **Possessor head (Poss) can also license ellipsis** of its complement.

Proposal: variation in the head that licenses nominal ellipsis in Hungarian: Num vs. Poss.

Consequences: nominal ellipsis licensed by Poss can **capture a previously unanalyzed systematic variation in the Hungarian possessive pronoun paradigm**.
Roadmap

1. Background: Hungarian nominal morphemes
2. Hungarian nominal ellipsis
   1. Nominal ellipsis licensed by Num
   2. Nominal ellipsis licensed by Poss
3. Analysis: variation in licensing
4. Consequences: possessive pronouns
5. Conclusions
Hungarian nominal morphemes

- Basic order of nominal morphemes in Hungarian (3)-(4):

  (3) noun – possessedness suffix – number – agreement – case
  (4) játék-a-i-m-at
toy-POSS-PL-1SG-ACC
‘my toys (acc)’

- **Possessedness** suffix (Poss) indicates that the head noun is a possessum.
  Appears in the forms -ja, -je, -a and -e, depending on the (morpho)phonological environment.
Hungarian nominal morphemes

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- **Number** suffix corresponds to the number of the possessum.

- **Agreement** suffix corresponds to the person and number of the possessor.
Hungarian nominal morphemes

▶ Plural head noun (i.e. possessum) → plural marker (-i) appears between possessedness suffix and agreement suffix:

(5) noun – possessedness suffix – number – agreement – case

(6) játék-a-i-m-at
    toy-POSS-PL-1SG-ACC
    ‘my toys (acc)’

(Plural marker of possessed nouns (-i) is different from regular plural marker (-k).)

▶ Singular head noun → possessedness and agreement suffixes are fused (7):

(7) játék-om-at
    toy-POSS.1SG-ACC
    ‘my toy (acc)’
Saab and Lipták (2016): nominal ellipsis in Hungarian targets the $nP$ ($nPE$)

(8) a. a piros játék-ok-at
    the red toy-PL-ACC
    ‘the red toys (acc)’

   b. a piros-ak-at $\emptyset$ ($nPE$)
    the red-PL-ACC
    ‘the red ones (acc)’
(9) $n$PE licensed by Num:

- Affixes attach to their host via the process of leaning.
- Ellipsis applies early on the PF branch → bleeds such processes.
- Stranded affixes reattach to non-canonical host: rightmost remnant (here, adjective) instead of noun.
- Under their analysis, $n$PE is licensed only by Num.
**nPE licensed by Poss**

- Possessor morphology can be stranded under nPE + show up on the adjectival remnant (cf. Saab and Lipták 2016; Kenesei et al. 1998).

(10) a. Mari kölcsönkérte a te piros játék-od-at és az én kék-em-et.
Mary borrowed the you red toy-POSS.2SG-ACC and the I blue-POSS.1SG-ACC
‘Mary borrowed your red toy and my blue (toy).’

b. Mari kölcsönkérte a te piros játék-a-i-d-at és az én kék-e-i-m-et.
Mary borrowed the you red toy-POSS-PL-2SG-ACC and the I blue-POSS-PL-1SG-ACC
‘Mary borrowed your red toys and my blue (toys).’

→It is not only Num, but also Poss that licenses ellipsis of its complement.

Judgements reported in prior literature were based on a remnant presented in isolation, e.g. *a ti érdekes-e-i-ték ‘your interesting ones’; cf. (10), where nPE is licensed by an appropriate antecedent.
Parallel examples where the remnant has a 2nd or 3rd person possessor are also grammatical:

     Mary borrowed the I red toy-POSS.1SG-ACC and the you blue-POSS.2SG-ACC
     ‘Mary borrowed my red toy and your blue (toy).’

b. Mari kölcsönkérte az én piros játék-a-i-m-at és a te kék-e-i-d-et.
     Mary borrowed the I red toy-POSS-PL-2SG-ACC and the you blue-POSS-PL-1SG-ACC
     ‘Mary borrowed my red toys and your blue (toys).’
Parallel examples where the remnant has a 2nd or 3rd person possessor are also grammatical:

(12) a. Mari kölcsönkérte a te piros játék-od-at és az ō kék-jé-t.
Mary borrowed the you red toy-POSS.2SG-ACC and the (s)he blue-POSS-ACC
‘Mary borrowed your red toy and her/his blue (toy).’

b. Mari kölcsönkérte a te piros játék-a-i-d-at és az ō kék-je-i-t.
Mary borrowed the you red toy-POSS-PL-2SG-ACC and the (s)he blue-POSS-PL-ACC
‘Mary borrowed your red toys and her/his blue (toys).’

Note: the agreement marker for 3rd person is null.
(13) $n$PE licensed by Num

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{DP} \\
\text{D} & \text{NumP} \\
\text{AP} & \ldots \\
\text{Num}_{[E]} & nP \\
\end{array}
\rightarrow nPE
\]

(14) $n$PE licensed by Poss

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{DP} \\
\text{D} & \ldots \\
\text{Agr} & \ldots \\
\text{Num} & \text{PossP} \\
\text{Poss}_{[E]} & nP \\
\end{array}
\rightarrow nPE
\]

- $n$PE licensed by either Num or Poss.
- Ellipsis always targets the complement of the licensing head, i.e. $nP$. 

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Consequences of our analysis

- Prediction: we expect to see the same pattern in other contexts where Poss is present.
  - → Hungarian possessive pronouns

But first: anaphoric possessive...
Hungarian anaphoric possessive

- When there is no adjective and the only remnant is the possessor noun → ‘anaphoric possessive’ -é is used in place of regular possessive morphology.
  (see i.a. Dékány (2015) and references therein)

- é is in complementary distribution with the possessedness suffix (-ja, -je, -a, -e absent):

(15) a. a fiú játék-a
   the boy toy-POSS
   ‘the boy’s toy’

b. a fiú-é-(*ja)
   the boy-é-(*POSS)
   ‘the boy’s one’

c. a fiú-é/{é/*ja}
   the boy-é/{é/*POSS}
   ‘the boy’s one’

Note: the agreement marker for 3rd person is null.
Possessive pronouns: the basic paradigm

▶ Anaphoric possessive is found in possessive pronouns: *miénk* (ours), *tiétek* (yours), etc.

(16) Possessive pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sg possessum</th>
<th>pl possessum</th>
<th>sg possessum</th>
<th>pl possessum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg eny-é-m</td>
<td>eny-é-m-ek</td>
<td>1pl mi-é-nk</td>
<td>mi-é-i-nk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg ti-é-d</td>
<td>ti-é-i-d</td>
<td>2pl ti-é-tek</td>
<td>ti-é-i-tek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg öv-é</td>
<td>öv-é-i</td>
<td>3pl öv-é-k</td>
<td>öv-é-i-k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(17) nominative pronoun – anaphoric possessive – number – agreement – case

(18) mi-é-i-nk

1PL.PRON-é-PL-1PL

‘our ones’
Possessive pronouns: alternations

- Previously unanalyzed systematic alternation: -é forms with the forms that contain -e.
- This occurs in the 1st/2nd person, e.g. *miénk* vs. *mienk* (ours), etc.

(19) Possessive pronouns: -é/-e alternation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>sg possessum</th>
<th>pl possessum</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg</td>
<td>eny-é-m/%eny-i-m</td>
<td>eny-é-m-ek/%eny-i-m-ek</td>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>mi-é-nk/mi-e-nk</td>
<td>mi-é-i-nk/mi-e-i-nk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg</td>
<td>öv-é</td>
<td>öv-é-i</td>
<td>3pl</td>
<td>öv-é-k</td>
<td>öv-é-i-k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Possessive pronouns: alternations

(20) nom. pron. – {anaphoric possessive | possessedness suffix} – num – agr – case

(21) mi-é-i-nk  
    1PL.PRON-é-PL-1PL  
    ‘our ones’

(22) mi-e-i-nk  
    1PL.PRON-POSS-PL-1PL  
    ‘our ones’

(23) kék-je-i-nk  
    blue-POSS-PL-1PL  
    ‘our blue ones’
Possessive pronouns: proposed analysis

► Dékány (2011): -é/-e alternation is phonological with no syntactic or semantic import.
   ■ No such phonological alternation found elsewhere.

► Given our proposal, the **alternation can now be understood as a syntactic one**, not merely an allomorphic one.

► The -e versions of the pronouns exist as a consequence of *n*PE, licensed by the Poss head.

► -e pronouns can be derived by adding the suffixes that would ordinarily surface on the noun (*enk*) to the nominative pronoun (e.g. *mi* ‘we’).
  (see Murphy 2018 for a similar account of pronominal inflection in German)
Open questions

▶ *n*PE licensed by Poss is allowed with all persons when the remnant is e.g. an adjective.

▶ Only allowed with 1st/2nd persons when the only remnant is the possessor noun/pronoun (c.f. invariant övé ‘his/her’).
  - *n*PE is not allowed when the remnants is a 3rd person pronoun or a noun.

▶ Proposal: restriction on leaning, whereby in Poss-licensed *n*PE, remnant morphology can only attach to possessors that are 1st/2nd person pronouns.
  - 3rd person possessive pronouns in Hungarian are also exceptional in other respects, e.g. they exhibit the so-called anti-agreement pattern (É. Kiss 2002)
Conclusions

▶ Two possible licensors of nominal ellipsis in Hungarian.

▶ Poss head, as well as the Num head, can license nP-ellipsis of its complement.

▶ Novel analysis of the systematic variation in the possessive pronoun paradigm.
Thank you!


