

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

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- ▶ 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**.



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.

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- ▶ **Number** suffix corresponds to the number of the possessum.
- ▶ **Agreement** suffix corresponds to the person and number of the possessor.



- ▶ 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)'

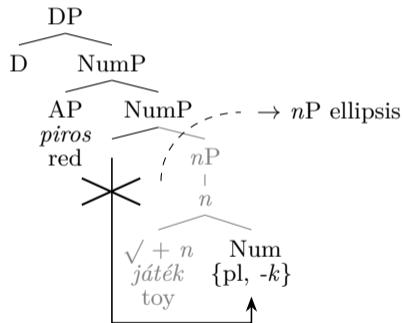


- ▶ Saab and Lipták (2016): nominal ellipsis in Hungarian targets the nP (nPE)

- (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.



- Possessor morphology can be stranded under *n*PE + 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-tek* 'your interesting ones'; cf. (10), where *n*PE is licensed by an appropriate antecedent.



Parallel examples where the remnant has a 2nd or 3rd person possessor are also grammatical:

- (11) a. Mari kölcsönkérte az én piros játék-om-at és a te kék-ed-et.
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).'

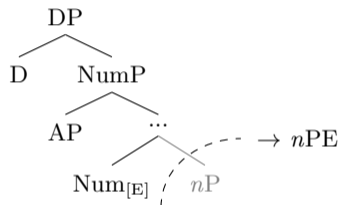


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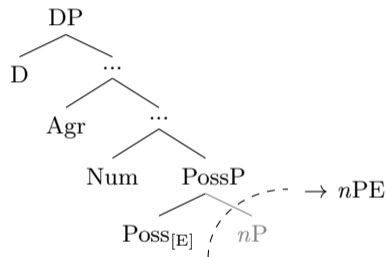
- (12) a. Mari kölcsönkérte a te piros játék-od-at és az ő kék-jé-t.
Mary borrowed the you red toy-POSS.2SG-ACC and the (s)he blue-POSS-ACC
'Mary borrowed your red toy and her/his blue (toy).'
- b. Mari kölcsönkérte a te piros játék-a-i-d-at és az ő kék-je-i-t.
Mary borrowed the you red toy-POSS-PL-2SG-ACC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



(14) *n*PE licensed by Poss



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

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*/**ja*}
the boy-{*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

	sg possessum	pl possessum		sg possessum	pl possessum	
1sg	eny-é-m	eny-é-m-ek		1pl	mi-é-nk	mi-é-i-nk
2sg	ti-é-d	ti-é-i-d		2pl	ti-é-tek	ti-é-i-tek
3sg	öv-é	öv-é-i		3pl	öv-é-k	öv-é-i-k

(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

	sg possessum	pl possessum		sg possessum	pl possessum	
1sg	eny-é-m/%eny-i-m	eny-é-m-ek/%eny-i-m-ek		1pl	mi-é-nk/mi-e-nk	mi-é-i-nk/mi-e-i-nk
2sg	ti-é-d/ti-e-d	ti-é-i-d/ti-e-i-d		2pl	ti-é-tek/ti-e-tek	ti-é-i-tek/ti-e-i-tek
3sg	öv-é	öv-é-i		3pl	öv-é-k	öv-é-i-k

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 *nPE*, 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)



- ▶ *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)



- ▶ 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!

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