On Hungarian Object-drop
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Background: According to Farkas (1987) and Puskás (2000), Hungarian object pronouns can be dropped in singular only. The occurrence of null objects is not connected to agreement morphology (Rizzi, 1986). The verb in Hungarian agrees with its complement only in definiteness (Bartos, 1997), which is not sufficient for identifying the pronoun. Object-drop is not the result of discourse topic-drop as topic-drop would allow any pronoun to be dropped under appropriate discourse conditions.

Experiment: I conducted an acceptability rating experiment with 249 speakers to test whether plural object pronouns can be dropped, using coordinated sentences. The results show that first and second person plural object pronouns can be dropped – though omitting the second person is more degraded, while third person object pronoun must always be pronounced.

Proposal: The semantic features of pronouns are [±speaker], [±hearer] and [PL]. There is a hierarchy between the features: speaker>hearer>PL (Harley&Ritter, 2002). The omission of the pronoun is allowed if its semantic content can be recovered. Negatively valued features are more difficult to recover, thus 2\textsuperscript{nd} plural pronoun is degraded and 3\textsuperscript{rd} is unacceptable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>me ‘engem’ [+speaker]</td>
<td>us ‘minket’ [+speaker][PL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>you ‘téged’ [+hearer]</td>
<td>you ‘titeket’ [+hearer][–speaker][PL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>him/her ‘őt’ [Ø]</td>
<td>them ‘őket’ [–speaker][–hearer][PL]</td>
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Selected References:

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