

György Rákosi
Possessed by something out there*
 On anaphoric possessors in Hungarian

Abstract

The paper provides an overview of the three most frequent Hungarian reflexive-marking strategies employed in the coding of pronominal possessors with clause-mate antecedents. While anaphoric possessors are generally *pro*-dropped, personal pronouns and reflexives can also function as possessors. The paper shows how these two overt strategies differ systematically from each other and from the default *pro*-drop strategy in the possessive noun phrase.

Keywords: anaphor, binding, coreference, Hungarian, logophor, *pro*-drop, possessive

1 Introduction

In this paper I discuss the three major pronominal strategies that are available in Hungarian to code possessors that are anaphorically linked to clause-mate antecedents. The default strategy is to *pro*-drop such pronominal possessors, as in the following example:

- (1) *János_i főzi a [pro_{i/j}] vacsorá-já-t.*
 John.NOM cooks the dinner-POSS.3SG-ACC
 ‘John is cooking his dinner.’

Alternatively, the anaphoric possessor can also be expressed as a personal pronoun or as a reflexive. These two overt strategies have been noted to be marked both in the grammatical and the stylistic sense in the literature on Hungarian, but the exact share of labour between the different anaphoric coding options has received relatively little attention.

My primary objective in this paper is to discuss and overview the core data that illustrate the competition that exists between these strategies. Some of the constraints that determine the choice of the anaphoric pronominal possessor appear to be purely grammatical in nature, while other constraints are discourse-governed and lie outside of the core system of grammar.

* I dedicate this paper to Péter Pelyvás on the occasion of his 65th birthday. Péter taught me as a professor of linguistics when I was a student, and I have been learning from him ever since I have had the pleasure of being his colleague. I am quite certain that the data presented here will be to his taste, and he will hopefully develop an alternative description and analysis, which I am looking forward to. The two reviewers of this paper have also been a great source of inspiration, and I extend my gratitude to them, too.

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I focus here on the two overt strategies. While personal pronouns and reflexives do not at first sight appear to be in complementary distribution in the possessor position of the Hungarian possessive noun phrase, they are in fact not in free variation. The reflexive functions as a bound variable but it is not used to mark coreference. Furthermore, it is the preferred or the only option in logophoric contexts and in cases where the extended predicate denotes an inherently reflexive relation.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In Section 2, I provide a short overview of the grammar of pronominal possessors in Hungarian, with special regard to the existing literature on pronominal possessors that have a clause-mate antecedent. In Section 3, I discuss a set of data that have not been noted before in the pertinent literature on Hungarian and argue that the three basic pronominal coding strategies that are available for possessors are not grammatical equivalents. The examples discussed involve data that I collected from the *Hungarian National Corpus*.¹ I round up the discussion and conclude in Section 4.

2 Hungarian pronominal possessors: the background

2.1 Possessive morphology and pro-drop inside the noun phrase

The pronominal possessor inside the Hungarian possessive construction is in nominative case, and it shows agreement in person and number with the possessed head. The presence of this agreement morphology licenses the non-expression of the pronominal possessor itself. Following standard generative practice, I consider this phenomenon as an instance of *pro*-drop, involving a covert pronominal possessor. I illustrate with examples containing singular overt and covert pronominal possessors.²

(2)	a.	<i>az én vacsorá-m</i>	a'.	(a) <i>pro vacsorá-m</i>
		the I.NOM dinner-POSS.1SG		the dinner-POSS.1SG
		'my dinner'		'my dinner'
	b.	<i>a te vacsorá-d</i>	b'.	(a) <i>pro vacsorá-d</i>
		the you.NOM dinner-POSS.2SG		the dinner-POSS.2SG
		'your dinner'		'your dinner'
	c.	<i>az ő vacsorá-ja</i>	c'.	(a) <i>pro vacsorá-ja</i>
		the he.NOM dinner-POSS.3SG		the dinner-POSS.3SG
		'his dinner'		'his dinner'

If the possessor is an overt personal pronoun, it is obligatorily preceded by the definite article in the possessive noun phrase. Since further details of the internal structure of the Hungarian possessive noun phrase are not directly relevant for the purposes of this paper, I refer the reader to previous work by Bartos (1999), Dékány (2011), den Dikken (1999), É. Kiss (1987, 2002), Laczkó (1995, 2007), Szabolcsi (1994) and Szabolcsi & Laczkó (1992) for comprehensive descriptions of the morphosyntax of possession in Hungarian.

¹ See Váradi (2002) for a description of the *Hungarian National Corpus* (HNC).

² I only discuss singular examples in this paper for expository purposes, but all the observations that I make here carry over to examples involving plural pronominal possessors.

Given that the agreement morphology identifies the possessor, the pronoun itself is regularly *pro*-dropped in accordance with the *pro*-drop nature of Hungarian, unless it bears a discourse function or it is otherwise emphatic in a non-semantic manner. The following minimal pair illustrates why an overt pronoun possessor may be required in certain focus constructions:³

- (3) a. *János a VACSORÁ-M-AT ette meg.*
 John.NOM the dinner-POSS.1SG-ACC ate.3SG PRT
 ‘It is my DINNER that John ate’ (... and not my breakfast.)
- b. *János a ÉN vacsorá-m-at ette meg.*
 John.NOM the I.NOM dinner-POSS.1SG-ACC ate.3SG PRT
 ‘It is MY dinner that John ate’ (... and not his.)

In (3a), it is the possessum that is interpreted as the focus of the clause; and possessor focus is only possible if the pronominal possessor is overtly expressed (3b). The pronominal possessor can also be overt in the postverbal domain without any special discourse function:

- (4) *János megint meg-ette az (én) vacsorá-m-at.*
 John.NOM again PRT-ate.3SG the I.NOM dinner-POSS.1SG-ACC
 ‘John ate my dinner yet again.’

The pronoun is optional in (4), and its presence or absence does not seem to influence the propositional meaning of the clause. The generally accepted view is that this variation is purely stylistic in nature, and it does not have a strict semantic impact.

The basic reflexive pronominal *maga* ‘himself’ can also be a possessor.⁴ The following two examples are both from the Hungarian National Corpus:

- (5) a. *Ezért is dicséri mindenki a maga autó-já-t.*
 this.for too praises everybody.NOM the himself.NOM car-POSS.3SG-ACC
 ‘This is why everybody praises his own car.’
- b. *El-mond-aná-m a magam eset-é-t.*
 PRT-say-COND-1SG the myself.NOM case-POSS.3SG-ACC
 ‘I would tell you about my own case.’

Unlike personal pronouns, reflexives show invariant 3SG agreement with the possessum.⁵ I argue in Rákosi (2011) that this is a synchronic grammatical reflex of their possessive origin, since *maga* is historically a body part reflexive (so that *magam* ‘myself’ essentially derives from a by-now opaque possessive construction meaning ‘my body’). Besides the distinctive agreement pattern, reflexive possessors also substantially differ from personal pronoun

³ I use block capitals to mark the focussed constituent.

⁴ The basic Hungarian reflexive *maga* ‘himself’ has more complex varieties (such as *önmaga* ‘himself’ and *jómaga* ‘himself’), which I discuss in Rákosi (2011). These complex reflexives may also be possessors, though they are less frequent in this function than *maga*.

⁵ See Laczkó (2007, 2013) for a formal treatment of this agreement pattern in the framework of Lexical-Functional Grammar.

possessors in the nature of the anaphoric relation that they code. These differences are discussed in detail in Section 3.

2.2 *Pronominal possessors and clause-mate antecedents*

The emerging picture is that when a possessor has a clause-mate antecedent, three pronominal strategies are available in principle to mark this referential dependency. The possessor is either (i) a covert *pro* or (ii) an overt personal pronoun (6a), or (iii) it is a reflexive (6b).⁶

- (6) a. *János az pro/ő autó-já-val ment el.*
 John.NOM the he.NOM car-POSS.3SG-with went.3SG PRT
 ‘John left with his car.’
- b. *János a maga autó-já-val ment el.*
 John.NOM the himself.NOM car-POSS.3SG-with went.3SG PRT
 ‘John left with his own car.’

The sentences in (6) are taken from É. Kiss (1987: 197). É. Kiss describes the reflexive example (6b) as marked, whereas the *pro*-drop strategy and the overt pronoun strategy are both treated by her as the “unmarked cases” (6a). For Bartos (1999: 36), however, the explicit pronoun in (6a) is stylistically marked in being slightly archaic or intentionally funny.

É. Kiss (1987) argues that the dependency between the subject antecedent and the possessor is not local, i.e., the possessive noun phrase constitutes a distinct binding domain in Hungarian. She presents this analysis as an alternative to the classical Binding Theory of Chomsky (1981), wherein the anaphoric possessors are in the governing category of the matrix clause that they are part of. The major argument É. Kiss (1987) makes for the claim that the possessive construction is a binding domain on its own is her judgement that (6a) is unmarked both with a covert or an overt pronominal possessor, unlike (6b) with the reflexive.

In this paper, I follow É. Kiss (1987) in not treating the dependency between the anaphoric possessor and the antecedent as local. As we will see in the Section 3, this assumption provides us with an analytical framework that can adequately account for the fine-grained variation in the data that I present there. Preliminary evidence pointing towards the same conclusion comes from possessor extraction constructions, wherein the possessor receives dative case and can be positioned relatively freely in the matrix clause that embeds the possessive noun phrase itself. Consider the following minimal pair.

- (7) a. **Mindenki nek-i a legközelebbi hozzátartozó-ja.*
 everybody.NOM DAT-3SG the closest relative-POSS.3SG
 ‘Everybody is his closest relative.’
- b. *Mindenki magá-nak a legközelebbi hozzátartozó-ja.*
 everybody.NOM himself-DAT the closest relative-POSS.3SG
 ‘Everybody is his own closest relative.’

⁶ The pronominal possessors in the forthcoming examples are all meant to be in a referential dependency with a clause-mate antecedent, if there is one. The dependency itself is identifiable through the English translation, and I avoid the use of indices.

While both the personal pronoun and the reflexive possessor can be anaphoric to the subject in (6), in (7), where the possessor has been extracted and receives dative case, only the reflexive strategy is grammatical (7b).⁷ The simplest explanation is that it is only through extraction that the possessor and the subject end up in the same local binding domain, and this configuration requires the use of the reflexive anaphor. Given that (6) is subject to no such restriction, the possessive noun phrase must indeed form a distinct binding domain, as É. Kiss (1987) argues.

In the rest of this paper, I only discuss examples with non-extracted, nominative possessors. It is this construction wherein the three anaphoric strategies discussed here are in variation. Furthermore, it is the nominative possessor construction that represents the unmarked case in the sense that (dative) possessor extraction is licensed only under specific grammatical and discourse constraints. These constraints are discussed in detail in the literature cited in Section 1, but they lie outside of the focus of this paper.

3 A closer look at the data

3.1 On the marked nature of overt pronominal reflexives

As discussed in 2.2, É. Kiss (1987) considers reflexives the marked option in the case of possessor anaphora, and Bartos (1999) regards the overt personal pronoun in the self-same function as slightly archaic or as a marker of intentionally playful styles. Indeed, it is only the *pro*-option that sounds natural in the default case (8a), while the personal pronoun or the reflexive does not (8b).

(8) a. *János főzi a [pro] vacsorá-já-t.*
 John.NOM cooks the dinner-POSS.3SG-ACC
 ‘John is cooking his dinner.’

b. *János főzi az ő / a maga vacsorá-já-t.*
 John.NOM cooks the he.NOM / the himself.NOM dinner-POSS.3SG-ACC
 ‘John is cooking his / his own dinner.’

Nevertheless, the issue with (8b) does not appear to be strictly grammatical in nature. Once the context has the stylistic overtones that Bartos (1999) refers to, both the pronoun and the reflexive become fully acceptable for native speakers. Such an effect can be achieved by inserting the speaker-oriented modifier *kis* ‘little’ in the possessive construction, as in (9):

(9) *János főzi az ő / a maga kis vacsorá-já-t.*
 John.NOM cooks the he.NOM the himself.NOM little dinner-POSS.3SG-ACC
 ‘John is cooking his / his own little dinner.’

The Hungarian adjective triggers much the same implicatures as the English *little*. The exact nature of this contribution is not directly relevant for us. What matters is that the anaphoric dependency is available in (9) with both possessors for native speakers, and speakers do not

⁷ Extraction of a reflexive dative possessor is a marked phenomenon which requires strong discourse support. But when the licensing conditions are favourable, the contrast between the pronominal and the reflexive possessor is sharp.

find such examples marked in the grammatical sense. Since there is no essential grammatical difference between (8b) and (9), I conclude that the issue with (8b) does not concern the core grammar of this construction.⁸

There is, nevertheless, another sense in which reflexive possessors may be in need of discourse licensing. One important recognition that emerged from the study of reflexive data that do not fit within the bounds of Chomsky's (1981) Binding Theory was that many reflexives are not proper anaphors, but are discourse-licensed pronominals. Such logophoric uses of reflexives are licensed within a piece of discourse that represents the perspective of the antecedent (see especially Pollard & Sag (1992) and Reinhart & Reuland (1993) for a theoretically relevant evaluation of such data). Consider the following minimal pair for illustration ((10a) is from the Hungarian National Corpus):

- (10) **John feels that ...** : *(10a), √(10b)
I feel that ... : √(10a), √(10b)

- a. *Ez a változás mintha a magam bense-jé-t is*
 this the change.NOM as.though the myself.NOM inside-POSS.3SG-ACC too
meg-változtatta volna.
 PRT-alter.3SG COND
 'As though this change had altered my own internal constitution too.'
- b. *Ez a változás mintha az én bense-m-et is*
 this the change.NOM as.though the I.NOM inside-POSS.1SG-ACC too
meg-változtatta volna.
 PRT-alter.3SG COND
 'As though this change had altered my internal constitution too.'

What the two examples share is that the possessor does not have an overt antecedent in the sentence. Rather, this antecedent is available from the extended discourse: it is the speaker in this particular case. The particle *is* 'too' triggers the use of a pronominal possessor, because the referent of this possessor is contrasted with another individual not named in the sentence. When the reflexive is used (10a), the sentence *must* be interpreted as being presented from the speaker's perspective. I try to illustrate this via the bold supertext, which is English for expository purposes. If we try to embed (10a) in a matrix clause whose subject introduces a perspective-holder different from the speaker (*John*), then (10a) becomes unacceptable because of the lack of an available prominent logophoric antecedent. The personal pronoun in

⁸ As Bartos (1999: 36) notes, the anaphoric personal pronoun in (8b) also has an archaic character. It is often claimed that the use of personal pronoun possessors – with or without clause-mate antecedents – was frequent under the influence of Latin and Greek in earlier centuries. In a recent quantitative study of the Hungarian translations of the Parable of the Prodigal Son ranging from the fifteenth century to the twentieth, Demján (2007) has found that the use of overt personal pronoun possessors has been more or less steadily on the decline from a peak found in the earliest translations in the fifteenth century. The early translators, it seems, worked more under the influence of the Latin and Greek originals, in which the pronominal possessor is normally explicit. This practice changed in later centuries when Biblical texts were written in a style closer to the Hungarian spoken in the age. However, since some of the Bible versions that are still in common use contain language which is recognised as archaic, the "overuse" of explicit possessor pronouns may be familiar to many speakers *qua* a feature of an archaic variety of Hungarian. Hence the archaic character of the pronoun in (8b).

(10b) is subject to no such restrictions since the personal pronoun does not require a logophoric antecedent (though it *can* have one).

The logophoric reading of the reflexive possessor is most prominent when there is no clause-mate antecedent available. Nevertheless, many of the attested examples with clause-mate antecedents also have a logophoric character under closer inspection. This fact in itself provides an explanation for why at least a subset of possessive reflexives is felt to be marked: logophoric elements in need of discourse licensing require more effort to process than bound pronominals, which participate in a dependency directly coded in grammar.

3.2 *Bound and coreferential uses*

It is not the case however that every instance of the possessor *maga* ‘himself’ is logophoric. The reflexive can also function as a bound variable, which is most evident if the antecedent is a quantified noun phrase, as in the following two examples (both examples are from the Hungarian National Corpus, and (5a) is repeated as (11a)):

- (11) a. *Ezért is dicséri mindenki a maga autó-já-t.*
 this.for too praises everybody.NOM the himself.NOM car-POSS.3SG-ACC
 ‘This is why everybody praises his own car.’
- b. *Minden kor-nak meg-van a maga Antikrisztus-a.*
 every age-DAT PRT-is the itself.NOM Antichrist-3SG.NOM
 ‘Every age has its own Antichrist.’

Pronominals acting as bound variables only need a c-commanding antecedent, which does not have to be local. Therefore the data in (11) do not refute the assumption that the possessive noun phrase constitutes its own binding domain (see 2.2).

On more careful inspection it turns out that non-logophoric reflexive possessors only allow for bound readings, and they do not license proper coreference. Binding and coreference are two, truth-conditionally distinct modes of establishing referential dependencies, of which only the former is directly coded in the computational system (see Reinhart 2006 for an overview and references). The truth-conditional difference between the two readings can be made prominent in, for example, VP-ellipsis constructions. Consider the following minimal pair:

- (12) a. *A magam arc-á-t kerest-em a gesztus-á-ban. Te is.*
 the myself.NOM face-POSS.3SG-ACC looked.for-1SG the gesture-POSS.3SG-in you too
 ‘I was looking for my own face in his gesture. You too.’
 → You searched for you own face in his gesture. *binding*
- b. *Az én arc-om-at kerest-em a gesztus-á-ban. Te is.*
 the I.NOM face-POSS.1SG-ACC looked.for-1SG the gesture-POSS.3SG-in you too
 ‘I was looking for my face in his gesture. You too.’
 → You searched for my face in his gesture. *coreference*

The possessor is a reflexive in (12a). Following Reinhart (2006), I assume that binding creates a λ -predicate, resulting in the semantics informally characterised here for (12a) as ‘I was looking for self’s face in his gesture’. What is missing from the second, elliptical structure is this VP with an open variable (‘looking for self’s face in his gesture’), which is bound by the

subject *te* ‘you’ and the bound interpretation results. If, however, the possessor is a personal pronoun, as in (12b), no such reflexivised λ -predicate is created. In (12b) the dependency between the possessor and the *pro*-dropped matrix subject is coreference, and consequently, what is ellipsed in the second sentence is the VP ‘looking for my face in this gesture’. The reading indicated under (12b) results.⁹

Pro-dropped possessors do allow for both interpretations, much like an English pronominal possessor does:

- (13) *Az arc-om-at kerest-em a gesztus-á-ban. Te is.*
 the face-POSS.1SG-ACC looked.for-1SG the gesture-POSS.3SG-in you too
 ‘I was looking for my face in his gesture. You too.’
 → You searched for you own face in his gesture. *binding*
 → You searched for my face in his gesture. *coreference*

The general difference between (13) and (12) is that in (12) the possessor has been overtly spelled out because the possessor is emphatic or is contrastively interpreted (see 2.1). In such contexts, the personal pronoun seems to be specialized for coreferential readings, whereas the reflexive licenses the bound variable interpretation.

3.3 One further semantic difference

I repeat example (11b) below in a slightly altered form to illustrate another semantic difference between reflexive and personal pronoun possessors.

- (14) a. *Ennek a kor-nak is meg-van a maga Antikrisztusa.*
 this.DAT the age-DAT too PRT-is the itself.NOM Antichrist-3SG.NOM
 ‘This age also has its own Antichrist.’
 b. **Ennek a kor-nak is meg-van az ő Antikrisztusa.*
 this.DAT the age-DAT too PRT-is the he.NOM Antichrist-3SG.NOM
 ‘This age also has his own Antichrist.’

Hungarian does not have grammatical gender, but the +/–HUMAN feature does play a role in constraining the interpretation of pronouns.¹⁰ As (14a) shows, the reflexive possessor *maga* ‘himself/itself’ can have –HUMAN antecedents. The personal pronoun possessor, however, is unacceptable in such contexts (14b). This is yet another difference that shows that reflexives and personal pronouns are not in free variation in the possessor position of the Hungarian noun phrase.

3.4 Inherently reflexive predicates

An inherently reflexive predicate is one that contains a variable that is necessarily bound by an antecedent within the clause. *Draw oneself up* is one such (extended) predicate in English:

⁹ Some speakers can accept the coreferential reading with the reflexive possessor, too (12a). This is not directly relevant for us now, what is important is that while (12b) does not license the bound reading, (12a) does.

¹⁰ Alternatively, the relevant referential constraint is an animacy constraint. The judgements are not always clear, therefore I discuss this constraint as one governed by the +/–HUMAN feature.

one can only draw himself, but not others, up on the intended reading of ‘make oneself look bigger by standing straight’. This example can also be directly rendered in Hungarian, see (15):

- (15) *János ki-húzta magát / *Kati-t.*
 John.NOM out-drew.3SG himself-ACC Kate-ACC
 ‘John drew himself /*Kate up.’ (on the intended posture reading)

The variable position of an inherently reflexive predicate is marked by the basic reflexive *maga* ‘himself’ in Hungarian.

If one carefully goes through the corpus sentences containing reflexive possessors, it turns out to be the case that a dominant majority of the non-logophoric examples appears in inherently reflexive predicates. The following examples are based on data I found in the Hungarian National Corpus. I shortened them for expository purposes, without changing on the features that are relevant for us.

- (16) a. *Ennek is meg-van a maga átfutási ide-je.*
 this.DAT too PRT-is the itself.NOM lead.time-POSS.3SG.NOM
 ‘This also has its own lead-time.’
- b. *A kormány a maga befolyása alá hajtotta a tévé-t*
 the government.NOM the itself.NOM control-POSS.3SG under drove.3SG the tv-ACC
 ‘The government brought the tv under its own control.’
- c. *Ez az év rossz-nak számít a maga 100 milliós árbevétel-é-vel.*
 this year bad-DAT counts the itself.NOM 100 million turnover-POSS.3SG-with
 ‘This year counts as bad with its turnover of 100 million.’
- d. *A maga mód-já-n János is próbált segíteni.*
 the himself.NOM manner-POSS.3SG-on John.NOM too tried.3SG to.help
 ‘John also tried to help in his own way.’

What connects all these examples is that they involve a predicate whose possessor must have an anaphoric antecedent within the clause.

Many other examples are only dominantly, but not necessarily construed as reflexive. In (17), for example, it is possible to switch to non-anaphoric possessors (as in *I was totally occupied by John’s problem*), but with this particular predicate, it is the non-anaphoric reading that is marked in the sense of being less frequent.

- (17) *Teljesen elfoglalt a magam baj-a.*
 totally occupied.3SG the myself.NOM problem-POSS.3SG.NOM
 ‘I was totally occupied by my own problem.’

It seems safe to conclude that other things being equal and in the absence of other factors (such as logophoricity), reflexive possessors are best when the possessive noun phrase is part of an inherently or dominantly reflexive predicate.

In the former case, the reflexive cannot normally be replaced by a personal pronoun, while it is a possibility in the latter. Consider these two examples and compare them with (16d) and (17), respectively:

- (18) a. *Az ő mód-já-n János is próbált segíteni.
 the he.NOM manner-POSS.3SG-on John.NOM too tried.3SG to.help
 ‘John also tried to help in his own way.’
- b. Teljesen elfoglalt az én kis baj-om.
 totally occupied.3SG the I.NOM little problem-POSS.1SG.NOM
 ‘I was totally occupied by my own little problem.’

Thus inherently reflexive predicates represent yet another context where reflexive possessors and personal pronoun possessors are mostly in complementary distribution.

4 Summary and outlook

In this paper, I have provided an overview of the three most frequent strategies that are employed in Hungarian to code possessors that have clause-mate antecedents. By default, pronominal possessors are pro-dropped under recoverability from the agreement morphology on the possessum. In certain cases, however, pronominal possessors can be spelt out. The recurrent observation in the existing literature is that overt possessors are emphatic in some sense, and the general consensus is that overt pronominal possessors have a marked character.

I have focussed on the two most frequent pronominal strategies: when the possessor is spelt out as a personal pronoun, and when it is a reflexive. I have argued that these two strategies are not in free variation, even if they may superficially appear to be. Only the reflexive can function as a logophoric pronominal, provided that the right discourse setting is given. The reflexive can license bound variable readings, while the personal pronoun is used in cases of coreference. Finally, the reflexive is the preferred or the only option if the extended predicate is inherently or dominantly reflexive. Thus, under closer inspection, the reflexive and personal pronoun are in fact in complementary distribution in most cases in the possessor position, even if the relation between the possessor and the antecedent is not local for the purposes of binding theory. On the whole, the present work provides further evidence to É. Kiss’ (1987) analysis, where the Hungarian possessive noun phrase is treated as a distinct domain for binding.

Most of the existing literature has focussed on reciprocal possessors, which I did not discuss in this paper. Whereas we have several reflexive-marking strategies available for possessors in Hungarian, there is only one reciprocal strategy for this purpose. Since the lack of competition between alternative reciprocal strategies conceals many of the interesting features of possessor anaphora in Hungarian, I believe it is more useful to start a thorough inquiry with the reflexive strategies, where the underlying factors can be uncovered in a more transparent manner. I have done this initial step in this paper, and I leave the study of reciprocal possessors for another occasion.

This paper has only reviewed the three most frequent reflexive marking strategies in the possessive constructions. As I noted in footnote 4, the basic reflexive *maga* ‘himself’ has more complex forms, which can also function as possessors. Furthermore, the use of the reflexive adjective *saját* ‘own’ is a frequent alternative to the use of the possessor *maga* ‘himself’ in many of the examples that we have discussed here. An investigation into the nature of these alternative strategies and their relation to *maga*-possessors will also have to wait for another occasion.

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György Rákosi
University of Debrecen
Institute of English and American Studies
H-4010 Debrecen
Pf. 73
rakosigy@hotmail.com
rakosi.gyorgy@arts.unideb.hu