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### **The Diachrony of Referential Null Arguments**

Definite referential null arguments are apparently one of the distinctive features of non-configurational languages, see Baker (2001). Even though descriptions are available for various genetically unrelated languages, there are few if any accounts of their diachrony. Our workshop aims to bring together scholars working on different language families and on typologically different languages who are interested in diachronic changes concerning the creation or disappearance of null arguments, with a focus on null objects or other types of null arguments not coreferenced on the verb.

The rise of null objects deserves further investigation. Null objects can be the result of incorporation, whereby object clitics become verb affixes (Baker 2001). Related to incorporation is the Hungarian objective conjugation, whose rise is also a possible topic of discussion.

The occurrence of definite referential null objects has been observed in many ancient Indo-European languages. In spite of this, and in spite of the long documented history of these languages, even in their case historical accounts are limited, as are detailed studies of the conditions licensing null objects (Schäufele 1990 on Sanskrit; several studies have been devoted to null objects in Old Icelandic, Sigurðsson 1993). At least in Latin and possibly in Greek, null objects seem to be obligatory in coordinated sentences, unless emphasis or disambiguation are involved (this is possibly a common phenomenon connected to coordination reduction and frequent in non-Indo-European languages as well, Luraghi 2004), as well as in answers to yes/no questions (van der Wurff 1997). Descriptions of increasing use of overt objects in Latin and Germanic point to increasing transitivity or emerging configurationality.

#### **References**

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