

## Experimental and corpus-based approaches to ellipsis

Gabriela Bîlbîie, James Griffiths & Volker Struckmeier  
(University of Bucharest, University of Tübingen & Ruhr University Bochum)

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Research has shown that elliptic utterances, such as the B-responses in the dialogue in (1), are (minimally) conditioned by pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, morphological, and phonological factors. Such utterances are therefore an especially rich source of information about how disparate linguistic data types function and interact. Because of this, elliptic utterances (or other seemingly nonsentential phenomena) form the main empirical pillar for entire grammatical frameworks (Ginzburg 2012, Kempson et al. 2016) and are often employed in attempts to arbitrate between competing frameworks (cf. Kobele & Merchant 2016).

- (1)       A: Who will be late?  
          B: Luisa.  
          B': Luisa will.

Reflecting a wider trend, research on elliptic utterances is increasingly eschewing the traditional informal method of collecting linguistic data in formal linguistics, which involved collecting acceptability judgments from a handful of native speakers in an uncontrolled setting. Instead, judgment data are now being collected in controlled, large-scale experiments (using Likert scale, forced-choice, and magnitude estimation responses) and other forms of data, such as naturally-occurring speech reported in corpora and response times from self-paced reading studies. Obtaining data via these corpus-based or experimentally oriented methodologies is especially important for research in the ellipsis domain, where acceptability judgments are subtle (provoking neither floor nor ceiling responses; cf. Molimpakis 2019, Lemke 2020, a.o.), and where applying the informal methodology has consistently under-generated elliptic utterances (as corpus studies of naturally-occurring speech often point out; cf. Barton 1990, Ginzburg & Sag 2000, a.o.).

The importance of empirically thorough ellipsis research is further evidenced by the significant impact such studies have already had on the subfield. For instance, the hypothesis space for determining the nature of the ellipsis site (as containing silent syntactic structure, or a proform, or linguistic material) and the nature of the antecedent (linguistic or non-linguistic information in the proximate discourse) has been significantly reduced through experimental work on antecedent accessibility (e.g. Frazier and Clifton 2001; Martin and McElree 2008, 2009, 2011; Yoshida et al. 2013) and antecedent recoverability in so-called ‘mismatch’ configurations (Arregui et al. 2006, Kim & Runner 2018, Poppels & Kehler 2019, a.o.). Also, thanks to corpus-based and experimentally oriented research, the picture is becoming much clearer regarding the underlying source (e.g., phonological, morphological, syntactic, processing, pragmatic) of those constraints on ellipsis that differ within and across languages, such as constraints on preposition-stranding and island-sensitivity (Potter 2017, Nykiel & Hawkins 2020, among many others). Also, developmental issues need to be taken into account, specifically the way that ellipsis phenomena can be acquired, since elliptical phenomena may be (almost by definition) less directly observable for learners.

This workshop represents the fourth iteration of *Experimental and Corpus-Based Approaches to Ellipsis* (ECBAE). Like previous iterations, this workshop functions as a forum for ellipsis research, with special emphasis on methodologies aiming to improve the

empirical foundations of the subfield. Contributions to the workshop will make headway in long-standing theoretical questions surrounding ellipsis (some of which are listed in (2)) and will furnish advice on practical issues, such as how experimental methodologies can be improved to return more empirically reliable and theoretically impactful results.

- (2) a. Are structural cues used to recover the meaning of an ellipsis site, or is recoverability solely a semantic/pragmatic phenomenon?
- b. How do different types of ellipsis differ from each other, and can some ellipsis types be subsumed under others?
- c. Which factors are involved in yielding cross-linguistic differences in licensing specific elliptical utterances (e.g., syntactic, processing, prosodic, discursive constraints)?

The line-up for ECBAE 4 is designed to offer a wide variety of perspectives on these research questions. The proposed workshop covers a broad spectrum of ellipsis types (fragments, sluicing, nominal omission, post-auxiliary ellipsis, and pseudogapping) and a range of methodologies (acceptability judgment, corpus-driven, production experiments, and self-paced reading). In addition, the chosen contributions cumulatively cover six languages (Arabic, English, French, German, Icelandic, and Spanish). Through our invited speaker's presentation and others, the workshop also acknowledges the importance of pursuing the developmental angle, by considering the import of child and L2 acquisition on the questions in (2). The workshop also brings together researchers typically working in distinct theoretical frameworks, thus presenting an occasion for reflection on high-level conceptual issues.

Through its commitment to representing a broad range of empirical and conceptual approaches to ellipsis, this workshop will appeal to linguists from various backgrounds.

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