

# Ellipsis

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# Four issues

- Representation
- Identification (Interpretation)
- Data
- Homogeneity

# Representation: Complex

- Articulated syntactic representation, subject to full set of constraints.
- Compositional interpretation.
- Subject to all syntactic constraints, but constraints regulating mapping from syntax to phonology vacuously satisfied.

# Representation: Atomic

- Null proform at ellipsis site or lexical type-shifting rule.
- Interpreted like other anaphors.
- Should be no syntactic evidence for internal complexity.

# Representation: Nil

- Syntax generates fragments of arbitrary categories.
- Construed using general inference/matching mechanisms.
- No evidence for internal complexity.
- Evidence for fragment status?

# Identification: Identity of Form

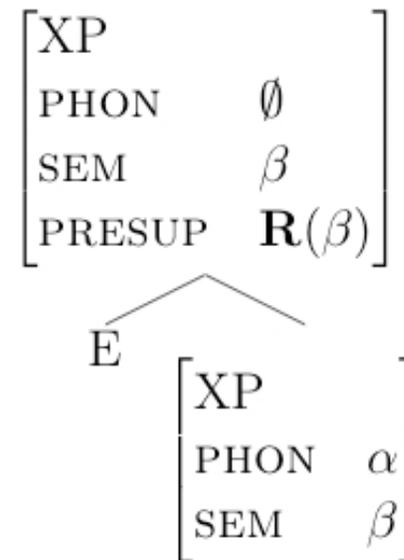
- Reuse: Multiple occurrences of one object
  - Entails full syntactic and semantic identity with ‘antecedent’
- Matching: Relation between two objects
  - In principle allows for some variability, depending on how the relation is stated

# Identification: Identity of Meaning

- Various options, in decreasing strength:
  - Logical equivalence
  - Parallelism, E-Givenness, etc.
  - Inferenceability
- Each option is consistent with different answers to the representation question!

# Identification: Identity of Meaning

- Syntactic structure
  - Encode identification relation as presupposition introduced by ‘E-morpheme’



# Identification: Identity of Meaning

- Proform/lexical rule
  - Encode relation as presupposition (domain restriction) on variable introduced by proform or as part of a lexical rule

# Identification: Identity of Meaning

- If the identification relation has systematic or language-specific properties, this would seem to indicate lexical encoding, which would in turn argue for some representational status to ellipsis (null structure+E or proform)

# Data: Relevance

- Different kinds of data are going to bear on the two questions.
  - Sag: identification
  - CLM: representation
- These issues are connected, but we need to be sensitive to the distinction.

# Data: Kind

- We need more data of more types, especially processing data.
  - E.g., Frazier and Clifton's work on sluicing vs. VP-ellipsis
- Unacceptability/infelicity (presupposition failures) vs. ungrammaticality (matching effects).

# Homogeneity

- It is possible that not all occurrences of non-pronunciation are alike.
- Conclusions based on one type may not generalize to other types.
- If ellipsis is heterogeneous, we need to ask why, and how we can capture differences and similarities.

# Heterogeneity

- Multiple E-morphemes and/or null proforms, differing in selectional restrictions and presuppositions.
- Processing preferences regulating the choice between them?

# Heterogeneity

- Surely it is possible to understand the use of a linguistic symbol without propositional content as an intention to convey a proposition related to that symbol.
- But is this the norm or the exception in ellipsis?