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К ВОПРОСУ ОБ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНИИ СЛОВА

Автор представляет и анализирует восемь определений слова, относящихся к области структурной лингвистики. Каждое определение подкрепляется примерами, подтверждающими точку зрения автора.

Ключевые слова: слово, противоречие, морфология, структурная лингвистика

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MODELS AND FUNCTIONS OF ELLIPSIS IN SPOKEN AND WRITTEN DISCOURSES

The main objective of the article is to analyse the stylistically significant use of ellipsis as a stylistic device at the syntactical level in English written and spoken discourses. The objective of our stylistic research was to examine what types of elliptical gaps are usually employed in the written and spoken texts in order to create a certain degree of stylistic significance.

Keywords: ellipsis, spoken discourse, written discourse, stylistics

General Remarks on Ellipsis

One of the most obvious characteristics of the way humans interact using languages is the tendency to convey a considerable amount of information by saying as economically as possible. When using language, most of the time, we neither say nor write everything explicitly, we tend to leave out information we think our recipients are already aware of, or information that can easily be recovered from the context – linguistic or situ-

ational. The actual omission of recoverable words, phrases or even clauses enables us create connections between sentences – connections that improve the overall unity of the text and create cohesion by means of a cohesive device known as **ellipsis**. Let us begin our exploration of ellipsis with a simple example:

A: “How would you like to be remembered?”

B: “As the oldest man in the history of the world.”

By examining the second sentence of this interchange, some of the characteristics of the device of ellipsis can be observed, as the presence of ellipsis is manifested through the occurrence of structural gaps, the reference for which lies in the surrounding context in which the elliptical utterance occurs. Halliday and Hasan [1976] specify the direction in which to look for the interpretation of an elliptical gap by arguing that even though examples of cataphoric elliptical gaps are also possible, the individual cohesive ties involving ellipsis are usually anaphoric – pointing the reader backwards.

Considering the short interchange above might suggest that each structural gap encountered within a text is an elliptical one. This, however, is not true and there are certain conditions that need to be met for a structural gap to be considered an elliptical one. According to Aelbrecht [2010], two conditions are required in the case of a structurally incomplete sentence in order to be considered an elliptical one:

1. **recoverability**: if a sentence constituent is not to be included in a sentence, the structure of which would otherwise require its presence, the meaning of the elliptical sentence has to be recoverable from the surrounding context;

2. **licensing**: a requirement that an ellipsis cannot occur in any environment even though the interpretation need not necessarily be problematic.

Types of Ellipsis

It is common for a linguistic phenomenon to manifest itself in more than one way, rather than in a single form, recurring over and over in the same environment. The other types of cohesive devices we have briefly

explored follow this pattern and ellipsis is no exception. We will begin our exploration of the various types of ellipsis by closely examining the difference between the type of ellipsis bound to the surrounding linguistic context and the one that depends on the situation in question. Downing and Locke [2006] term the following types of ellipsis:

a) textual – which occurs when the recoverable words shared by two consecutive clauses are present in one, but omitted in the other;

b) situational – structural elements, e.g. the subject of a sentence, are often omitted because

they allow for an effortless recoverability, as in: [I'll] See you soon.

Ellipsis can also be distinguished by the structure having some missing element, e.g. *The children will carry the small boxes, the adults the large ones*. This is an example of **anaphoric** ellipsis, as “will carry” is supplied from the first clause to the second. However, it does not work the other way, e.g. **The children the small boxes, the adults will carry the large ones*. This would not create a grammatically correct sentence. **Cataphoric** ellipsis points the reader forward, such as: *“If you could, I'd like you to be back here at five thirty.”* Omission of “be back here” in the first part of the sentence is possible thanks to its appearance in the second part of the sentence.

Halliday and Hasan [1976] state that exophoric ellipsis should not be taken into consideration since it does not contribute to the overall cohesion of the text (the ellipsed elements are only recoverable from the situational context). On the other hand, Wilson [2000] and Schneiderova [2013] argue that the frequent occurrence of exophoric ellipsis in a text might be an indication of the fact that the text is, to some degree, stylistically significant. One of the best-known frameworks of ellipsis is probably the one developed by Halliday and Hasan [1976: 146]. They differentiate between three different types of ellipsis – termed as “nominal”, “verbal” and “clausal” – based on whether the omitted elements in the sentence constitute a noun phrase, a verb phrase or a clause:

1. **Nominal ellipsis** involves omission of a noun headword: e.g.: *I chose a tuna sandwich; Jennifer had cheese and tomato.*

2. **Verbal ellipsis** occurs in two very common types:

a) **echoing** – repeating an element from the verbal group:

A: Will anyone be waiting?

B: Jim will, I think.;

b) **contrasting** – changing the auxiliary verb:

A: Has she divorced?

B: No, but she will one day, I'm sure.

3. **Clausal ellipsis** occurs when whole stretches of clausal components can be omitted: *He said he would take early retirement as soon as he could, and he has.* With clausal ellipsis individual clause elements may be omitted, especially common are subject-pronoun omission (*doesn't matter, hope so, sorry, can't help you, etc.*)

Wilson's [2000] classification includes sentence-initial ellipsis, **leftmost, rightmost** and **central** coordination reduction, which is also known as "gapping". In addition to this, he introduces a special type of ellipsis termed "telegraphic". In the case of "telegraphic" ellipsis, he argues, there often arise cases in which recovery by referring to the surrounding linguistic context is not possible. The reason for this is that the most illustrative example of this type of elliptical structure is the newspaper headline, the most important characteristic of which, concerning ellipsis, is non-recoverable omission.

Models and Functions of Ellipsis – a Stylistic Approach

The objective of our stylistic research was to examine what types of elliptical gaps are usually employed in written and spoken texts in order to create a certain degree of stylistic significance. Considering models of ellipsis, we have focused our analysis on examining whether the elements that have been left out from the structure of sentences affect whole clauses, verb or noun phrases, which in turn serves as the basis for one possible classification of the various types of elliptical gaps. In addition to that, we have tried to interpret the stylistic effects that elliptical sentences aim to achieve, while also paying attention to their functions and such characteristics as whether the elliptical gap can be recovered from the parts of the text that stand before or after the gap in question.

Ellipsis affecting clauses

The category of elliptical gaps affecting the structure of clauses has been the most numerous one of all the models of ellipsis we have identified. It manifests itself in various forms: sentence fragments as direct answers, sentence fragments providing supplementary information, sluicing and subject ellipsis, all of which will be presented in the following paragraphs.

1. Sentence fragments as direct answers

#1

“He doesn’t want any trouble with anybody.” “Who doesn’t []?” I inquired. “Gatsby [doesn’t want any trouble with anybody]. [...]”

The example can be subcategorized as a direct response to the question that precedes it, i.e. stating exactly what the question asks for using a single word. As the expanded ellipsis in the aforementioned example illustrates, if the predicator and the direct object have not been removed, the last sentence would be a complete simple sentence. In addition to that, an ellipsis can also be found in the question, to which this direct answer replies; however, that ellipsis involves a model that will be discussed in a different subchapter. This example also illustrates the possibility of gradual elision of sentence elements. The elliptical site tends to lengthen as more information can be presupposed. The auxiliary “does” in its negative form is still present in the elliptical question while the fragment that answers the question anaphorically presupposes it.

2. Sentence fragments providing supplementary information

#2

She looks up to him and sees the vacuum where curiosity ought to lodge. And [she sees] something more. [] The total absence of human recognition – [*] the glazed separateness.*

From the point of view of syntax, the subject and the predicator verbs are omitted, which only leaves the direct objects and adverbs present. We can see the author chose to begin the second sentence with a coordinating conjunction, which evokes the effect of an afterthought together with the

pause at the end of the previous sentence and adds to the dramatic effect of the whole description of what Pecola Breedlove, the major character of Tony Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, sees in the shopkeeper. Ellipting the unnecessary repetition of the subject and the predicator in this case helps to emphasize the attributes of the overall Pecola's perception of the shopkeeper.

3. Sluicing

Another type of ellipsis that occurs more frequently within the models of ellipsis affecting clauses is that of sluicing, which, as defined by Gengel [2013] enables the omission of everything that follows a wh-element in either a direct or an indirect interrogative clause. In the following example, it can be observed that the function served by the ellipped words is to emphasize the interrogative pronoun, which then helps the person one is asking the question to decode what kind of information has already been understood from the context and the repetition of which is needed.

#3

– That's a lovely morning, sir, she said. Glory be to God. – To whom [be glory]?

The general function of emphasizing the interrogative pronoun as in the previous example is slightly changed in the example below. Here the ellipped direct question serves to make a connection between the two sentences, the latter of which is subordinate to the former and would usually be connected to it. Written this way, however, it serves better the purpose of illustrating the fact that the person uttering these sentences is angry at the one for whom they are addressed. In addition to that, ellipsis combines with rhetoric question for even a higher level of significance.

#4

You wouldn't kneel down to pray for your mother on her deathbed when she asked you. Why [wouldn't you kneel down...]? Because you have the cursed Jesuit strain in you, only it's injected the wrong way.

4. Ellipsis of subject

The ellipsis of subject in English is kind of a special case, which is, by some linguists [e.g. Quirk et al. 1985], considered a purely situational type of ellipsis while Wilson [2000] considers it a legitimate type of ellipsis in certain types of texts, e.g. newspapers or diaries. Ellipsis of subject always occurred under circumstances in which the aim of the author was to make the text resemble spoken colloquial conversation, e.g.:

#5

Parham yonder actually claimed that a man ought not to date anything he couldn't lift. [He] Said what if the house caught on fire.

#6

"Glad to get a look at you. Last time I saw your mama, you were pushing out the front of her dress." "[She] Still is [pushing out the front of my dress]," Sethe smiled, "provided she can get in it."

The only function of the ellipsis of subject is the one of avoiding the unnecessary repetition. In all the cases, the subject is very easily recoverable simply by referring to the previous sentence.

Ellipsis affecting verb phrases

Ellipsis affecting verb phrases is the second most frequently occurring type. In the previous paragraphs, we have presented selected examples which, among other elements, also included verb phrases being ellipsed. In order to clarify the difference, it should be noted that once the whole verb phrase has been left out, it is no longer the verb phrase itself, which is being affected by the omission, that kind of omission affects the clause. On the contrary, when talking about ellipses that affect verb phrases, either the lexical verb or the auxiliary (operator verb) has still remained present. [Halliday – Hasan 1976]

1. Ellipsis of lexical verbs

Out of the individual instances of verbal ellipsis, the vast majority of examples were anaphoric, only two instances of cataphoric presupposition were found. Considering the position of the site of ellipsis, final ellipses

were more frequent, which is obvious since lexical verbs stand on the right side of verb phrases, while the auxiliaries stand on the left. As it did for the clausal ellipsis, the two most frequently occurring functions, which are the avoidance of repetition of all the pieces of information clearly understood from the surrounding text and the emphasis that is carried over to those sentence elements that remain intact are also prevalent in the case of verbal ellipsis.

#7

*I hate that I don't care if it's a sad good-bye or a bad good-bye, but when I leave a place I like to know I'm leaving it. If you don't [**know you're leaving it**], you feel even worse.*

In the example above, the lexical verb and the rest of the verb phrase can be removed because the only change that happened in the sentence and thus what should be emphasized is the change of polarity in the conditional clause of the last sentence as opposed to the independent clause of the previous sentence.

2. Ellipsis of operator verbs

Ellipsis of operator verbs affects verb phrases from the opposite side of the clause as opposed to the lexical ones. The omission in this category affects the verb phrases by the omission of verbs from the initial position while also eliding the subject if that stays the same as the one in the preceding clause or sentence.

The following example illustrate how the ellipsis of the operator verb can be used in order to pinpoint the important information in a sentence. Considering the example below, for each clause we can observe the change in lexical verb as the actions that the woman referred to as “she” performed are being enumerated.

#8

*In less than forty-eight hours, she has been assigned a young child to care for, [**she has**] been the target of a deadly attack, [**she has**] lost her twelve-year-old cat, and [**she has**] been forced out of her apartment and [**she has been forced**] into a safe house owned by the City of New York.*

It can be stated that when there is a change in the lexical verb in successive clauses while the operator stays the same, it can be omitted. Towards the end of this long sentence, there is even a change in the type of elliptical gap. The first three ellipses that we have marked in bold are all instances of verbal ellipsis; however, it would be more appropriate to consider the last one, which has been extended to include the other elements up to the head of the verb phrase, an instance of the ellipsis affecting the whole clause since the verb phrase, once ellipped, is no longer present.

Ellipsis affecting noun phrases

Concerning the structure of the ellipped noun phrases that we have analysed, nominal ellipsis involves the omission of the head of the noun phrase in all the cases, the difference being in what element of the noun phrase is promoted to the function of the head of the noun phrase, by means of which we have further subdivided this section. In terms of the position of the elliptical site, it is always final since the head of the noun phrase being omitted is usually the last word in the phrase.

1. Determiner as the head of the noun phrase

The largest group of nominal ellipses ellipped the head of the noun phrase in such a way that the element which would otherwise function as a determiner has been promoted to the function of the head of the noun phrase. Further classification of the following examples can be provided if it is based on the type of the determiner.

Numerals

#9

*All forty six men awoke to rifle shot. All forty six **[men]** [].*

Quantifiers

#10

*“Why, I thought – why, look here, old sport, you don’t make much money, do you?” “[] Not [] very much **[money]**.”*

Possessives

#11

“What did you come back for?” Beloved smiled. “[] To see her face.” “[] Ma’am’s [face]? [...]”

In case of numerals and quantifiers, we can observe the general tendency to not only shorten the whole sentence; there’s also a strong tendency to omit all the recoverable data from the noun phrase as well, which might, in some cases, create interesting results. In excerpt #9, for example, the repetition that the author has employed is intensified even more when used together with ellipsis since the fact that made the character uttering these statements was not that surprised was not that the soldiers were men, it was the number of them.

Combined determiners

This section provides an example of a kind of special use of ellipsis in noun phrases, which combines the emphasis of different types of determiners, i.e. two numerals and one quantifier, in order to achieve the desired gradation.

#12

She’s worth ten [pounds], fifteen [pounds], more [pounds], a pound.

What also makes this particular example different in comparison to the others is that the presupposition in this case is cataphoric.

2. Modifier as the head of the noun phrase

One particular characteristic of the ellipsis in noun phrases is that it usually coexists together with a larger elliptical construction that most frequently affects the whole clause. This fact is illustrated by examples below, in which the initial part of the sentence that is left unexpanded would be an ellipsis that affects the whole clause.

#13

“[] Must be velvet closer by.” “[] Not [] like in Boston. Boston got the best [velvet].”

#14

“Is Avery a nice man?” “Mmm hmm.” Sarah said with a quick bob of her head. “[] Very nice [man].”

Overall results of the research

In this part, we present the overall quantitative results based on the occurrence of different models of elliptical gaps and the functions they fulfil.

Ellipsis affecting whole clauses 188/300	62.6%
• Sentence fragments as direct answers 59/188	31.3%
• Sentence fragments providing sup. information 83/188	44.1%
• Sluicing 20/188	10.6%
• Ellipsis of subject only 25/188	13.2%
• Stripping 1/188	0.5%

Ellipsis affecting verb phrases 65/300	21.6%
• Ellipsis of lexical verbs 50/65	76.9%
• Ellipsis of operator verbs 15/65	23%

Ellipsis affecting noun phrases 46/300	15.6%
• Determiner as the head of the noun phrase 37/46	80.4%
• Modifier as the head of the noun phrase 9/46	19.5%

Considering the other characteristics of ellipsis that we looked at, such as the presupposition, the site of the elliptical gap or whether the ellipsis spans across whole sentences or just clauses, we came to the following results:

Presupposition

• Anaphoric 295/300	98.3%
• Cataphoric 5/300	0.5%

The position of the site of ellipsis

• Initial 186/300	62%
• Medial 5/300	1.6%
• Final 109/300	36.3%

The span of ellipsis

• Intersentential 273/300	91%
• Intrasentential 27/300	9%

Type of expansion

- Exact expansion 241/300 80.3%
- Variable expansion 59/300 19.6%

Conclusion

The objective of our article was to analyse models and functions of ellipsis in written and spoken English. We present the identification of the different models through which the device of ellipsis manifests itself in various discourses, which we have looked at from different points of view. The examples have been categorized in terms of what elements of sentence structure are affected by the use of ellipsis, whether one has to refer to the context that precedes the site of ellipsis, in which case the elliptical gap is anaphoric or, if the opposite is the case, cataphoric. Concerning the functions of elliptical gaps we can conclude that the omission of unnecessary repetition of easily recoverable parts in the structure of sentences is by far the most frequent and can be found in all the examples of our corpus, since it somewhat stems from the nature of ellipsis in general. The most common function for which the device of ellipsis is usually employed is to give important words enough emphasis, which manifests itself in many ways. In fact, we can say that emphasis is the reason why phenomena like, for example, sentence fragments occur, i.e. repeating the presupposed elements from questions or sentences preceding the utterance with the elliptical site is worthless. For the percipients of such elliptical sentences the most important piece of information is the one that stays intact and thus is given a greater amount of emphasis. In addition to that, in some cases, where ellipsis combines with other stylistic devices, the function of giving emphasis is even more important as it helps to put these other literary figures, e.g. parallel constructions, double negatives etc., into focus and thus raises the overall stylistic effect the text has on the reader.

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МОДЕЛИ И ФУНКЦИИ ЭЛЛИПСИСА В РАЗГОВОРНОМ И ПИСЬМЕННОМ ДИСКУРСАХ

Целью статьи является анализ стилистически значимого использования эллипсиса на синтаксическом уровне в англоязычных письменном и устном дискурсах. Мы поставили цель исследовать, какие типы эллипсиса обычно используются в письменных и устных текстах для создания стилистического эффекта.

Ключевые слова: эллипсис, устный дискурс, письменный дискурс, стилистика

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ОСОБЕННОСТИ ПРЕДСТАВЛЕНИЯ СИТУАТИВНЫХ МОДЕЛЕЙ В ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОМ ДИСКУРСЕ (на материале романа И. Макьюэна «Суббота»)

Статья посвящена исследованию языковых и прагматических особенностей полного и фрагментарного представления ситуативных моделей общения в художественном дискурсе на материале романа Иэна Макьюэна «Суббота».

Ключевые слова: художественный дискурс, ситуативная модель, авторское представление, ситуация общения

В данной статье представлены результаты исследования специфики авторского представления ситуативных моделей на примере англоязычного романа Иэна Макьюэна «Суббота» (Ian McEwan “Saturday”).