

# Chapter 19

## Ellipsis

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This chapter provides an overview of the HPSG analyses of elliptical constructions. It first discusses three types of ellipsis (nonsentential utterances, predicate ellipsis, and non-constituent coordination) that have attracted much attention in HPSG. It then reviews existing evidence for and against the so-called direct interpretation or WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) perspective to ellipsis, where no invisible material is posited at the ellipsis site. The chapter then recaps the key points of existing HPSG analyses applied to the three types of ellipsis.

### 1 Introduction

Ellipsis is a phenomenon that involves a non-canonical mapping between syntax and semantics. What appears to be a syntactically incomplete utterance still receives a semantically complete representation, based on the features of the surrounding context, be it linguistic or nonlinguistic. The goal of syntactic theory is thus to account for how the complete semantics can be reconciled with the apparently incomplete syntax. One of the key questions here relates to the structure of the ellipsis site, that is, whether or not we should assume the presence of invisible syntactic material. Section 2 introduces three types of ellipsis (nonsentential utterances, predicate ellipsis, and non-constituent coordination) that have attracted considerable attention and received treatment within HPSG (our focus here is on standard HPSG rather than Sign-Based Construction Grammar; Sag 2012, see also Abeillé & Borsley 2024: Section 7.2, Chapter 1 of this volume



and Müller 2024a: Section 1.3.2, Chapter 32 of this volume on SBCG and Abeillé & Chaves 2024: Section 7, Chapter 16 of this volume on non-constituent coordination). In Section 3 we overview existing evidence for and against the so-called WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) approach to ellipsis, where no invisible material is posited at the ellipsis site. Finally in Sections 4–6, we walk the reader through three types of HPSG analyses applied to the three types of ellipsis presented in Section 2. Our purpose is to highlight the nonuniformity of these analyses, along with the underlying intuition that ellipsis is not a uniform phenomenon. Throughout the chapter, we also draw the reader’s attention to the key role that corpus and experimental data play in HPSG theorizing, which sets it apart from frameworks that primarily rely on intuitive judgments.

## 2 Three types of ellipsis

Based on the type of analysis they receive in HPSG, elliptical phenomena can be broadly divided into three types: nonsentential utterances, predicate ellipsis, and non-constituent coordination.<sup>1</sup> We overview the key features of these types here before discussing in greater detail how they have been brought to bear on the question of whether there is invisible syntactic structure at the ellipsis site or not. We begin with stranded XPs, which HPSG treats as nonsentential utterances, and then move on to predicate and argument ellipsis, followed by phenomena known as non-constituent coordination.

### 2.1 Nonsentential utterances

This section introduces utterances smaller than a sentence, which we refer to as *nonsentential utterances* (NSUs). These range from *Bare Argument Ellipsis* (BAE)<sup>2</sup> as in (1), through fragment answers as in (2) to direct or embedded fragment questions (sluicing) as in (3)–(4):

- (1) A: You were angry with them.  
B: Yeah, angry with them and angry with the situation.
- (2) A: Where are we?  
B: In Central Park.
- (3) A: So what did you think about that?  
B: About what?

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<sup>1</sup>For more detailed discussion, see Kim & Nykiel (2020).

<sup>2</sup>This term is used in Culicover & Jackendoff (2005: 6).

- (4) A: There's someone at the door.  
 B: Who?/I wonder who.

As illustrated by these examples, sluicing involves stranded *wh*-phrases and has the function of an interrogative clause, while Bare Argument Ellipsis involves XPs representing various syntactic categories and typically has the function of a clause (Ginzburg & Sag 2000: 313, Culicover & Jackendoff 2005: 233).<sup>3</sup>

The key theoretical question nonsentential utterances raise is whether they are, on the one hand, parts of larger sentential structures or, on the other, nonsentential structures whose semantic and morphosyntactic features are licensed by the surrounding context. To adjudicate between these views, researchers have looked for evidence that nonsentential utterances in fact behave as if they were fragments of sentences. As we will see in Section 3, there is evidence to support both of these views. However, HPSG doesn't assume that nonsentential utterances are underlyingly sentential structures.

## 2.2 Predicate ellipsis and argument ellipsis

This section looks at four constructions whose syntax includes null or unexpressed elements. These constructions are *Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis* (PAE),<sup>4</sup> which is a term we are using here for what is more typically referred to as *Verb Phrase Ellipsis* (VPE); pseudogapping; *Null Complement Anaphora* (NCA); and *argument drop* (or *pro-drop*). Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis features stranded auxiliary verbs as in (5), while pseudogapping, also introduced by an auxiliary verb, has a remnant right after the pseudo gap as in (6). Null Complement Anaphora is characterized by omission of complements to some lexical verbs as in (7), while argument drop refers to omission of a pronominal subject or an object argument, as illustrated in (8) for Polish.

- (5) A: I didn't ask George to invite you.  
 B: Then who did? (Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis)
- (6) Larry might read the short story, but he won't the play. (Pseudogapping)
- (7) Some mornings you can't get hot water in the shower, but nobody complains. (Null Complement Anaphora)

<sup>3</sup>Several subtypes of nonsentential utterances (nonsentential utterances) can be distinguished, based on their contextual functions, an issue we leave open here (for a recent taxonomy, see Ginzburg 2012: 217).

<sup>4</sup>The term Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis was introduced by Sag (1976: 53) and covers cases where a non-VP element is elided after an auxiliary verb, as in *You think I am a superhero, but I am not*.

- (8) Pia późno wróciła do domu. Od razu poszła spać.  
 Pia late get.PST.SG to home.GEN immediately go.PST.SG  
 sleep.INF  
 ‘Pia got home late. She went straight to bed.’ (argument drop)

One key question raised by such constructions is whether these unrealized null elements should be assumed to be underlyingly present in the syntax of these constructions, and the answer is rather negative (see Section 3). Another question is whether theoretical analyses of constructions like Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis should be enriched with usage preferences, since these constructions compete with *do it/that/so* anaphora in predictable ways (see Miller 2013 for a proposal).

### 2.3 Non-constituent coordination

We now focus on three instances of non-constituent coordination – gapping (Ross 1967: 171), Right Node Raising (RNR), and Argument Cluster Coordination (ACC) – illustrated in (9), (10), and (11), respectively.

- (9) Ethan [gave away] his CDs and Rasmus his old guitar. (Gapping)  
 (10) Ethan prepares and Rasmus eats [the food]. (Right Node Raising)  
 (11) Harvey [gave] a book to Ethan and a record to Rasmus. (Argument Cluster Coordination)

In Right Node Raising, a single constituent located in the right-peripheral position is associated with both conjuncts. In both Argument Cluster Coordination and gapping, a finite verb is associated with both (or more) conjuncts but is only present in the leftmost one. Additionally in Argument Cluster Coordination, the subject of the first conjunct is also associated with the second conjunct but is only present in the former. These phenomena illustrate what appears to be coordination of standard constituents with elements not normally defined as constituents (a cluster of NPs in (9), a stranded transitive verb in (10), and a cluster of NP and PP in (11)).

To handle such constructions, the grammar must be permitted to (a) coordinate non-canonical constituents, (b) generate coordinated constituents parts of which are subject to an operation akin to deletion, or (c) coordinate VPs with non-sentential utterances. As we will see throughout this chapter, HPSG analyses of these constructions make use of all three options.

### 3 Evidence for and against invisible material at the ellipsis site

This section is concerned with nonsentential utterances and Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis, since this is where the contentious issues arise of whether there is invisible syntactic material in an ellipsis site (Sections 3.1 and 3.2) and of where ellipsis is licensed (Sections 3.3 and 3.4). Below, we consider evidence from the literature for and against invisible structure. As we will see, the evidence is based not only on intuitive judgments, but also on experimental and corpus data, the latter being more typical of the HPSG tradition.

#### 3.1 Connectivity effects

Connectivity effects refer to parallels between nonsentential utterances and their counterparts in sentential structures, thus speaking in favor of the existence of silent sentential structure. We focus on two kinds here: case-matching effects and preposition-stranding effects (for other examples of connectivity effects, see Ginzburg & Miller 2018). It's been known since Ross (1967) that nonsentential utterances exhibit case-matching effects, that is, they are typically marked for the same case that is marked on their counterparts in sentential structures. (12) illustrates this for German, where case matching is seen between a *wh*-phrase functioning as a nonsentential utterance and its counterpart in the antecedent (Merchant 2005a: 663):

- (12) Er will jemandem schmeicheln, aber sie wissen nicht wem /  
 he will someone.DAT flatter but they know not who.DAT  
 \* wen.  
 who.ACC  
 'He wants to flatter someone, but they don't know whom.'

Case-matching effects are crosslinguistically robust in that they are found in the vast majority of languages with overt case marking systems, and therefore, they have been taken as strong evidence for the reality of silent structure. The argument is that the pattern of case matching follows straightforwardly if a nonsentential utterance is embedded in silent syntactic material whose content includes the same lexical head that assigns case to the nonsentential utterance's counterpart in the antecedent clause (Merchant 2001, 2005b). However, a language like Hungarian poses a problem for this reasoning (Jacobson 2016). While Hungarian has verbs that assign one of two cases to their object NPs in overt

clauses with no meaning difference, case matching is still required between a nonsentential utterance and its counterpart, whichever case is marked on the counterpart. To see this, consider (13) from Jacobson (2016: 356). The verb *hasonlit* ‘resembles’ assigns either sublative (SUBL) or allative (ALL) case to its object, but if the sublative is selected for a nonsentential utterance’s counterpart, the nonsentential utterance must match this case.

- (13) A: Ki-re        hasonlit        Péter?  
           who-SUBL resemble.PRS.SG Péter  
           ‘Who does Péter resemble?’  
       B: János-ra     / ? János-hoz.  
           János-SUBL    János-ALL  
           ‘János.’

Jacobson (2016) notes that there is some speaker variation regarding the (un)acceptability of case mismatch here, while all speakers agree that either case is fine in a corresponding nonelliptical response to (13A). This last point is important, because it shows that the requirement of—or at least a preference for—matching case features applies to nonsentential utterances to a greater extent than it does to their nonelliptical equivalents, challenging connectivity effects.

Similarly problematic for case-based parallels between nonsentential utterances and their sentential counterparts are some Korean data. Korean nonsentential utterances can drop case markers more freely than their counterparts in nonelliptical clauses can, a point made in Morgan (1989) and Kim (2015). Observe the example in (14) from Morgan (1989: 237).

- (14) A: Nwukwu-ka ku chaek-ul sa-ass-ni?  
           who-NOM    the book-ACC buy-PST-QUE  
           ‘Who bought the book?’  
       B: Yongsu-ka    / Yongsu / \* Yongsu-lul.  
           Yongsu-NOM    Yongsu    Yongsu-ACC  
           ‘Yongsu.’  
       B’: Yongsu-ka    / \* Yongsu ku chaek-ul sa-ass-e.  
           Yongsu-NOM    Yongsu the book-ACC buy-PST-DECL  
           ‘Yongsu bought the book.’

When a nonsentential utterance corresponds to a nominative subject in the antecedent (as in (14B)), it can either be marked for nominative or be caseless. However, replacing the same nonsentential utterance with a full sentential answer,

as in (14B'), rules out case drop from the subject. This strongly suggests that the case-marked and caseless nonsentential utterances couldn't have identical source sentences if they were to derive via PF-deletion (deletion in the phonological component).<sup>5</sup> Data like these led Morgan (1989) to propose that not all nonsentential utterances have a sentential derivation, an idea later picked up in Barton (1998).

The same pattern is associated with semantic case. That is, in (15), if a nonsentential utterance is case-marked, it needs to be marked for comitative case like its counterpart in the A-sentence, but it may also simply be caseless. However, being caseless is not an option for the nonsentential utterance's counterpart in a sentential response to A (Kim 2015: 280).

- (15) A: Nwukwu-wa hapsek-ul                      ha-yess-e?  
           who-COM     sitting.together-ACC do-PST-QUE  
           'With whom did you sit together?'  
       B: Mimi-wa. / Mimi.  
           Mimi-COM Mimi  
           'With Mimi.' / 'Mimi.'

The generalization for Korean is then that nonsentential utterances may be optionally realized as caseless, but may never be marked for a different case than is marked on their counterparts.

Overall, case-marking facts show that there is some morphosyntactic identity between nonsentential utterances and their antecedents, though not to the extent that nonsentential utterances have exactly the features that they would have if they were constituents embedded in sentential structures. The Hungarian facts also suggest that those aspects of the argument structure of the appropriate lexical heads present in the antecedent that relate to case licensing are relevant for an analysis of nonsentential utterances.<sup>6</sup>

The second kind of connectivity effects goes back to Merchant (2001, 2005b) and highlights apparent links between the features of nonsentential utterances and *wh*- and focus movement (leftward movement of a focus-bearing expression). The idea is that prepositions behave the same under *wh*- and focus movement as they do under clausal ellipsis, that is, they pied-pipe or strand in the same

<sup>5</sup>Nominative (in Korean) differs in this respect from three other structural cases in the language—dative, accusative, and genitive—in that these three may be dropped from nonelliptical clauses (see Morgan 1989, Lee 2016, Kim 2016). However, see Müller (2002) for a discussion of German dative and genitive as lexical cases.

<sup>6</sup>Hungarian and Korean are not the only problematic languages; for a list, see Vicente (2015).

environments. If a language (e.g., English) permits preposition stranding under *wh*- and focus movement (*What did Harvey paint the wall with?* vs. *With what did Harvey paint the wall?*), then nonsentential utterances may surface with or without prepositions, as illustrated in (16) for sluicing and Bare Argument Ellipsis (see Section 4 for a theoretical analysis of this variation).

(16) A: I know what Harvey painted the wall with.

B: (With) what?/(With) primer.

If there were indeed a link between preposition stranding and nonsentential utterances, then we would expect prepositionless nonsentential utterances to only be possible in languages with preposition stranding. This expectation is, however, disconfirmed by an ever-growing list of non-preposition stranding languages that do feature prepositionless nonsentential utterances: Brazilian Portuguese (Almeida & Yoshida 2007), Spanish and French (Rodrigues et al. 2009), Greek (Molimpakis 2019), Bahasa Indonesia (Fortin 2007), Russian (Philippova 2014), Polish (Szczegielniak 2008, Sag & Nykiel 2011, Nykiel 2013), Bulgarian (Abels 2017), Serbo-Croatian (Stjepanović 2008, 2012), Mauritian (Abeillé & Has-samal 2019), and Arabic (Leung 2014, Alshaalan & Abels 2020). A few of these studies have presented experimental evidence that prepositionless nonsentential utterances are acceptable, though for reasons still poorly understood, they typically do not reach the same level of acceptability as their variants with prepositions do (see Nykiel 2013, Nykiel & Kim 2022 for Polish, Molimpakis 2019 for Greek, and Alshaalan & Abels 2020 for Saudi Arabic). For more experimental and corpus work on connectivity effects, see Sag & Nykiel 2011 for Polish and Nykiel 2015, 2017, Nykiel & Hawkins 2020 for English.

It is evident from this research that there is no grammatical constraint on nonsentential utterances that keeps track of what preposition-stranding possibilities exist in any given language. On the other hand, it does not seem sufficient to assume that nonsentential utterances can freely drop prepositions, given examples of sprouting like (17), in which prepositions are not omissible (see Chung et al. 1995).<sup>7</sup> As noted by Chung et al. (1995: 250), the difference between the merger type of sluicing (16) and the sprouting type of sluicing (17) is that there is an explicit phrase that the nonsentential utterance corresponds to in the former but not in the latter (in the HPSG literature, this phrase is termed a Salient Utterance by Ginzburg & Sag 2000: 313 or a Focus-Establishing Constituent by Ginzburg 2012: 234).

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<sup>7</sup>However, Hardt et al. (2020)'s corpus data yield examples of sprouting where prepositions are dropped from nonsentential utterances that serve as adjuncts rather than arguments, as in A: *Then you see where they're going to place it*]. B: *What night?*



- (17) A: I know Harvey painted the wall.  
 B: \*(With) what?/Yeah, \*(with) primer.

The challenge posed by (17) is how to ensure that the nonsentential utterance is a PP matching the implicit PP argument in the A-sentence (see the discussion around (35b) for further detail). This challenge has not received much attention in the HPSG literature, though see Kim (2015).

### 3.2 Island effects

One of the predictions from the view that nonsentential utterances are underlyingly sentential is that they should respect island constraints on long-distance movement (see Chaves 2024, Chapter 15 of this volume for a discussion of islands in HPSG). But as illustrated below, nonsentential utterances (both sluicing and Bare Argument Ellipsis) exhibit island-violating behavior.<sup>8</sup> The nonsentential utterance in (18) would be illicitly extracted out of an adjunct (*\*Where does Harriet drink scotch that comes from?*) and the nonsentential utterance in (19) would be extracted out of a complex NP (*\*The Gay Rifle Club, the administration has issued a statement that it is willing to meet with*).<sup>9</sup>

- (18) A: Harriet drinks scotch that comes from a very special part of Scotland.  
 B: Where? (Culicover & Jackendoff 2005: 245)
- (19) A: The administration has issued a statement that it is willing to meet with one of the student groups.  
 B: Yeah, right—the Gay Rifle Club. (Culicover & Jackendoff 2005: 245)

Among Culicover & Jackendoff's (2005: 245) examples of well-formed island-violating nonsentential utterances are also sprouted nonsentential utterances (those that correspond to implicit phrases in the antecedent) like (20)–(21).

- (20) A: John met a woman who speaks French.  
 B: With an English accent?

<sup>8</sup>As noted earlier, the derivational approaches need to move a remnant or nonsentential utterance to the sentence initial position and delete a clausal constituent since only constituents can be deleted. See Merchant (2001, 2010) for details.

<sup>9</sup>Merchant (2005b) argued that Bare Argument Ellipsis, unlike sluicing, does respect island constraints, an argument that was later challenged (see, e.g., Culicover & Jackendoff 2005: 239; Griffiths & Lipták 2014). However, Merchant (2005b) focused specifically on pairs of *wh*-interrogatives and answers to them, running into the difficulty of testing for island-violating behavior, since a well-formed *wh*-interrogative antecedent could not be constructed.

- (21) A: For John to flirt at the party would be scandalous.  
B: Even with his wife?

Other scholars assume that sprouted nonsentential utterances are one of the two kinds of nonsentential utterances that respect island constraints, the other kind being contrastive nonsentential utterances, illustrated in (22) (Chung et al. 1995, Merchant 2005b, Griffiths & Lipták 2014).

- (22) A: Does Abby speak the same Balkan language that Ben speaks?  
B: \*No, Charlie. (Merchant 2005b: 688)

Schmeh et al. (2015) further explore the acceptability of nonsentential utterances preceded by the response particle *no* like those in (22) compared to nonsentential utterances introduced by the response particle *yes*, depicted in (23). (22) and (23) differ in terms of discourse function in that the latter supplements the antecedent rather than correcting it, a discourse function signaled by the response particle *yes*.

- (23) A: John met a guy who speaks a very unusual language.  
B: Yes, Albanian. (Culicover & Jackendoff 2005: 245)

Schmeh et al. (2015) find that corrections with *no* lead to lower acceptability ratings compared to supplementations with *yes* and propose that this follows from the fact that corrections induce greater processing difficulty than supplementations do, hence the acceptability difference between (22) and (23). This finding makes it plausible that the perceived degradation of island-violating nonsentential utterances could ultimately be attributed to nonsyntactic factors, e.g., the difficulty of successfully computing a meaning for them.

In contrast to nonsentential utterances, many instances of Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis appear to respect island constraints, as would be expected if there were unpronounced structure from which material was extracted. An example of a relative clause island is depicted in (24) (note that the corresponding sluicing nonsentential utterance is fine).

- (24) \* They want to hire someone who speaks a Balkan language, but I don't remember which they do [~~want to hire someone who speaks~~ \_\_\_\_]. (Merchant 2001: 6)

(24) contrasts with well-formed island-violating examples like (25a) and (25b), as observed by Miller (2014) and Ginzburg & Miller (2018).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Miller (2014) cites numerous corpus examples of island-violating pseudogapping.

- (25) a. He managed to find someone who speaks a Romance language, but a Germanic language, he didn't [~~manage to find someone who speaks~~\_\_]. (Ginzburg & Miller 2018: 90)
- b. He was able to find a bakery where they make good baguette, but croissants, he couldn't [~~find a bakery where they make good~~\_\_]. (Ginzburg & Miller 2018: 90)

As Ginzburg & Miller (2018) rightly point out, we do not yet have a complete understanding of when or why island effects show up in Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis. Its behavior is at best inconsistent, failing to provide convincing evidence for silent structure.

### 3.3 Structural mismatches

Because structural mismatches are rare or absent from nonsentential utterances (see Merchant 2005b, 2013),<sup>11</sup> this section focuses on Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis and developments surrounding the question of which contexts license it. In a seminal study of anaphora, Hankamer & Sag (1976) classified Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis as a surface anaphor with syntactic features closely matching those of an antecedent present in the linguistic context. They argued in particular that Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis is not licensed if it mismatches its antecedent in voice. Compare the following two examples from Hankamer & Sag (1976: 327).

- (26) a. \* The children asked to be squirted with the hose, so we did.
- b. The children asked to be squirted with the hose, so they were.

<sup>11</sup>Given the assumption that canonical sprouting nonsentential utterances have VP antecedents, as in (17), Ginzburg & Miller (2018: 95) cite examples—originally from Beecher (2008: 13)—of sprouting nonsentential utterances with nominal, hence mismatched, antecedents, e.g., (i).

(i) We're on to the semi-finals, though I don't know who against.

Further examples where nonsentential utterances refer to an NP or AP antecedent appear in COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English):

(ii) A: Well, it's a defense mechanism. B: Defense against what? (Mov:BartonFink, 1991)

(iii) Our Book of Mormon talks about the day of the Lamanite, when the church would make a special effort to build and reclaim a fallen people. And some people will say, Well, fallen from what? (SPOK: NPR\_ATCW, 2005)

The nonsentential utterances in (ii)–(iii) repeat the lexical heads whose complements are being sprouted (*defense* and *fallen*), that is, they contain more material than is usual for nonsentential utterances (cf. (i)). It seems that without this additional material it would be difficult to integrate the nonsentential utterances into the propositions provided by the antecedents and hence to arrive at the intended interpretations.

This proposal places tighter structural constraints on Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis than on other verbal anaphors (e.g., *do it/that*) in terms of identity between an ellipsis site and its antecedent. This has prompted extensive evaluation in a number of corpus and experimental studies in the subsequent decades. Below are examples of acceptable structural mismatches reported in the literature, ranging from voice mismatch in (27a) to nominal antecedents in (27b) and to split antecedents in (27c).<sup>12</sup>

- (27) a. This information could have been released by Gorbachev, but he chose not to \_\_. (Hardt 1993: 37)
- b. Mubarak's survival is impossible to predict and, even if he does \_\_, his plan to make his son his heir apparent is now in serious jeopardy. (Miller & Hemforth 2014: 7)
- c. Mary wants to go to Spain and Fred wants to go to Peru but because of limited resources only one of them can \_\_. (Webber 1979: 128)

There are two opposing views that have emerged from the empirical work regarding the acceptability and grammaticality of structural mismatches in Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis. The first view takes mismatches to be grammatical and connects degradation in acceptability to violation of certain independent constraints on discourse (Kehler 2002, Miller 2011, 2014, Miller & Hemforth 2014, Miller & Pullum 2014) or processing (Kim et al. 2011). Two types of Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis have been identified on this view through extensive corpus work—auxiliary choice Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis and subject choice Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis—each with different discourse requirements with respect to the antecedent (Miller 2011, Miller & Hemforth 2014, Miller & Pullum 2014). The second view assumes that there is a grammatical ban on structural mismatch, but violations may be repaired under certain conditions; repairs are associated with differential processing costs compared to matching ellipses and antecedents (Arregui et al. 2006, Grant et al. 2012). If we follow the first view, it is perhaps unexpected that voice mismatch should consistently incur a greater acceptability penalty under Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis than when no ellipsis is involved, as recently reported in

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<sup>12</sup>Miller (2014: 87) also reports cases of structural mismatch with English comparative pseudo-gapping, as in (i) from COCA:

(i) These savory waffles are ideal for brunch, served with a salad as you would a quiche. (SanFranChron, 2012).

See also Abeillé et al. (2016) for examples of voice mismatch in French Right Node Raising.

Kim & Runner (2018).<sup>13</sup> Kim & Runner (2018) stop short of drawing firm conclusions regarding the grammaticality of structural mismatches, but one possibility is that the observed mismatch effects reflect a construction-specific constraint on Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis. HPSG analyses take structurally mismatched instances of Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis to be unproblematic and fully grammatical, while also recognizing construction-specific constraints: discourse or processing constraints formulated for Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis may or may not extend to other elliptical constructions, such as nonsentential utterances (see Abeillé et al. 2016, Ginzburg & Miller 2018 for this point).

### 3.4 Nonlinguistic antecedents

Like structural mismatches, the availability of nonlinguistic (situational) antecedents for an ellipsis points to the fact that it need not be interpreted by reference to and licensed by a structurally identical antecedent. Although this option is somewhat limited, Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis does tolerate nonlinguistic antecedents, as shown in (28) (see also Hankamer & Sag 1976, Schachter 1977).

- (28) a. Mabel shoved a plate into Tate's hands before heading for the sisters' favorite table in the shop. "You shouldn't have." She meant it. The sisters had to pool their limited resources just to get by. (Miller & Pullum 2014: ex. 23)
- b. Once in my room, I took the pills out. "Should I?" I asked myself. (Miller & Pullum 2014: ex. 22a)

Miller & Pullum (2014) note that such examples are exophoric Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis involving no linguistic antecedent for the ellipsis but just a situation where the speaker articulates their opinion about the action involved. Miller & Pullum (2014) provide an extensive critique of the earlier work on the ability of Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis to take nonlinguistic antecedents, arguing for a streamlined discourse-based explanation that neatly captures the attested examples as well as examples of structural mismatch like those discussed in Section 3.3. The important point here is again that Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis is subject to construction-specific constraints which limit its use with nonlinguistic antecedents.

Nonsentential utterances appear in various nonlinguistic contexts as well. Ginzburg & Miller (2018) distinguish three classes of such nonsentential utterances: sluices (29a), exclamative sluices (29b), and declarative fragments (29c).

<sup>13</sup>But see Abeillé et al. (2016) for experimental results that show no acceptability penalty for voice mismatch in French Right Node Raising.

- (29) a. (In an elevator) What floor? (Ginzburg & Sag 2000: 298)  
b. It makes people “easy to control and easy to handle,” he said, “but, God forbid, at what cost!” (Ginzburg & Miller 2018: 96)  
c. BOBADILLA turns, gestures to one of the other men, who comes forward and gives him a roll of parchment, bearing the royal seal. “My letters of appointment.” (COCA FIC: Mov:1492: Conquest of Paradise, 1992)

In addition to being problematic from the licensing point of view, nonsentential utterances like these have been put forward as evidence against the idea that they are underlyingly sentential, because it is unclear what the structure that underlies them would be. There could be many potential sources for these nonsentential utterances (see Culicover & Jackendoff 2005: 306).<sup>14</sup>

## 4 Analyses of nonsentential utterances

It is worth noting at the outset that the analyses of nonsentential utterances within the framework of HPSG are based on an elaborate theory of dialog (Ginzburg 1994, Ginzburg & Cooper 2004, 2014, Larsson 2002, Purver 2006, Fernández Rovira 2006, Fernández & Ginzburg 2002, Fernández et al. 2007, Ginzburg & Fernández 2010, Ginzburg et al. 2014, Ginzburg 2012, 2013, Kim & Abeillé 2019). Existing analyses of nonsentential utterances go back to Ginzburg & Sag (2000), who recognize declarative fragments as in (30a) and two kinds of sluicing nonsentential utterances: direct sluices as in (30b) and reprise sluices as in (30c) (the relevant fragments are bolded). The difference between direct and reprise sluices lies in the fact that the latter are requests for clarification of any part of the antecedent. For instance, in (30c), the referent of *that* is unclear to the interlocutor.

- (30) a. “I was wrong.” Her brown eyes twinkled. “Wrong about what?” “**That night.**” (COCA FIC: Before we kiss, 2014)  
b. “You’re waiting,” she said softly. “**For what?**” (COCA FIC: Fantasy & Science Fiction, 2016)  
c. “Can we please not say a lot about that?” “**About what?**” (COCA FIC: The chance, 2014)

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<sup>14</sup>This is not to say that a sentential analysis of fragments without linguistic antecedents hasn’t been attempted. For details of a proposal involving a “limited ellipsis” strategy, see Merchant (2005b) and Merchant (2010).

These different types of nonsentential utterances are derived from the Ginzburg & Sag (2000: 333) hierarchy of clausal types depicted in Figure 1.

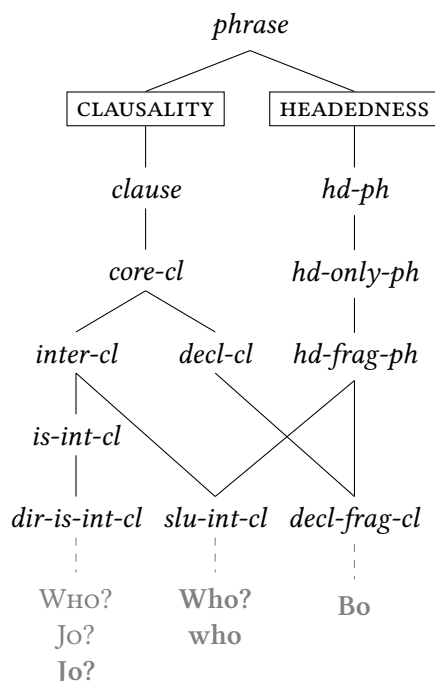


Figure 1: Clausal hierarchy for fragments (Ginzburg & Sag 2000: 333)

Nonsentential utterances like declarative fragments (*decl-frag-cl*) are subtypes of *hd-frag-ph* (headed-fragment phrase) and *decl-cl* (declarative clause), while direct sluices (*slu-int-cl*) and reprise sluices (*dir-is-int-cl*) are subtypes of *hd-frag-ph* and *inter-cl* (interrogative clause). The type *slu-int-cl* is permitted to appear in independent and embedded clauses, hence it is underspecified for the head feature *IC* (independent clause). This specification contrasts with that of declarative fragments and reprise sluices, which are both specified as *[IC+]*. Ginzburg & Sag (2000: 305) use *[IC+]* to block declarative fragments and reprise sluices from appearing in embedded clauses (e.g., A: *What do they like?* B: *\*I doubt bagels*).<sup>15</sup> Ginzburg & Sag (2000: 304) make use of the constraint shown in (31), in which the two contextual attributes *SAL-UTT* and *MAX-QUD* play key roles in ellipsis resolu-

<sup>15</sup>This feature specification, however, needs to be remedied for speakers who accept examples like A: *What does Kim take for breakfast?* B: *Lee says eggs*.

tion (we have added information about the MAX-QUD to generate nonsentential utterances):

(31) Head-Fragment Schema:

$$\left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{CAT} \quad \text{S} \\ \text{CTXT} \quad \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{MAX-QUD} \quad [\text{PARAMS } neset] \\ \text{SAL-UTT} \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{CAT} \quad [2] \\ \text{CONT} | \text{IND } i \end{array} \right\} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right] \rightarrow \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{CAT} \quad [2] [\text{HEAD } nonverbal] \\ \text{CONT} \quad [\text{IND } i] \end{array} \right]$$

This constructional constraint first allows any non-verbal phrasal category (NP, AP, VP, PP, AdvP) to be mapped onto a sentential utterance as long as it corresponds to a Salient Utterance (SAL-UTT).<sup>16</sup> This means that the head daughter's syntactic category must match that of the SAL-UTT, which is an attribute supplied by the surrounding context as a (sub)utterance of another contextual attribute—the Maximal Question under Discussion (MAX-QUD). The context gets updated with every new question-under-discussion, and MAX-QUD represents the most recent question-under-discussion appropriately specified for the feature PARAMS, whose value is a nonempty set (*neset*) of parameters.<sup>17</sup> SAL-UTT is the (sub)utterance with the widest scope within MAX-QUD. To put it informally, SAL-UTT represents a (sub)utterance of a MAX-QUD that has not been resolved yet. That is, it typically contains an interrogative phrase, an indefinite pronoun or a quantifier, but it can also contain a constituent of any length that has been misunderstood or not understood at all by one of the interlocutors. The feature CAT of SAL-UTT supplies information relevant for establishing morphosyntactic identity with a nonsentential utterance, that is, syntactic category and case information, and (31) requires that a nonsentential utterance match this information.

For illustration, consider the following exchange including a declarative fragment:

- (32) A: What did Barry break?  
B: The mike.

<sup>16</sup>Ginzburg (2012) uses the Dialogue Game Board (DGB) to keep track of all information relating to the common ground between interlocutors. The DGB is also the locus of contextual updates arising from each newly introduced question-under-discussion. See Lücking, Ginzburg & Cooper (2024), Chapter 26 of this volume for more on Dialogue Game Boards.

<sup>17</sup>As defined in Ginzburg & Sag (2000: 304), the feature MAX-QUD is also specified for PROP (proposition) as its value. For the sake of simplicity, we suppress this feature here and further represent the value of MAX-QUD as a lambda abstraction, as in Figure 2. See Ginzburg & Sag (2000: 304) for the exact feature formulations of MAX-QUD.



In this dialog, the fragment *The mike* corresponds to the SAL-UTT *what*. Thus the constructional constraint in (31) would license a nonsentential utterance structure like Figure 2.

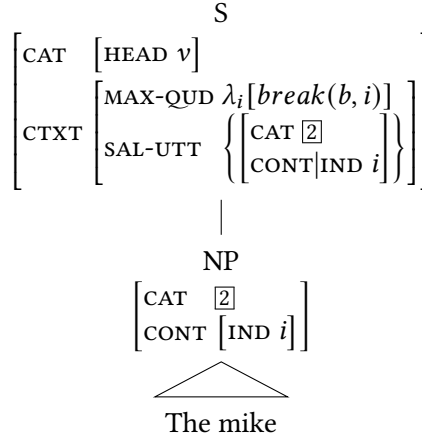


Figure 2: Structure of a declarative fragment clause

As illustrated in the figure, uttering the *wh*-question in (32A) evokes the QUD asking the value of the variable  $i$  linked to the object that Barry broke. The nonsentential utterance *The mike* matches that value. The structured dialogue thus plays a key role in the retrieval of the propositional semantics for the nonsentential utterance.

This constructional approach has the advantage that it gives us a way of capturing the problems that Merchant (2001, 2005b) faces with respect to misalignments between preposition stranding under *wh*- and focus movement and the realization of nonsentential utterances as NPs or PPs discussed in Section 3.1. Because the categories of SAL-UTT discussed in Ginzburg & Sag (2000) are limited to nonverbal, SAL-UTTs can surface either as NPs or PPs. As long as both of these syntactic categories are stored in the updated contextual information, a nonsentential utterance’s CAT feature will be able to match either of them (See Sag & Nykiel 2011 for discussion of this possibility with respect to Polish and Abeillé & Hassamal 2019 with respect to Mauritian).

Another advantage of this analysis of nonsentential utterances is that the content of MAX-QUD can be supplied by either linguistic or nonlinguistic context. MAX-QUD provides the propositional semantics for a nonsentential utterance and is, typically, a unary question. In the prototypical case, MAX-QUD arises from the

most recent *wh*-question uttered in a given context, as in (32), but can also arise (via accommodation) from other forms found in the context, such as constituents in direct sluicing as in (33), or from a nonlinguistic context as in (34).

- (33) A: A friend of mine broke the mike.  
B: Who?

- (34) (Cab driver to passenger on the way to the airport) A: Which airline?

The analysis of such direct sluices differs only slightly from that illustrated for (32), and in fact all existing analyses of nonsentential utterances (Sag & Nykiel 2011, Ginzburg 2012, Abeillé et al. 2014, Kim 2015, Abeillé & Hassamal 2019, Kim & Abeillé 2019) are based on the Head-Fragment Schema in (31). The direct sluice would have the structure given in Figure 3. The analyses in Figures 2 and 3 differ

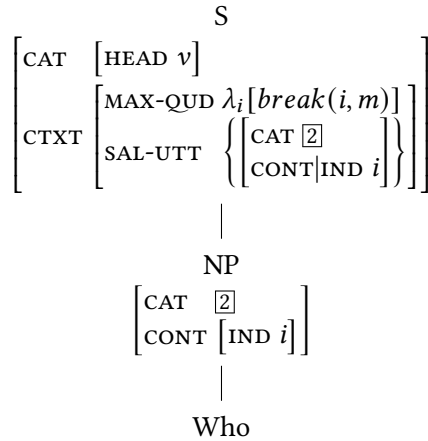


Figure 3: Structure of a sluiced interrogative clause

only in the value of the feature *CONT* (*CONTENT*): in the former it is a proposition and in the latter a question.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup>In-situ languages like Korean and Mandarin allow pseudosluices (sluices with a copula verb), which has lead to proposals that posit cleft clauses as their sources (Merchant 2001). However, Kim (2015) suggests that a cleft-source analysis does not extend to languages like Korean since there is one clear difference between sluicing and cleft constructions: the former allows multiple remnants, while clefts do not license multiple foci. See Kim (2015) for an analysis that differentiates sluicing in embedded clauses (pseudosluices with the copula verb) from direct sluicing in root clauses, as Ginzburg & Sag (2000: 329) do.

This construction-based analysis, in which dialogue updating plays a key role in the licensing of nonsentential utterances, also offers a direction for handling the contrast between merger (35a) and sprouting (35b) examples (recall the discussion in Section 3.1).

- (35) a. A: I heard that the boy painted the wall with something.  
       B: (With) what?  
       b. A: I heard that the boy painted the wall.  
       B: \*(With) what?

The difference between (35a) and (35b) is that the preceding antecedent clause in the former includes an overt correlate for the nonsentential utterance, but in (35b), all there is is just a PP that is implicitly provided by the argument structure of the verb *paint*. Kim (2015) suggests the following way of analyzing the contrast. Consider the argument structure of the lexeme *paint*:

- (36) The lexeme *paint*:
- $$\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{PHON } \langle \textit{paint} \rangle \\ \text{CAT } \left[ \text{ARG-ST } \langle \text{NP}_i, \text{NP}_j, \text{PP}[\textit{with}]_x \rangle \right] \\ \text{CONT } \textit{paint}(i, j, x) \end{array} \right]$$

As represented in (36), the verb *paint* takes three arguments. But note that the PP argument can be realized either as an overt PP or a *pro* expression. In the framework of HPSG, this optionality of an argument to be either realized as a complement or not expressed is represented as the Argument Realization Principle (ARP; Ginzburg & Miller 2018: 101; Abeillé & Borsley 2024: 17, Chapter 1 of this volume).<sup>19</sup>

- (37) Argument Realization Principle:
- $$v\text{-}lxm \Rightarrow \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{SUBJ } \boxed{1} \\ \text{COMPS } \boxed{2} \ominus \textit{list}(\textit{noncanon-ss}) \\ \text{ARG-ST } \boxed{1} \oplus \boxed{2} \end{array} \right]$$

The ARP tells us that the elements in the ARG-ST that are realized as the SUBJ and COMPS elements, as well as noncanonical elements bearing syntactic-semantic information (including *gap-ss* (*gap-synsem*) and *pro*) in the argument structure, need not be realized in the syntax, permitting mismatch between argument structure and syntactic valence features (see Section 5).

<sup>19</sup>This ARP is an adapted version of Ginzburg & Sag (2000: 171) and Bouma et al. (2001: 11).

In accordance with the ARP, there will be two lexical items that correspond to the lexeme in (36), depending on the realization of the optional PP argument:

- (38) 
$$\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{PHON } \langle \textit{painted} \rangle \\ \text{CAT } \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{SUBJ } \langle [1] \text{NP}_i \rangle \\ \text{COMPS } \langle [2] \text{NP}_j, [3] \text{PP}[\textit{with}]_x \rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST } \langle [1] \text{NP}, [2] \text{NP}, [3] \text{PP} \rangle \end{array} \right] \\ \text{CONT } \textit{paint}(i, j, x) \end{array} \right]$$
- (39) 
$$\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{PHON } \langle \textit{painted} \rangle \\ \text{CAT } \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{SUBJ } \langle [1] \text{NP}_i \rangle \\ \text{COMPS } \langle [2] \text{NP}_j \rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST } \langle [1] \text{NP}_i, [2] \text{NP}_j, \text{PP}[\textit{with}, \textit{pro}]_x \rangle \end{array} \right] \\ \text{CONT } \textit{paint}(i, j, x) \end{array} \right]$$

The lexical item with an overt PP complement in (38) would project a merger sentence like (35a) while the one with a covert PP in (39) would license the sprouting example in (35b). Each of these two lexical items would then license the partial VP structures in Figure 4 and Figure 5.

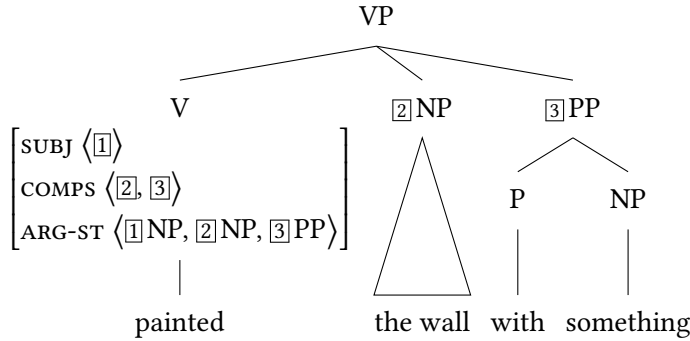


Figure 4: Structure of a merger antecedent

Let us consider the nonsentential utterance with the merger antecedent in (35a). In this case, the nonsentential utterance can be either the NP *What?* or the PP *With what?* because of the available Dialog Game Board information triggered by the previous discourse. As can be seen from the structure in Figure 4,

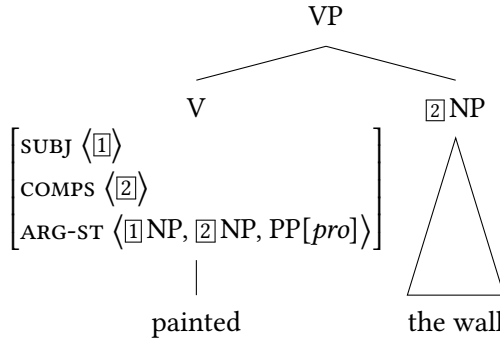


Figure 5: Structure of a sprouting antecedent

the antecedent clause activates not only the PP information but also its internal structure, including the NP within it. The nonsentential utterance can thus be anchored to either of these two, as given in the following:

- (40) a.  $\left[ \text{CTXT} | \text{SAL-UTT} \left\{ \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{CAT} \text{ PP}[\text{with}]_x \\ \text{CONT} \text{ paint}(i, j, x) \end{array} \right] \right\} \right]$   
 b.  $\left[ \text{CTXT} | \text{SAL-UTT} \left\{ \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{CAT} \text{ NP}_x \\ \text{CONT} \text{ paint}(i, j, x) \end{array} \right] \right\} \right]$

The SAL-UTT in (40a) is the PP *with something*, projecting *With what?* as a well-formed nonsentential utterance in accordance with (31). Since the overt PP also activates the NP object of the preposition, the discourse can supply that NP as another possible SAL-UTT value, as in (40b). This information then projects *What?* as a well-formed nonsentential utterance in accordance with (31). Now consider (35b). Note that in Figure 5 the PP argument is not realized as a complement even though the verb *painted* takes a PP as its argument value. The interlocutor can have access to this ARG-ST information, but nothing further: the PP argument has no further specifications other than being an implicit argument of *painted*. This means that only this implicit PP can be picked up as the SAL-UTT. This is why the sprouting example allows only a PP as a possible nonsentential utterance. Thus the key difference between merger and sprouting examples lies in what the previous discourse activates via syntactic realizations.<sup>20</sup>

The advantages of the discourse-based analyses sketched here thus follow from their ability to capture limited morphosyntactic parallelism between nonsentential utterances and SAL-UTT without having to account for why nonsen-

<sup>20</sup>We owe most of the ideas expressed here to discussions with Anne Abeillé.

tential utterances behave differently from constituents of sentential structures. The island-violating behavior of nonsentential utterances is unsurprising on this analysis, as are attested cases of structural mismatch and situationally controlled nonsentential utterances.<sup>21</sup> However, some loose ends still remain. (31) incorrectly rules out case mismatch in languages like Hungarian for speakers that do accept it (see discussion around example (13)).<sup>22</sup>

## 5 Analyses of predicate/argument ellipsis

The first issue in the analysis of Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis is the status of the elided expression. It is assumed to be a *pro* element due to its pronominal properties (see Lobeck 1995, López 2000, Kim 2003, Aelbrecht & Harwood 2015, Ginzburg & Miller 2018). For instance, Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis applies only to phrasal categories (42), with the exception of pseudogapping as shown in (41); it can cross utterance boundaries (43); it can override island constraints (44)–(45); and it is subject to the Backwards Anaphora Constraint (46)–(47).

- (41) Your weight affects your voice. It does mine, anyway. (Miller 2014: 78)
- (42) Mary will meet Bill at Stanford because she didn't \_\_ at Harvard.
- (43) A: Tom won't leave Seoul soon.  
B: I don't think Mary will \_\_ either.
- (44) John didn't hit a home run, but I know a woman who did. (CNPC: Complex Noun Phrase Constraint)
- (45) That Betsy won the batting crown is not surprising, but that Peter didn't know she did \_\_ is indeed surprising. (SSC: Sentential Subject Constraint)
- (46) \* Sue didn't \_\_ but John ate meat.
- (47) Because Sue didn't \_\_, John ate meat.

One way to account for Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis closely tracks analyses of *pro*-drop phenomena. We do not need to posit a phonologically empty pronoun if a level of argument structure is available where we can encode the required

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<sup>21</sup>The rarity of nonsentential utterances with nonlinguistic antecedents can be understood as a function of how hard or how easily a situational context can give rise to a MAX-QUD and thus license ellipsis. See Miller & Pullum (2014) for this point with regard to Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis.

<sup>22</sup>See, however, Kim (2015) for a proposal that introduces a case hierarchy specific to Korean to explain limited case mismatch in this language.

pronominal properties (see Ginzburg & Sag 2000: 330). As we have seen, the Argument Realization Principle in (37) allows an argument to be a noncanonical *synsem* such as *pro* which need not be mapped onto COMPS. For instance, the auxiliary verb *can*, bearing the feature AUX, has a *pro* VP as its second argument in a sentence like *John can't dance, but Sandy can*, that is, this VP is not instantiated as a syntactic complement of the verb.<sup>23</sup> This possibility is represented formally in (48) (see Kim 2003, Ginzburg & Miller 2018):

(48) Lexical description for *can*:

<i>v-lxm</i>	
PHON	$\langle \text{can} \rangle$
CAT	HEAD $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{VFORM } \textit{fin} \\ \text{AUX } + \end{array} \right]$
	SUBJ $\langle \text{I} \rangle$
	COMPS $\langle \rangle$
	ARG-ST $\langle \text{I NP}, \text{VP}[\textit{pro}] \rangle$

The auxiliary in (48) will then project a structure like the one in Figure 6. The head daughter's COMPS list is empty because the second element on the ARG-ST list is a *pro*.<sup>24</sup>

We saw in Section 3.3 that Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis does not require structural identity with its antecedent, which is supplied by the surrounding context. Therefore, ellipsis resolution is not based on syntactic reconstruction in HPSG analyses, but rather on structured discourse information (see Ginzburg & Sag 2000: 295). The *pro* analysis outlined above expects structural mismatches (and island violations), because the relevant antecedent information is the information that the Dialog Game Board provides via the MAX-QUD in each case, and hence no structural-match requirement is enforced on Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis.<sup>25</sup> This means in turn that HPSG analyses of Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis do not face the problem of having to rule out, or rule in, cases of structural mismatch or nonlinguistic

<sup>23</sup>The rich body of HPSG work on English auxiliaries takes them to be not special Infl categories, but verbs having the AUX value +. See Kim (2000), Kim & Sag (2002), Sag et al. (2003, 2020), Kim & Michaelis (2020).

<sup>24</sup>The same line of analysis could be extended to Null Complement Anaphora, which has received relatively little attention in modern syntactic theory, including in HPSG. However, Null Complement Anaphora is sensitive only to a limited set of main verbs and its exact nature remains controversial.

<sup>25</sup>In the derivational analysis of Merchant (2013), cases of structural mismatch are licensed by the postulation of the functional projection VoiceP above an IP: the understood VP is linked to its antecedent under the IP.

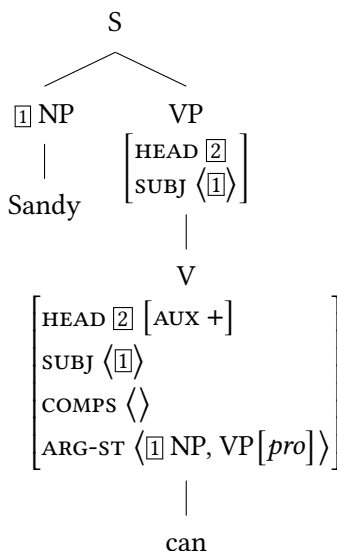


Figure 6: Structure of a Verb Phrase Ellipsis

antecedents, because their acceptability can be captured as reflecting discourse-based and construction-specific constraints on Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis.

## 6 Analyses of non-constituent coordination and gapping

Constructions such as gapping, Right Node Raising, and Argument Cluster Coordination have also often been taken to be elliptical constructions. Each of these constructions has received relatively little attention in the research on elliptical constructions, possibly because of their syntactic and semantic complexities. In this section, we briefly review HPSG analyses of these three constructions, leaving more detailed discussion to Abeillé & Chaves 2024, Chapter 16 of this volume and references therein.<sup>26</sup>

### 6.1 Gapping

Gapping allows a finite verb to be unexpressed in the non-initial conjuncts, as exemplified below.

<sup>26</sup>We also leave out discussion of HPSG analyses for pseudogapping: readers are referred to Miller (1992), Kim & Nykiel (2020) and Abeillé (2024: Section 4), Chapter 12 of this volume.



- (49) a. Some ate bread, and others rice.  
 b. Kim can play the guitar, and Lee the violin.

HPSG analyses of gapping fall into two kinds: one kind draws on Beavers & Sag's (2004) deletion-like analysis of non-constituent coordination (Chaves 2009) and the other on Ginzburg & Sag's (2000) analysis of nonsentential utterances (Abeillé et al. 2014).<sup>27</sup> The latter analyses align gapping with analyses of nonsentential utterances, as discussed in Section 4, more than with analyses of non-constituent coordination, and for this reason gapping could be classified together with other nonsentential utterances. We use the analysis in Abeillé et al. (2014) for illustration below.

Abeillé et al. (2014), focusing on French and Romanian, offer a construction- and discourse-based HPSG approach to gapping where the second headless gapped conjunct is taken to be an nonsentential utterance. Their analysis places no syntactic parallelism requirements on the first conjunct and the gapped conjunct, given English data like (50) (note that the bracketed phrases differ in syntactic category).

- (50) Pat has become [crazy]<sub>AP</sub> and Chris [an incredible bore]<sub>NP</sub>. (Abeillé et al. 2014: 248)

Instead of requiring syntactic parallelism between the two clauses, their analysis limits gapping remnants to elements of the argument structure of the verbal head present in the antecedent (i.e., the leftmost conjunct) and absent from the rightmost conjunct, which reflects the intuition articulated in Hankamer (1971). This analysis thus also licenses gapping remnants with implicit correlates, as illustrated in the following Italian example, where the subject is implicit in the leftmost conjunct and overt in the rightmost conjunct (Abeillé et al. 2014: 251).<sup>28</sup>

- (51) Mangio la pasta e Giovanni il riso.  
 eat.1SG DET pasta and Giovanni DET rice  
 'I eat pasta and Giovanni eats rice.'

The subject in the leftmost conjunct in (51) would be analyzed as a noncanonical *synsem* of type *pro* and the correlate for the remnant *Giovanni*.

<sup>27</sup>For a semantic approach to gapping, the reader is referred to Park et al. (2019), who offer an analysis of scope ambiguities under gapping where the syntax assumed is of the nonsentential utterance type and the semantics is cast in the framework of Lexical Resource Semantics. For more on Lexical Resource Semantics see Koenig & Richter (2024: Section 6.2), Chapter 22 of this volume.

<sup>28</sup>Gapping is possible outside coordination constructions like comparatives as well as in subordinate clauses. See Abeillé & Chaves (2024: Section 7), Chapter 16 of this volume.

Abeillé et al. (2014) adopt two key assumptions in their analysis: (a) coordination phrases are nonheaded constructions in which each conjunct shares the same valence (SUBJ and COMPS) and nonlocal (SLASH) features, while its head (HEAD) value is not fixed but contains an upper bound (supertype) to accommodate examples like (50), and (b) gapping is a special coordination construction in which the first (full) clause (and not the remaining conjuncts) shares its HEAD value with the mother, and some symmetric discourse relation holds between the conjuncts. To illustrate, the gapped conjunct *Chris an incredible bore* in (50) is a nonsentential utterance with a cluster phrase daughter consisting of two NP daughters, as represented by the simplified structure in Figure 7.

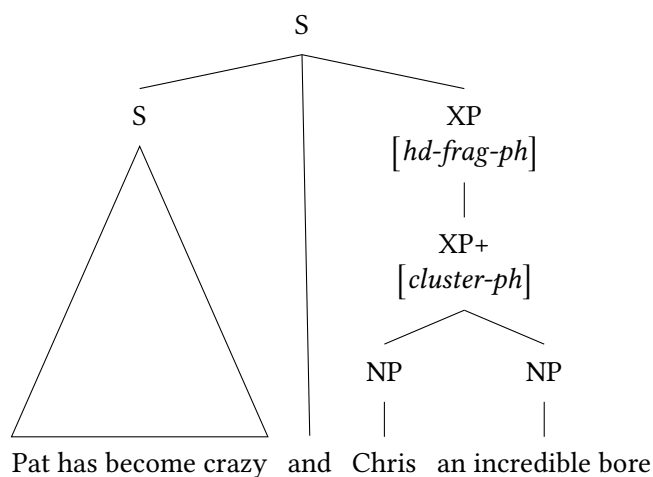


Figure 7: Simplified structure of a gapping construction

Abeillé et al. (2014) analyze gapping remnants as forming a cluster phrase whose mother has an underspecified syntactic category (this information is represented by the CLUSTER head feature in Figure 7 and in the constraint in (52) below).<sup>29</sup> This cluster phrase then serves as the head daughter of a head-fragment phrase, whose syntactic category is also underspecified. This means that there is no unpronounced verbal head in the phrase to which gapping remnants belong. The meanings of the gapping remnants are computed from the meaning of

<sup>29</sup>The notion of a cluster refers to any sequence of dependents and was introduced in Mouret (2006)'s analysis of Argument Cluster Coordination. For more detail, see Abeillé & Chaves 2024: 810–814, Chapter 16 of this volume on coordination and Kubota (2024: 1422), Chapter 29 of this volume on the semantics of Argument Cluster Coordination.

the leftmost nonelliptical verbal conjunct. In sum, the nonsentential utterance that consists of the gapped conjunct in Figure 7 has a single daughter, a cluster phrase, which in turn has two daughters.

The constraint in (52) illustrates how syntactic parallelism between gapping remnants and their correlates in the leftmost conjunct is operationalized. We saw above that Abeillé et al. (2014) ensure that gapping remnants are arguments of a verbal head located in the leftmost conjunct. They do so by adopting the contextual attribute *SAL-UTT*, which is introduced for all nonsentential utterances, as in (52) (Abeillé et al. 2014: 259) (for the definition of *SAL-UTT*, see Section 4).

(52) Syntactic constraints on *head-fragment-phrase*:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{head-fragment-phrase} \Rightarrow \\ &\left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{CNXT|SAL-UTT} \left\langle \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{HEAD } H_1 \\ \text{MAJOR +} \end{array} \right], \dots, \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{HEAD } H_n \\ \text{MAJOR +} \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\ \text{CAT|HEAD|CLUSTER} \left\langle \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{HEAD } H_1 \\ \text{MAJOR +} \end{array} \right], \dots, \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{HEAD } H_n \\ \text{MAJOR +} \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \end{array} \right] \end{aligned}$$

Each list member of the *SAL-UTT* unifies its *HEAD* value with the corresponding cluster element, while the feature *MAJOR* makes each member of the *SAL-UTT* a major constituent functioning as a dependent of some verbal projection. This analysis does not reconstruct a syntactic gapped clause and predicts that gapping may appear in contexts where a full finite clause cannot, as illustrated in (53).

(53) Bill wanted to meet Jane as well as Jane (\*wanted to invite) him. (Abeillé et al. 2014: 242)

With syntactic parallelism between the first and the gapped conjuncts captured this way, Abeillé et al. (2014) also allow gapping remnants to appear in a different order than their correlates in the leftmost conjunct (54) (see Sag et al. 1985: 156–158), however limited this possibility is in gapping.

(54) A policeman walked in at 11, and at 12, a fireman.

This ordering flexibility is licensed as long as some symmetric discourse relation holds between the two conjuncts. Abeillé et al. (2014) localize this symmetric discourse relation to the *BACKGROUND* contextual feature of the Gapping Construction, which is a subtype of coordination.

## 6.2 Right Node Raising

In typical examples of Right Node Raising, as shown below, the element to the immediate right of a parallel structure is shared with the left conjunct:

- (55) a. Kim prepares and Lee eats [the pasta].  
b. Kim played and Lee sang [some Rock and Roll songs at Jane's party].

The bracketed shared material can be either a constituent, as in (55a), or a non-constituent, as in (55b).

Right Node Raising has consistently attracted HPSG analyses involving silent material (a detailed discussion of analyses of Right Node Raising can be found in Abeillé & Chaves 2024: 810–814, Chapter 16 of this volume). All existing analyses of Right Node Raising (Abeillé et al. 2016, Beavers & Sag 2004, Chaves 2014, Crysmann 2008, Shiraishi et al. 2019, Yatabe 2001, 2012) agree on this point, although some of them propose more than one mechanism for accounting for different kinds of non-constituent coordination (Chaves 2014, Yatabe 2001, 2012, Yatabe & Tam 2021). One strand of research within the Right Node Raising literature adopts a linearization-based approach employed more generally in analyses of non-constituent coordination (NCC) (see Yatabe 2001, 2012, for a general introduction to order domains see Müller 2024b: Section 6, Chapter 10 of this volume) and another proposes a deletion-like operation (Abeillé et al. 2016, Chaves 2014, Shiraishi et al. 2019).

The kind of material that may be Right Node Raised and the range of structural mismatches permitted between the left and right conjuncts have been the subject of recent debate.<sup>30</sup> For instance, Chaves (2014: 839–840) demonstrates that, besides more typical examples like (55), there is a range of phenomena classifiable as Right Node Raising that exhibit various argument-structure mismatches as in (56a,b), and that can target material below the word level as in (56c,d).

- (56) a. Sue gave me—but I don't think I will ever read—[a book about relativity].  
b. Never let me—or insist that I—[pick the seats].  
c. We ordered the hard- but they got us the soft-[cover edition].  
d. Your theory under- and my theory over[generates].

Furthermore, Right Node Raising can target strings that are not subject to any known syntactic operations, such as rightward movement, as illustrated in (57) (Chaves 2014: 865).

- (57) a. I thought it was going to be a good but it ended up being a very bad [reception].

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<sup>30</sup> Although we refer to the material on the left and right as conjuncts, it is been known since Hudson (1976, 1989) that Right Node Raising extends to other syntactic environments than coordination (see Chaves 2014).

- b. Tonight a group of men, tomorrow night he himself, [would go out there somewhere and wait].

Right Node Raised material can also be discontinuous, as in (58) (Chaves 2014: 868; Whitman 2009: 238–240).

- (58) a. Please move from the exit rows if you are unwilling or unable [to perform the necessary actions] without injury.  
 b. The blast upended and nearly sliced [an armored Chevrolet Suburban] in half.

This evidence leads Chaves (2014) to propose that Right Node Raising is a nonuniform phenomenon, comprising extraposition, VP- or N'-ellipsis, and true Right Node Raising. Of the three, only true Right Node Raising should be accounted for via the mechanism of optional surface-based deletion that is sensitive to morph form identity and targets any linearized strings, whether constituents or otherwise.<sup>31</sup> Chaves' (2014: 874) constraint licensing true Right Node Raising is given informally in (59) (where  $\alpha$  means a morphophonological constituent,  $*$  the Kleene star (operator), and  $^+$  the Kleene plus (operator)):

- (59) Backward Periphery Deletion Construction:  
 Given a sequence of morphophonologic constituents  $\alpha_1^+ \alpha_2^+ \alpha_3^+ \alpha_4^+ \alpha_5^*$ , then output  $\alpha_1^+ \alpha_3^+ \alpha_4^+ \alpha_5^*$  iff  $\alpha_2^+$  and  $\alpha_4^+$  are identical up to morph forms.

(59) takes the morphophonology of a phrase to be computed as the linear combination of the morphophonologies of the daughters, allowing deletion to apply locally.<sup>32</sup>

Another deletion-based analysis of Right Node Raising is due to Abeillé et al. (2016), Shiraishi et al. (2019), differing from Chaves (2014) in terms of identity conditions on deletion. Abeillé et al. (2016) argue for a finer-grained analysis of French Right Node Raising without morphophonological identity. Their empirical evidence reveals a split between functional and lexical categories in French

<sup>31</sup>Whenever Right Node Raising can instead be analyzed as either VP or N'-ellipsis or extraposition, Chaves (2014) proposes separate mechanisms for deriving them. These are the direct interpretation line of analysis described in the previous sections for nonsentential utterances and predicate/argument ellipsis and an analysis employing the feature *EXTRA* to record extraposed material along the lines of Kim & Sag (2005) and Kay & Sag (2012). See also Borsley & Crysmann (2024: Section 8.1), Chapter 13 of this volume on extraposition and the *EXTRA* feature.

<sup>32</sup>For further detail on linearization-based analyses of Right Node Raising, the interested reader is referred to Yatabe (2001, 2012) and to Müller 2024b: Section 6, Chapter 10 of this volume for details of linearization-based approaches in general.

such that the former permit mismatch between the two conjuncts (where determiners or prepositions differ) under Right Node Raising, while the latter do not. Shiraishi et al. (2019) provide further corpus and experimental evidence that morphophonological identity is too strong a constraint on Right Node Raising, given the range of acceptable mismatches between the verbal forms of the material missing from the left conjunct and those of the material that is shared between both conjuncts.

### 6.3 Argument Cluster Coordination

Argument Cluster Coordination is a type of non-constituent coordination (NCC), as illustrated in (60):

- (60) a. John gave [a book to Mary] and [a record to Jane].  
b. John gave [Mary a book] and [Jane a record].

As for the treatment of Argument Cluster Coordination, the existing HPSG analyses have articulated two main views: ellipsis (Yatabe 2001, Crysmann 2008, Beavers & Sag 2004) and non-standard constituents (Mouret 2006). For discussion of the nonelliptical view, which takes Argument Cluster Coordination to be a special type of coordination, we refer the reader to Abeillé & Chaves 2024, Chapter 16 of this volume and references therein. Here we just focus on the ellipsis view, which better fits this chapter.

The ellipsis analysis set forth by Beavers & Sag (2004) gains its motivation from examples like (61).

- (61) a. Jan travels to Rome tomorrow, [to Paris on Friday], and will fly to Tokyo on Sunday.  
b. Jan wanted to study medicine when he was 11, [law when he was 13], and to study nothing at all when he was 18.

As pointed out by Beavers & Sag (2004), such examples challenge non-ellipsis analyses within the assumption that only constituents of like category can coordinate.<sup>33</sup> The status of the bracketed conjuncts in (61) is quite questionable, since they are not VPs like the other two fellow conjuncts. Beavers & Sag's (2004) proposal is to treat such examples as standard VP coordination with ellipsis of the verb in the second conjunct, as given in (62).

<sup>33</sup>As discussed in Abeillé & Chaves (2024: Section 6), Chapter 16 of this volume and references therein, there are numerous examples (e.g., *Fred became wealthy and a Republican*) where unlike categories are coordinated.

- (62) Jan [[travels to Rome tomorrow], [[~~travels~~] to Paris on Friday], and [will fly to Tokyo on Sunday]].

Beavers & Sag (2004) further adopt the DOM list machinery proposed as part of the linearization theory (see Crysmann 2003a for this proposal), and allow some elements in the daughters' DOM lists to be absent from the mother's DOM list (Yatabe 2001, Crysmann 2003a).<sup>34</sup> This idea is encoded in the Coordination Schema, given in (63), which is a simplified version of the one in (Beavers & Sag 2004: 27).<sup>35</sup>

- (63) Syntactic constraints on *cnj-phrase* (adapted from Beavers & Sag 2004: 27):

$$cnj\text{-}phrase \Rightarrow \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{DOM } [\underline{A}] \oplus [\underline{B}_1] \oplus [\underline{C}] \oplus [\underline{B}_2] \oplus [\underline{D}] \\ \text{DTRS } \left\langle \begin{array}{l} [\text{DOM } [\underline{A}] \oplus [\underline{B}_1] [ne\text{-}list] \oplus ([\underline{D}])], \\ [\text{DOM } [\underline{C}] [(conj)] \oplus ([\underline{A}]) \oplus [\underline{B}_2] [ne\text{-}list] \oplus [\underline{D}]] \end{array} \right\rangle \end{array} \right]$$

As specified in 63, there are two constituents contributing a DOM value. The mother DOM value has the potentially empty material  $\underline{A}$  from the left conjunct (the corresponding material in the right conjunct is elided), a unique element  $\underline{B}_1$  from the left conjunct, the coordinator  $\underline{C}$ , a unique element  $\underline{B}_2$  from the right conjunct, and some material  $\underline{D}$  from the right conjunct (the corresponding material in the left conjunct is elided). (63) licenses various types of coordination. For instance, when  $\underline{A}$  is empty, it licenses examples like *Kim and Pat*, but when  $\underline{A}$  is non-empty, it licenses examples like *John gave a book to Mary and a record to Jane*. When both  $\underline{A}$  and  $\underline{D}$  are non-empty, it allows examples like (62). The content of the DOM list consists of prosodic constituents (i.e., constituents with no information about their internal morphosyntax) and this offers a way of accounting for coordination of noncanonical constituents as a type of ellipsis.

## 7 Summary

This chapter has reviewed three types of ellipsis—nonsentential utterances, predicate ellipsis, and non-constituent coordination—which correspond to three kinds of analysis within HPSG. The pattern that emerges from this overview is that HPSG favors the “what you see is what get” approach to ellipsis and makes limited use of deletion-like operations, accounting for a wider range of corpus and

<sup>34</sup>For detailed discussion of the feature DOM, see Müller (2024b: Section 6), Chapter 10 of this volume.

<sup>35</sup>For simplicity, we represent only the DOM value, suppressing all the other information and further add the parentheses for  $\underline{A}$  and  $\underline{D}$ . For the exact formulation, see Beavers & Sag (2004).

experimental data than derivation-based approaches common in the Minimalist literature.

## Abbreviations

MAX-QUD    Maximal-Question-under-Discussion  
SAL-UTT    Salient Utterance

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