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Ellipsis in English

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

﴿هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

صدق الله العلي العظيم

(سورة الزمر/ الآية ٩)

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

﴾

Say: "Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endued with understanding that receive admonition﴿

Surah Al-Zamar : verse 9

Dedication

To :

The source of patience, optimism and hope, the

best example of this life:

Our beloved mother

The first teacher in our lives, our great heart

and honor:

Our fathers

The dear ones who help us throughout our

studies:

Our brothers and sisters

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

Abstract

In interaction and role speaking many words are deleted for they are being interpreted from the context. In human spoken communication, context is very important to explain the meaning of the words being used or being deleted. The purpose of this study is to analysis the concept of ellipsis in conversation and how the ellipsis forms meaning is recovered through the maintaining the context.

الخلاصة

يتم حذف العديد من الكلمات في التفاعل ودور الحديث لأنه يتم تفسيرها من السياق. في الاتصال البشري المنطوق، يعتبر السياق مهمًا جدًا في شرح معنى الكلمات المستخدمة أو التي يتم حذفها. ان الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو تحليل مفهوم الحذف في المحادثة وكيف يتم استرجاع معنى أشكال القطع من خلال الحفاظ على السياق.

Chapter One

1. Introduction

According to Crane, et al (1981:10), language is most commonly defined as a form of communication that is not stereotyped and nonfinite, it is learned and created. By creative, we generally mean that language is unlimited in its scope. Speakers of a language are able to produce and interpret an unlimited number of utterances that they have never heard before.

Language is used by people to communicate with each other in every social activity. By using language, people not only can conceal and reveal their characters, and identities but also can get knowledge and understand the things around them.   There are some languages in the world that have their own systems. One of them used in most countries as an international language is English. English is an international language become more advance in many countries. Therefore, English has its own place in our life as an important language. Learning English as a foreign language is not an easy subject. It has difficult rules in its system. Sometimes, in using this language, we do not even need to provide a substitute for a word or phrase which has already been said. We can simply omit it and know that the missing part can be reconstructed quite successfully (Masniati, 2011:2).

According to Cook (1982:20) ellipsis is omitting part of sentence on the assumption that an earlier sentence or the context will make the meaning clear. Hence, ellipsis is done in order to avoid repetition and make a sentence more concisely. Although one or more words are

omitted, the meaning of the sentence is not different from the complete (unomitted) sentence of written text or spoken language.

1.1 The Definition of Ellipsis

According to (Longman Dictionary),ellipsis is defined as the leaving out of words or phrases from sentences where the leaving-out words or phrases are unnecessary because they have already been referred to or mentioned for example:-

1. The man went to the door and (he) opened it.

Moreover Crystal (1985: 158-159) declares that this term is manipulated in grammatical analysis to indicate a sentence that being enduring unnecessary omission or crossing out for reasons of economy. The reason can be for emphasis or style. This part of the structure which has been omitted is recoverable from a course of the context. From linguistic point of view , this elided or elliptic parts tend to be emphasizing and necessary for the omission and the elliptic part shouldn't made the sentence ambiguous as being illustrated as follows;.

2. A: Where are you going?

   B: To town.

The full form of sentence B is predictable from sentence A (' I am going to town ').

Another elucidation for ellipsis concept is set forth by Hartmann and Stork (1972: 99), who emphasize the fact that the missing words must be 'understood' or necessary to make the construction grammatically complete .

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 142-144) conceive ellipsis as 'substitution by zero'. This concept is being referred to as 'something understood' where understanding is used in the special sense of 'going without saying'. As long as the structure doesn't divulge its features, then an item is elliptic.

Furthermore, McCarthy (1991:43) states that elliptic technique refers to the omission of elements normally required by the grammar which is the speaker or writer assumes as being obvious from the context. This is not to say that every utterance which is not fully explicit is elliptical; most messages require some inputs from the context to make sense of them. Ellipsis is distinguished by the structure having some 'missing' elements, for example when there is a written sentence: Nellly liked the green tiles, I preferred the blue. For this type of the sentence, it is as nominal ellipsis because the word "tiles" involves omission of noun.

In addition, ellipsis is considered as syntactic feature of language. However, ellipsis is not connected the morphological analysis of the language. Generally, ellipsis manifests the feature of omitting or eliding some of the surface expression. As far as discourse is concerned, sentience is highly affected by the structure of the neighboring sentence. Ellipsis indicates the mooting of words where understanding can be accomplished without the repeating of the word or the omitting words don't put up any kind of ambiguity. Words can be omitted or elide as being recoverable from the element of the context (ibid).

Accordingly, the ellipted forms have to be recoverable from the context. However context is significant to avoid misunderstanding and miss communication, as in, (Ahmed & Khalaf, 2019: 3).

3. John preferred to email John, to tweet

It is obvious to the reader/ listener that the verb (prefer) is omitted form the second clause.

4. Susan loves zucchini, and Jory does

1.2 Function of Ellipsis

Generally, the function of ellipsis is to make a sentence or expression more economical. Ellipses are used for adding conciseness from an authenticity to the context. As far as these functions are concerned, ellipsis can be divided into two categories (Quirk et al., 1985:900).

1.2.1 Function of Ellipsis in Noun Phrase

Ellipsis that is used in noun phrase is called elliptical noun phrase. It comes as a result of final ellipsis which functions as modifier and head tends to be omitted. For example:

4. "You can't tax one set of people without taxing the other".

The second indication of people is omitted. It functions as post modifier because it is placed at the final position and takes place after the head of the phrase. So, the other one operates as the head of the second noun phrase (the other set people). However, to elide noun phrase needs some level of parallelism between the construction and antecedent as illustrated in the following'

5. "Although Suha is the oldest girl in the class, Tammy is the tallest".

The word 'tallest' in this sentence above is likely to be said to deny the 'oldest'. This term is appropriate when there are two constructions that include a contractive relationship. This shifting of the function to the modifier head is achieved by omission of an understanding noun as in;

6. "My own camera, like Randy's Japanese"

As has been exemplified above, the camera has been omitted. The head of this example is Randy's. This head is a genitive noun. There is considerable variety in the structural relation between the elliptical noun phrase and its antecedent noun phrase. This indication is the variable sign that generally referred to as ellipsis.

1.2.2 Function of Ellipsis in Clause

When ellipsis is used in a clause, it is called elliptical clause, as demonstrated in the following;

1.2.2.1 Ellipsis in WH-Clause

This kind of ellipsis includes 'WH-Clause' that is reduced by ellipsis to the 'WH-Word' alone. Thus, 'WH-Word' normally receives strong stress. For example:

7. "Have you ever wanted to start successful business? This book tells you how (to start a successful business) (Quirk et al.,1985:908).

This type of ellipsis is restricted to WH-Clauses. The WH-Word in the second clause (how to start a successful business) takes a strong stress. The elliptical WH-Question is found not only in dependent, but also in independent interrogative clause as follows;

8. A: "we are bound to win the prize someday"

B: "Yes, but when?"

1.2.2.2 Ellipsis in to-Infinitive Clause

The elliptical To-infinitive clause normally consists of one word. In this case, the introductory unstressed particle to, is used to be unstressed. The nucleus of the tone unit normally falls on the preceding verb or noun as follows,

9. "You can let him go if you want to (let him go)".

Dividing is also to occur as a result of ellipsis following the marginal modals like; 'ought to', and 'used to'; and following semi auxiliary construction such as, be able to, be going to, have to, and be supposed to as follows;

10. "We don't save as much money these days as used to".

Both the elliptical WH-Clause and the elliptical to-infinite clause are normally restricted to a function of complementation, as demonstrated in the following example;

11. "You will speak to whoever I tell you to (speak)".

As Swam (1996:186) states that this sentence is the complementation of tell. It is rare to find ellipsis of this type in non-final position in the sentence. Thus, ellipsis is found in whole infinitives. Furthermore, there can be a manipulation of 'to' instead of the whole infinitive of a repeated verb (and a following complement), if the meaning is clear as illustrated in the following roles swapping conversation;

12. A: "Are you and Gillian getting married?"

B: "We hope to (get married)."

Be and stative are not usually dropped as in,

13. "There are more flowers than there used to be"

"(Not . . . than there use to)"

1.3 Types of Ellipsis

There are three main types of ellipsis that are nominal ellipsis, verbal ellipsis and clausal ellipsis as being illustrated more deeply in the following;

1.3.1 Nominal Ellipsis

Nominal ellipsis is viewed by Halliday and Hasan (1976:43) who state that nominal ellipsis refers to the ellipsis within the nominal group or the common noun that is likely to be omitted and the function of head taken on by one of other elements (deictic, numerative, epithet or classifier). For more clarification for those concepts, the deictic usually a determiner, the enumerative is a numeral or other quantifier, the epithet is an adjective and the classifier is a noun. The manipulation for the deictic and numeral is more frequent that epithet and classifier. The most instances of ellipsis, therefore are those with deictic or enumerative as head. Under certain circumstances the common noun, the head, is to be elided and another element takes its function. This is called nominal ellipsis. It involves the upgrading of a word functioning as deictic, enumerative, epithet or classifier from the status of modifier to the status of head as follows;

14. "Four other Oysters followed them, and yet another four …"

The second four, which is a 'enumerative' and therefore is a modifier, is upgraded to function as 'head', similar presentation can be seen in ;

15. "Which last longer, the curved rods or the straight rods?"

16. "The straight are less likely to break."

The word 'straight; here is an epithet which can be functioning as modifier in the question yet as head noun in the responses. Both another four and the straight are elliptical nominal groups. In an elliptical nominal group, the necessary information should be supplied from one source or another which is so far mentioned. The elliptical nominal group surmises a preceding nominal group that is not elliptical. Hence, this kind is cohesive. However, there are two ways to take on the elliptical nominal group , first either by pushing down the modifier the element functioning as a head making it a modifier and add the missing head in its place, or via keeping the elliptical group as it is and add a partitive qualifier. The partitive qualifier is a relative clause or a prepositional phrase. When the elliptical nominal group designates some aggregate different form that is designated by the presupposed group, the partitive can be added as in; (Osisanwo, 2005:418)

17. A lot (of the exhibition)

18. A lot (of the paintings)

The use of the partitive is a very regular form of the English nominal group. It is obligatory when there is a quantification such as,

19. Two of my rosebushes were uprooted.

1.3.2 Verbal Ellipsis

Alongside the nominal ellipsis, there is a verbal ellipsis. According to Thomas (in McCarthy, 1991), states that verbal-groups ellipsis are echoing and auxiliary contrasting. Echoing repeats an element from the verbal group and contrasting is when the auxiliary changes, for examples;

20. A: will anyone be waiting?

B: Jim will, I should think.

This type of sentence is as verbal ellipsis because repeats an element from the verbal group that is the verb "will". For clarification the sentence,

21. The children will carry the small boxes; the adults will carry the large ones.

The verbal construction 'will carry' is supplied from the first clause to the second, this type of main-verb ellipsis. Contrasting is when the auxiliary changes, for example:

22. A: Has she remarried?

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

This sentence is verbal-group ellipsis because there is an auxiliary-changes in the sentence (the word has changes into the word will). (Stroud, 2016: 33-43)

1.3.3 Clausal Ellipsis

Clausal ellipsis contains a clause element that are to be omitted and the common elements to be elided including subject-pronoun omissions (doesn't matter, hope so, sorry, can't help you, etc.). Whole stretches of clausal components can also be omitted for examples: (Ibid: 43)

23. If you'd stayed here like I suggested, they definitely would be.

(Taken from script- dialogue transcript The Chronicles of Narnia)

This sentence is considered as clausal ellipsis because this type of sentence has some kinds of substitute for the main verb and an object pronoun, produces the form:

24-If you'd stayed here like I suggested, they definitely would be done.

1.4 Using Ellipsis

Ellipsis has two uses. It shows that text has been omitted, or it indicates a pause or a break in speech without completion.

1.4.1 Omission of Text

Elliptic techniques, which are used the omission of a portion of quoted text, are important devices in scientific analysis and other literary work because the writer often needs to quote from a source without including irrelevant material or outside phrases. (Stroud, 2016: 3)

This is an approach manipulated to use an ellipsis when omitting a word, phrase, line, paragraph, or more from a quoted passage. Ellipses

cab be used to save space or remove material that is less relevant. Ellipses are useful in getting right to the point without delay or distraction: (Ueno, 2015:22). To illustrate these elliptic procedures, here the full quotation is like,

25. "Today, after hours of careful thought, we vetoed the bill."

With ellipsis: "Today … we vetoed the bill."

Although ellipses are used in many ways, the three-dot method is the simplest. Newspapers, magazines, and books of fiction and nonfiction use various approaches as finding it suitable. Some writers and editors feel that no spaces are necessary as in; (Ibid)

26. I don't know…I'm not sure.

While others enclose the ellipsis with a space on each side as shown in the example:

I don't know … I'm not sure.

Still others make use of a space either directly before or directly after the ellipsis. For examples:

I don't know …I'm not sure.

1.4.2 Pause in Speech or Incomplete Speech

Another indication of the ellipsis is the reference for the occurrence of pause or interruption in dialogue of the literary work. This kind of ellipsis doesn't acclimatize with the linguistic principle of ellipsis and omission of the text in writing. (Stroud, 2016: 3)

Ellipsis is represented by three dot (full stop, or ellipsis points) in a row. Ellipsis indicates that words, phrase, or figure are missing. An ellipsis is used frequently with quotations. Elliptic occurrences come at the middle or at the end of a quotation, or it is likely to be used at the beginning such as. (Merchant,2004:661).

27. Kylie thought and thought … and then thought some more. "I was wondering …" Jason said, bemused.

However, spacing in ellipsis indicates the surrounding characters. In the middle, a space has to appear between the first and last ellipsis to mark the surrounding letters. If a quotation is meant to trail off (as in Jason's bemused thought), a space should be left between the last letter and the first ellipsis mark without including a full stop with the ellipsis marks (Ibid.)

1.5 The Criteria of Ellipsis

As said by Quirk (1985:884), there are five criteria for ellipsis.

a. The Elliptic Words are Precisely Recoverable

This means that there is no doubt to words to be supplied in a context where no ambiguity of reference arises. This criterion contains an ellipsis that presupposes words in a previous part of the same sentence.

For example:

28 "I am not able to help him, so I won't."

The word "able" has been ellipted in the second clause. Using ellipsis the omitted words are precisely recoverable, it does not mean to exclude

12

from ellipsis as case of genuine ambiguity, because maybe at one sentence there is one word which have two meanings.

b. The Elliptical Construction is Grammatically Defective

In many other cases, the recognition of a structural deficiency depends on a prior descriptive decision on grammar. The merits of each case must be argued on the basic of available evidence. Some structures are in some sense clearly defective but do not match the condition of precise recoverably.

For example:

29. "Thank and hello."

The word thanks can act as complete utterance, but lacking a clause structure. It does not fulfill the normal requirements of sentence hood. It is not clear; however what missing elements are left unexpressed. This suggests that the criteria of a structural deficiency cannot be usefully applied in isolation from that of precisely recoverability.

c. The Insertion of the Missing Words Result in a Grammatical Sentence

The insertion of the missing words results in a grammatical sentence, with the same meaning as the sentence.

For example:

30. "When (I was) speaking with my mother, I saw my friend come."

The insertion of the missing words in the example is first clause. The meaning of that sentence is the same as the original sentence (if the word I was is not omitted). The expression which says, with the same

meaning as the original sentence, is needed because there is always the assumption that whatever is understood the proviso of synonymy between the full and ellipted sentence, there would be no way of confining the concept of ellipsis within reasonable limits. This proviso excludes ellipsis form, in which the insertion leads to a grammatical sentence, but the meaning is slightly altered.

d. The Missing Words are Textually Recoverable

Textually recoverability is the most certain guarantee of ellipsis but since without the textual recoverability, there is usually room for disagreement on what particular word or expression has been ellipted.

For example:

31. "Like some."

Sentence above would be difficult to insist, for a situation in which a person is offered apples for instance, by just uttering the words like some? In this case, an apple is ellipted after some.

e. The Missing Words are Present in the Text in Exactly the Same Form There is an event stronger criteria within the textually recoverability category.

For example:

32. "The student might hit the bell, but I don't think he will (hit the bell)."

The ellipted expression in the example is an exact copy of the antecedent. The antecedent is the words hit the bell. These criteria (the missing words are present in the text exactly the same form) might be

subsumed under that of the third criteria (with the same meaning as the original sentence).

1.6 Syntactic of Ellipsis

Elliptical structures usually play an important role in fundamental ontological debates in linguistics. The logic is clear in the concept that if the parallelism or identity conditions found in ellipsis resolution require reference to certain kinds of objects, then our theories of linguistic competence must countenance objects of that kind. These are the reasons for elliptical structures to be obvious. In each case, the usual form meaning correspondence appears to break down the meaning in ellipsis without form. In other words, there have been two answers to the puzzle posed by ellipsis structures: the nonstructural and the structural. The nonstructural approach responds by supplementing the theory of meanings, creating or exploiting devices that can generate meanings in the absence of syntactic structure. (Jawad, 2017: 14)

The structural approach exerts the burden on the syntax, and supposes that the meanings are derived by the mechanisms at play in other contexts; it characterizes itself from the nonstructural approach by positing structure which is not pronounced. Within structural approaches, two main techniques of analyzing can be distinguished: those that propose essentially ordinary syntax, subject to some kind of 'deletion' to render the syntax unpronounced, and those that posit a null lexical element which is replaced or identified at some level of representation not relevant to the pronunciation. These various tacks can be distinguished by their answers to the following questions (Winkler, 2005:101).

Ueno (2015:72) refers to the way in which one decides whether some piece of syntactic structure is or isn't there, particularly when that structure in any case does not lead to any pronounced difference? Indirectly, detecting and arguing for such 'missing' structures is analogous to searching for and determining the properties of a black hole that one can tell it's there only by its effects on surrounding material.

The logic for elided structure is similar. There can be found effects that seem to be due to missing material, there is an argument that such structure exists. In other words, if effects are found to be attributed to properties of structure in similar non-elliptical cases, but structure is considered to be internal to the ellipsis site. Structural approaches are based on what call connectivity effects; nonstructural approaches take their priority from non-connectivity effects. Connectivity effects takes place when some part of the clause that consists the ellipsis demonstrates 'connectivity' and supposed, unpronounced part; non-connectivity is when this does not occur, despite a prior expectation of that. (Jawad, 2017: 14-15)

Chapter Two

Ellipsis in Spoken Language

Sentence in English contains subject and predicate. The subject is often an overt one. However, it can be elided especially in conversation (Biber et al. 1999: 1048).

However, according to Hendriks (2004:133) pointed out the ellipsis can be found when there is a specific mention so there is no need for repeating the words and he provide conversation example such as ;

- A / Where are you going?
- B/ to dance.

According to Collin William (1990:399), stated that ellipsis often takes place in conversation, reply, question and agreement. Furthmore the subject ellipsis occurs quite frequently in informal contexts.in

A. Ellipsis in Question:

This type of ellipsis is regarded to be common and popular in question that shows that there is something interesting said by someone. These kinds of question always use a pronoun as their subject as follows'

- A: "He gets free meals."
- B: "Does he?"
- A: "I've checked everyone."
- B:"Have you now?"
- A: "They starting up a new arts centre there."
- B: "Are they?"

It is important to state that the manipulation of ellipsis in question is done when there is a context and this come text makes it clear what are the deleted parts really mean. Generally,, this question can have just a WH-word as follows;

- A: "There is someone coming?"
- B: "Who?"
- A: "It is opening on the 31st of this month."
- B: "Where?"

Also, there is another type of question that can consist of only few words. In this case, the context can expose the ellipsis clear or what a certain elided parts mean. Short question are often used to express the situation of surprise or to offer something to somebody as in;

- A: "Does she drink? Heavily, I mean."
- B: "Drink? No, she never touches the stuff."
- A: "He's going to die, you see?"
- B: "Die?"

B. Ellipsis in Replies

As a result of replying back to any kind of WH- question, there is trend for using one word or a group of words instead of using full long sentence. This orientation is often used to avoid the process of repeating words as being in question as follows;

- A; "What's your name?"
- B: "Remy."

As far as the reply above is concerned, Remy is one world reply being favorable that replying with full sentence as "my name is Remy. However sometime there can be using of an adjeucnt or ab adverb for

degree to be in favor of using full sentence in answer of a yes / no question as in the following example;

- A: "Are you angry?"
- B: "Very."
- A: "Do you get angry with me?"
- B: "Not quite."
- A: "Do you think I believe him?"
- B: "Maybe." (Ibid)

C. Ellipsis in Agreement:

Another trend of using ellipsis is spoken to reflect an agreement with something that has been just said. This ellipsis is also common in the process of saying that it also applies to someone or something else. One approach of doing thus type ellipsis is by using the word "too" after an auxiliary or form of the verb to be as follows;

- A: "I like flower."
- B: "Yes, I do too."
- A: "I find something special."
- B: "So do I." (Masniati, 2011: 34)

Furthermore, ellipsis can also be used when to show an agreement with something negative that has just been said. Moreover , it is used to state that it applies to someone or something else and this can be done by using an auxiliary for of the verb to 'be' flowed by 'not' or 'either' as follows,

- A: "I don't know."
- B: "I don't either."
- A: "I don't like her."
- B: "Nor do I."

- A: "I'm not kidding."

- B: "Neither am I."

The above manifestation, the ellipsis is the omission of the word, phrase or clause where the deleted can be recovered from the context of conversation. Generally, the ellipsis in conversation is generally related to the question or the answers. ((Ibid: 35)

Conclusion

This paper falls into two chapters. The first chapter presents the linguistic concept of ellipsis with type and the definition of ellipsis according to various viewpoints. The second chapter introduces the use of this concept in conversation and how it is used in expresses intended meaning in conversation. Finally, there is a conclusion to sum up the finding.

Ellipsis in conversation turns to be parts of the speaker's economy and the listener's cooperation of swapping role in communication. The most common elided part in conversation is the subject. In conversation, ellipsis generally occur in question, reply and agreement. In question indicates that something interesting is being said and the subject usually takes the form of a pronoun. This kind of conversational ellipsis is very popular. This type also indicates a surprise by using short questions and it is determined by the use of the context. However, to reply for *Wh-* question is preferable to reply in one or more words that using compete grammatical sentence, in conversation the speaker tends to maintain easy and cooperative communication which is achieved by using such ellipsis. It has also concluded that ellipsis in conversation is connected with agreement for something or being applied for something or someone. Ellipsis is recovered from the context and it is usually done in combination of 'auxiliary' verb or verb to 'be' with 'nor', either', to replace complete ling sentence. Hence, the use of ellipsis can be classified under language economy and cooperative swapping, furthermore, context is very important in recovering the deleted part.

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