Parameterized [E]llipsis:
An argument from German determiner sharing

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UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG

Marie-Luise Schwarzer

★ 1 minute rundown ★

- New analysis of **determiner ellipsis** in gapped coordinations.
- ⇒ Proposal: [E]-deletion with licensing via Agree
- Implication: **parameterization** of [E] (upward/downward)

Determiner sharing constructions (DS)

- DS = symmetric coordination + gapping + omission of a determiner/quantifier (McCawley 1993 *et seq.*). DS is acceptable, but marked and not information-structurally neutral (Schwarzer 2020).

(1) Jede Gräfin   mag Lavendel und jede Königin (*mag) Flieder.
every countess likes lavender and every queen likes lilac

Generalizations:

1. DS is parasitic on gapping (McCawley 1993, Lin 2002 a.o.).

(2) **Alle** Mädchen spielen Klavier und ___ Jungen spielen Geige.
all girls   play piano and boys   play violin
only interpretation: *"All girls play the piano and boys in general play the violin."*

2. The shared quantifier must be initial in its conjunct. Any material overtly intervening between the coordinator and the quantifier makes DS impossible.

(3) *?[Ein Teleskop]   haben **viele** Kollegen   Petra geschenkt und **[einen**
a   telescope.acc have many colleagues.nom P   given   and a
Römertopf] haben viele Freunde   Petra geschenkt.
clay.pot   have many friends.nom P   given
intended: *"Many colleagues have given a telescope to Petra and many friends have given him a clay pot."*

3. DS can never skip elements. A prenominal modifier can only be deleted a) if it is the first one or b) if it's left/higher neighbor has been deleted.

(4) **Jeder zweite** Schüler spielt Geige und **jeder** zweite Lehrer spielt Klavier
every second student plays violin and every second teacher plays piano

4. Cardinal numbers and the indefinite article cannot be shared (German, English (Lin 2002, MacAdams 2012 a.o.), Spanish (Arregi & Centeno 2005), Korean (Kim 2011, Citko 2006, H. J. Lee, p.c.), and Dutch dialects (Ackema & Szendrői 2002)).

- The relation between DS and gapping has the **same properties as syntactic Agree** (phase mates, c-command, Minimality, Chomsky 2000).
  - **Phase** condition: The elided determiner and the gapped verb have to be **phase mates**. Assuming that gapping licenses DS, gapping in the matrix clause cannot license DS in the embedded clause because of the intervening phase boundary.
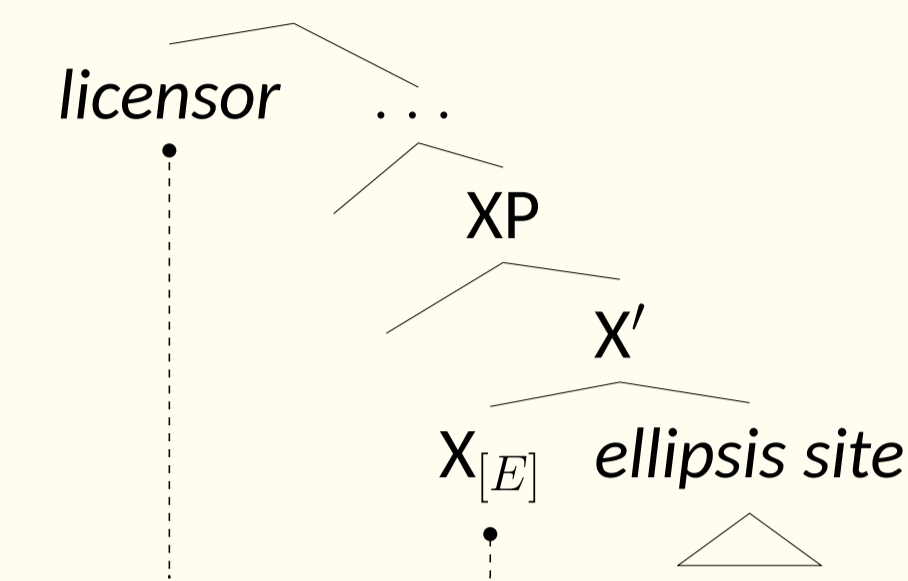
(5) [$_{CP}$ Kein Mädchen sollte   Klavier spielen,] findet sie, und [$_{CP}$ *(kein) Junge
no   girl   should piano play   thinks she and   no   boy
sollte   Geige spielen], findet er.
should violin play   thinks he

Analysis

⇒ Gapping **licenses** DS via Agree

Proposal

DS is a type of **[E]-deletion** (Merchant 2001, 2004), licensed by Agree with gapping-[E] (Aelbrecht 2010, (6)).

- New type [E$_{DS}$] **differs** from [E$_{sluice}$] in **systematic ways**:
  - **direction**: [E$_{sluice}$] marks an element in its c-command domain for non-pronunciation; [E$_{DS}$] is "upward": it deletes an element that c-commands it
  - **locality**: [E$_{sluice}$] deletes the most minimal element (= complement); [E$_{DS}$] deletes the most anti-local element (as far away from it as possible, but still within the same phase)
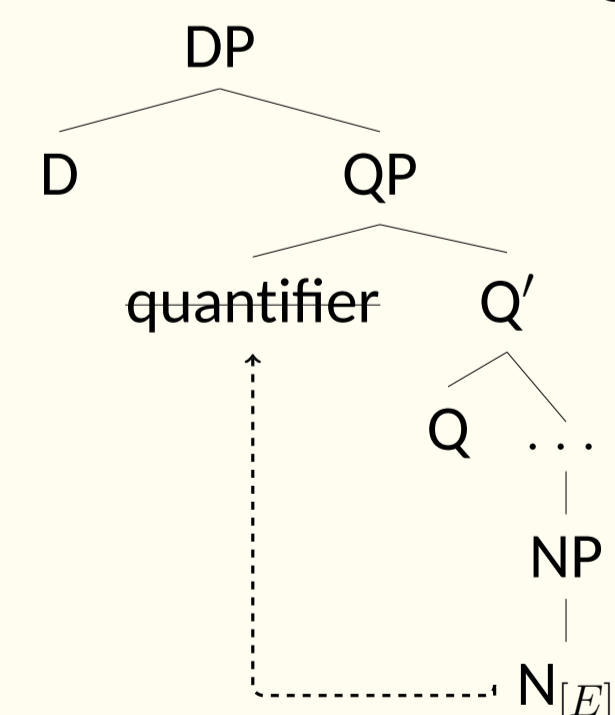
(6) *Ellipsis and licensing (Aelbrecht 2010)*

(7) *Sluicing-[E]*

downward local

[E] XP

(8) *DS-[E]*

XP

upward anti-local
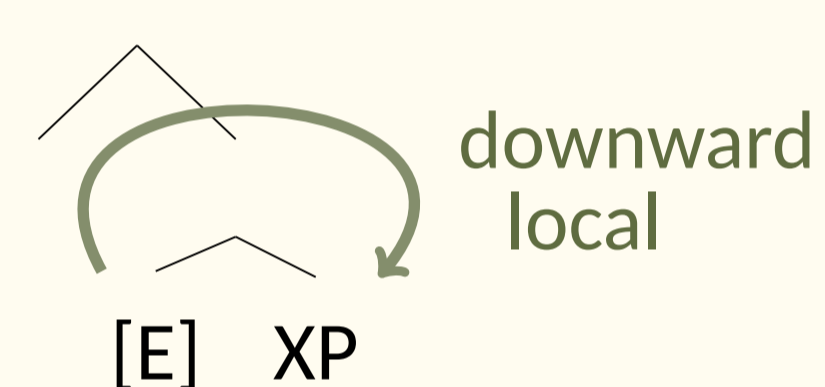
[E]
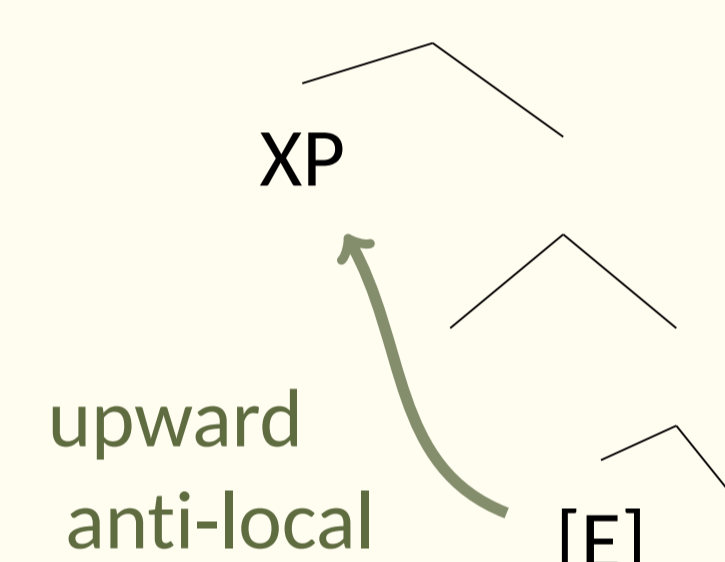
(9) *Definition of [E$_{DS}$]*
a. CAT: [E]
b. INF: [uFin]
c. SEL: [uN*]
d. PHON: $\varphi(X_{[-c\text{-com},-loc]}) \rightarrow \emptyset/[E]$

[E$_{DS}$] is hosted on N^0, has to be licensed by agreeing with Fin^0, and instructs PF to leave a [–c-command, –local] element unpronounced.
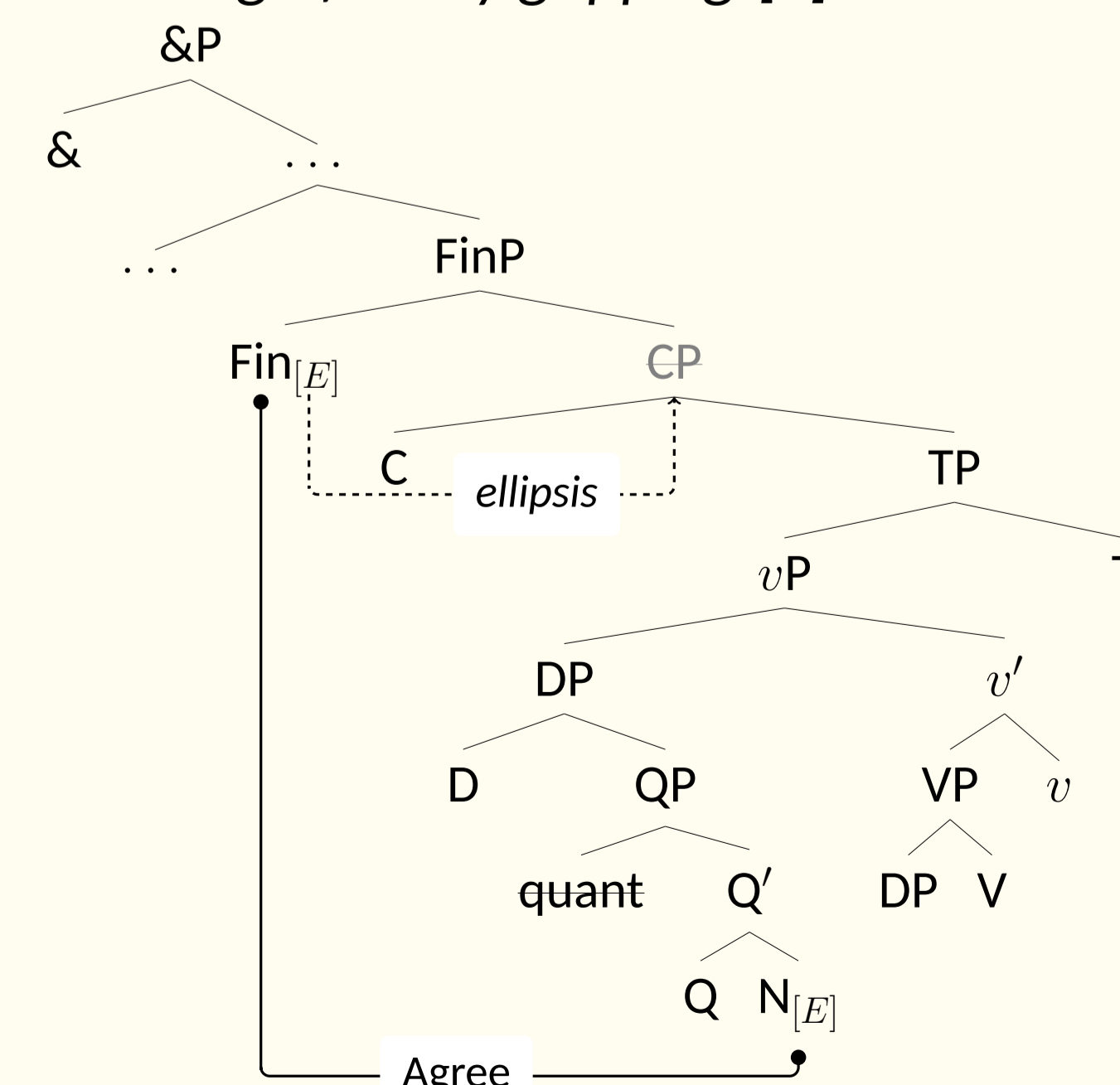
Derivation:

(10) *Determiner sharing*

DP
D   QP
quantifier   Q'
Q . . .
NP
N$_{[E]}$

❶ [E$_{DS}$] marks the most anti-local, c-commanding element for non-pronunciation

❷ DS must be licensed by gapping
⇒ Agree between [E$_{DS}$] on N^0 and [E$_{gap}$] on Fin^0

❸ derivational time bomb: if [E$_{DS}$] can't agree with [E$_{gap}$], the structure becomes ungrammatical

❹ [E$_{gap}$]: deletion of CP-complement

(11) *Licensing of DS by gapping-[E]*

&P
& . . .
. . . FinP
Fin$_{[E]}$ CP
C *ellipsis*   TP
vP   T
DP v'
D QP   VP v
quant Q'   DP V
Q N$_{[E]}$
Agree

Implications and extensions

- If this is on the right track, [E] could be more flexible than previously thought.

Generalized [E]-ellipsis

Within phase π, [E] on head H marks an element ε in π, ε [α c-command, α local], for non-pronunciation.

- The [E] feature can be **parameterized**: some ellipses target [+/+] elements, others [–/–] elements.
- Are the other patterns [α c-command, –α local] also possible? It seems so:

[– c-command, +local] in complex modifiers

- Cardinal numbers cannot be shared in DS on their own, (12-a). However, as part of a complex of modifiers, they can be, (12-b).

(12) a. #Zwölf Mädchen machen Tee und zwölf Jungen machen Kaffee.
twelve girls   make tea and twelve boys   make coffee
b. Alle 12 Mädchen machen Tee und alle 12 Jungen machen Kaffee.
all 12 girls   make tea and all 12 boys   make coffee

- This is reminiscent of the **Principle of Minimal Compliance** (Richards 1998, 2001), (13).

(13) *Principle of Minimal Compliance* (Preminger 2019)
Once a probe P has successfully targeted a goal G, any other goal G' that meets the same featural search criterion, and is dominated or c-commanded by G (= dominated by the mother of G), is accessible to subsequent probing by P irrespective of locality conditions.

- Low, local elements can only be elided after deletion of higher, non-local elements. Thus, in (12), [E$_{DS}$] can target *"zwölf"* in a second round of application, even though that element is usually too low.
- For [+c-command, – local] (in postnominal PPs), see handout.

- If Agree in general can apply **downwards and upwards** (Himmelreich 2017), this parameterization of [E] is expected.

Conclusion

DS is a niche phenomenon but can potentially give us insights into the core properties of ellipses. It shows how two different ellipsis processes interact through syntactic licensing, and a potential instantiation of Minimal Compliance in ellipsis. The analysis explicitly identifies [E]-deletion as an Agree operation with all the relevant properties.

Selected References. **Aelbrecht (2010)** *The syntactic licensing of ellipsis.* **Himmelreich (2017)** Case matching effects in free relatives and parasitic gaps, PhD thesis. **Johnson (2000)** Few dogs eat Whiskas or cats Alpo, UMOP. **Lin (2002)** Coordination and sharing at the interfaces, PhD thesis. **McCawley (1993)** Gapping with shared operators. *Proceedings of BLS 19.* **Merchant (2001)** *The syntax of silence.* **Merchant (2004)** Fragments and ellipsis. *Linguistics and Philosophy 27.* **Richards (1998)** The principle of minimal compliance. *LI 29.*