

The interaction between verb movement and ellipsis

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In this talk, we will provide much needed empirical support for the idea that ellipsis can bleed verb movement (Lasnik 1999, Merchant 2001). The evidence comes from the behaviour of the interrogative suffix in Hungarian and from tense and evidentiality markers in Turkish.

The Hungarian facts to be presented involve non-*wh*-sluicing, in which the remnant left behind by ellipsis is a focus phrase. As Van Craenenbroeck and Lipták (2006) has shown, ellipsis in this context affects not the complement of C° (as in English), but rather of the complement of the lower Foc° -head, in a configuration shown in (1'):

- (1) János meghívott egy lányt, de nem tudtam hogy ANNÁT.
John invited a girl but not I.knew COMP Anna
'John invited a girl, but I didn't know that it was Anna.'
- (1') ... [_{CP} spec [_{C°} *hogy*] [_{FocP} ANNÁT Foc° [_{HP}...]]]

In such non-*wh*-sluicing contexts, the interrogative yes/no suffix *-e* shows special behaviour. While in non-elliptical embedded clauses this suffix obligatorily shows up on the verb (cf. 2), in sluicing contexts it appears on the remnant (cf. 3):

- (2) Nem tudom, hogy Annát meghívta*(-e) János.
not I.know COMP Anna invited*(-Q) János
'I don't know if János invited Anna.'
- (3) János meghívott egy lányt, de nem tudom hogy ANNÁT*(-e).
John invited a girl but not I.know COMP Anna-Q
'John invited a girl, but I don't know if it was Anna.'

We will argue that this pattern instantiates a case of verb movement bled by ellipsis. The *-e* suffix occupies Foc° in non-elliptical clauses and triggers verb movement to Foc° . In elliptical clauses, the verb does not raise to Foc° and the interrogative suffix is forced to attach to the focal remnant in specFocP :

- (4) ... [_{CP} spec [_{C°} *hogy*] [_{FocP} ANNÁT [_{Foc°} -e] [_{HP} ~~meghívott~~]]

The supporting evidence from Turkish come from the realm of Tense and evidentiality markers. Some sluiced *wh*-phrases in Turkish can be suffixed with a Tense or an evidentiality morpheme, while in non-elliptical clauses, these morphemes are always found on the verb (Ince 2006):

- (5) Dün biri sen-i ara-mış-tı, ama kim-di hatırla-mı-yor-um.
yesterday someone_{NOM} you_{ACC} call-EVID-PST-3S but who-PST remember-NEG-PROG-1S
'Yesterday someone called you, but I don't remember who.'
- (6) Dün kim(*di) sen-i ara-mış-tı, hatırla-mı-yor-um.
yesterday who_{NOM}-PST you_{ACC} call-EVID-PST-3S remember-NEG-PROG-1S
'I don't remember who called you yesterday.'

For these facts we will argue, following Ince, that the verb in non-elliptical clauses moves to an $\text{Evid}^\circ/\text{T}^\circ$ head. When sluicing happens, Turkish deletes a lower projection (which we will identify as AspP), and bleeds verb movement to the higher $\text{Evid}^\circ/\text{T}^\circ$. As a result, the tense and evidentiality morphemes shows up on the *wh*-phrase remnants in elliptical contexts.

At the end of the talk we will look at the crosslinguistic scene of the interaction between verb movement and ellipsis and we will offer speculations as to what determines whether in a language verb movement is bled by ellipsis or not.

References

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