

A PRAGMATIC AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ELLIPSIS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK DISCOURSE

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Abstract: This study examines ellipsis as a linguistic mechanism that balances grammatical economy with communicative clarity. By synthesizing the theories of Hartmann, Stork, Halliday, Hasan, and McCarthy, the article explores how omitted elements are recovered through context. A comparative look at Uzbek linguistics reveals that ellipsis and "incomplete speech" function as synonyms to enhance communication speed. The findings suggest that ellipsis is not merely an absence of words, but a strategic presence of "zero-elements" that rely on shared knowledge between interlocutors.

Introduction

In the study of linguistics, the efficiency of a language is often measured by how much it can convey with the least amount of effort. This is the core of ellipsis. According to Hartmann and Stork (1972), ellipsis involves the omission of words that are inherently understood from the overall meaning. While these words are "missing," they remain grammatically mandatory; without their implied presence, the sentence would collapse structurally.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) evolved this concept by defining ellipsis as "substitution by zero." In their view, the speaker replaces a specific linguistic item with nothing, but the "gap" remains visible to the listener through context. Furthermore, McCarthy (1991) emphasizes that for an omission to qualify as an ellipsis, the missing elements must be precisely recoverable. This article aims to analyze how this "silent architecture" functions across English and Uzbek languages.

Methods

The study employs a comparative qualitative analysis. The methodology involves:

1. **Theoretical Review:** Analyzing foundational definitions of ellipsis from Western linguistic traditions (1972–1991).
2. **Cross-Linguistic Comparison:** Evaluating the application of ellipsis in English noun phrases versus Uzbek sentential structures.
3. **Contextual Analysis:** Examining literary excerpts from authors like A. Qahhor and traditional Uzbek proverbs to identify the relationship between omission and situational context.

Results and Data Analysis

3.1 Nominal and Structural Economy in English

In English, ellipsis frequently occurs within the noun phrase, allowing for a streamlined flow of information. A primary example is: “*You can’t tax one set of people without taxing the other.*”

Here, the recovery of the word "set" is instantaneous. The results show that the brain uses the "Common Ground" (shared knowledge) to bypass redundant repetition. The mental lexicon retrieves the missing head noun based on the preceding parallel structure.

3.2. The Uzbek Perspective: Incomplete vs. Elliptical

In Uzbek linguistics, the distinction between "elliptical" and "incomplete speech" is virtually non-existent; they are treated as synonyms. The study of Uzbek texts reveals that inaccuracy in structure is compensated by the situation (*vaziyat*).

- Textual Ellipsis: “*Kanal. Katta kanal. O’tgan yili chiqardik*” (A. Qahhor). The object of "chiqardik" is omitted because the physical or textual environment makes it obvious.
- Proverbial Ellipsis: “*Olam quyosh bilan yorug’ — odam ilm bilan.*” In this context, the predicate *yorug’* (is bright) is dropped in the second clause to maintain poetic meter and balance.

3.3. Phonetic vs. Grammatical Ellipsis: A Divergence

A significant divergence was found between European and Uzbek scholars regarding the boundaries of the term. While some European traditions categorize sound or syllable dropping as "phonetic ellipsis," Uzbek linguists like F. Ibragimova argue that phonetic changes are separate phenomena. For an ellipsis to exist in the Uzbek school of thought, it must remain a grammatical and semantic event where a whole unit of meaning is bypassed.

Discussion

4.1. The Pragmatics of Inference

The data suggests that ellipsis serves as a bridge between formal grammar and pragmatic intent. As McCarthy suggested, the success of an ellipsis depends entirely on the listener's ability to perform inference. This is a cognitive process where the listener fills the "zero-slot" using:

1. Anaphoric reference: Looking back at what was just said.
2. Exophoric reference: Looking at the physical surroundings (the situational context).

4.2. Conciseness vs. Emotional Urgency (The Anti-Ellipsis)

The primary function of ellipsis is the Principle of Economy—speeding up communication. However, this study finds that its opposite, anti-ellipsis (the deliberate inclusion or repetition of elements), is used to increase emotional tension.

In texts where detailed descriptions are provided—such as the habits of a religious figure like Mullah Norkozi—the avoidance of ellipsis serves to build a vivid, cumulative emotional effect.

While an elliptical version would be faster, the "full" version provides character depth and stylistic weight.

Conclusion

Ellipsis is a sophisticated tool of "silent communication." It proves that language is not just a set of spoken sounds, but a shared psychological map. Whether in English legalistic phrasing or Uzbek folk sayings, the ellipsis allows for a streamlined exchange of ideas. From the point of view of formal size and stylistic intention, ellipsis and anti-ellipsis are inversely related, together forming the balance required for effective human expression.

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