

MA GRAMMAR / WEEK 03

Ellipsis across structures

MA Grammar · Week 3
Quirk et al., Chapter 12

Where does the reduction occur?

Opening contrasts

Rana has the first edition.
Omar has the second.

Rana has read it. Omar has too.

Today's goals

Locate nominal and clausal gaps.
Identify stranded operators.
Distinguish form from conversational function.

Nominal ellipsis preserves dependents

Two constructed cases

We compared the first draft and the second.

We requested three copies but received only two.

Diagnostic questions

Which noun is recoverable?

Which determiners or modifiers remain?

Does the fuller NP preserve the comparison?

A stranded operator stays overt

They have checked it, and we have too.

They will check it, and we will too.

They checked it, and we did too.

The retained operator carries tense, agreement or modality.

Infinitival ellipsis has its own anchor

To remains

I have not revised it, but I intend to.

Recover revise it after to.

To may also be absent

I will help if you want.

The intended help is contextually supplied.
The precise analysis depends on the verb
and construction.

Worked analysis · A question–answer pair

A: Which version did you use? B: The second.

The answer supplies the focused noun phrase, with version recoverable.

A fuller clause is I used the second version.

Nominal recovery and clausal response expansion are separate layers.

Special contexts need specific tests

Coordination: Rana read the article, and Omar the book.

Comparison: The second report is longer than the first.

Appended response: I will revise it, if necessary.

Identify each construction before proposing a full recovery.

Check the difference between do and do so

Case A

The tutor checked the sources.
We did too.

Case B

The tutor checked the sources.
We did so too.

Workshop 1 · Locate each gap

1. I read the first chapter but not the second.
2. Salma has checked the list, and I have too.
3. I have not applied, but I plan to.
4. Noor wants to present, and Huda does too.

State the retained material and a grammatical full form.

Drill key · Choose the right domain

Nominal / infinitival

1: second chapter. A wider clausal expansion is also possible.

3: plan to apply. To remains overt.

Finite predication

2: have checked the list.

4: does want to present.

Recover want as well as present in item 4.

Workshop 2 · A fragment in interaction

Student: “Between one and two.”

Professor: “Between one and two? Anybody think they could beat that?”

Authentic extract · Paul Bloom, PSYC 110, Lecture 8
Open Yale Courses · speaker labels shortened

The topic is the age of a first memory.

What is recovered from context, and what is overtly repeated?

Fragments are interpretable in context

The student supplies an age range, rather than a full clause.

The professor repeats the fragment before asking a new question.

Anybody think... plausibly omits does in the spoken question.

That refers to the reported age range or its associated claim.

Text laboratory · At the library

Constructed teaching data

- 1 A: Have you read the revised chapter?
- 2 B: I have, but only the first half.
- 3 A: I read the first version, and Lina the second.
- 4 B: I plan to compare them, but not today.
- 5 A: The new version is more detailed than the old.
- 6 B: The introduction is, but the conclusion is not.

Annotate at two structural levels

Mark every plausible nominal and clausal reduction.

Show what remains after each operator or infinitival marker.

Explain the contribution of only, but and not.

Identify one comparative analysis that is not settled by the wording alone.

Suggested analysis of the library exchange

Lines 1–3

I have: read the revised chapter.
Only the first half: a restricted response
supplement.
Lina the second: Lina read the second
version.

Lines 4–6

Not today: a temporal restriction.
The old: the old version.
The introduction is: more detailed.
The conclusion is not: more detailed.

Challenge · Avoid counting imagined gaps

Claim: plan to compare them contains infinitival ellipsis.

Identify every overt verb in that expression.

Contrast it with I have not compared them, but I plan to.

Exit response · Explain a new contrast

The abstract is clear, and the introduction is too.

The abstract is clear, and the introduction is equally so.

Identify what is absent or substituted in each second conjoin.

Portfolio 1 · Revise an analysis

Select a problem from Weeks 1–3 and write 500–600 words.

Include data, a source record, diagnostics and one alternative analysis.

Explain one change you made after feedback.

Next week: Quirk et al., §§13.1–42.