This book is about ellipsis. It begins with a superb introduction by the editors that not only gives a summary of the contributions chosen for the volume, but also a very comprehensive historical perspective on the subject. This proves very helpful, because accounts of ellipsis are often tied to the theoretical tenets in vogue at the time of writing. For example, the notion of PF, that of reconstruction or that of focus, have undergone many subtle, but important revisions over the years. Consequently, ellipsis can be interpreted or analysed very differently today in comparison to earlier models. Schwabe and Winkler nicely summarise the three central questions that are relevant for the analysis of ellipsis: (i) Does ellipsis have internal structure?; (ii) How is ellipsis interpreted?; (iii) What role does information structure play in the structural representation and interpretation of ellipsis? The topic of omitted structures is notoriously difficult and the editors must be commended for clarifying the theoretical and empirical issues at the outset of the book.

The volume is divided into three main sections: I. ‘Towards the exploration of PF-deletion accounts’; II. ‘From the computational system to the syntax-semantics interface’; III. ‘The semantic component and its
connection to focus and discourse structure’. The book also contains a language index and a subject index. The first part contains papers by Christopher Kennedy, Jason Merchant, Chris Wilder and Katharina Hartmann. As the title of the section suggests, these papers propose PF accounts of ellipsis. The second main section of the book includes articles by Caterina Donati, Winfried Lechner, Uli Sauerland, Luis López and Susanne Winkler. These papers investigate the question of whether a special process of ellipsis must be added to the system of grammar or whether the existing means are sufficient to account for the different kinds of ellipsis. The third and last main section comprises chapters by Daniel Hardt, Maribel Romero, Kerstin Schwabe, Satoshi Tomioka and Petra Gretsch. This section of the book concentrates on the relevance of focus and more generally discourse configurations for the analysis of ellipsis.

The first paper is by Christopher Kennedy and is entitled ‘Ellipsis and syntactic representation’. It reviews the well-known arguments for the idea that elided constituents have a syntactic representation. Taking two instances of elliptical constructions, namely VP-ellipsis and pseudogapping he shows that these are subject to the well-known constraints on syntactic representations (parasitic gaps, binding principles, and island constraints). On the other hand, so-called attributive comparative deletion shows that the elided constituent is insensitive to Ross’ Left Branch Constraint (LBC), suggesting that perhaps not all elliptical phenomena have a syntactic representation. On the assumption that the LBC applies not at LF, but at PF, the puzzle is solved.
Assuming that the LBC holds of morpho-phonological properties of lexical items at PF, the idea is that the constraint is inactive if ellipsis has taken place, precisely because ellipsis does not involve morpho-phonological properties of lexical items at PF.

Like Kennedy’s paper, Jason Merchant’s contribution entitled ‘Subject-auxiliary inversion in comparatives and PF output constraints’ tackles the case of ellipsis on the assumption that it has PF relevance. The paper establishes the novel generalization that Subject-Auxiliary inversion in comparative clauses requires the co-presence of VP-ellipsis. Merchant argues that this peculiar fact follows from a disjunctive formulation of an ECP that applies at PF. The analysis relies on the idea that there is an intermediate trace of the A'-moved comparative operator involved in the construction to the edge of VP. This trace is subject to the ECP at PF and it interacts with the head movement that is also involved in subject-auxiliary inversion. The intermediate trace is unlicensed in structures with I-to-C movement. However, VP-ellipsis repairs the violation, an idea that has independently been proposed for other ellipsis structures.

The next contribution is by Chris Wilder and is entitled ‘Antecedent-containment and ellipsis’. Wilder discusses Antecedent-contained deletion (ACD) constructions in the light of new empirical evidence from sentences involving ‘wide scope’ ellipsis. The claims are that: (i) ACDs involve A'-movement; (ii) an independent PF principle is at work (“A VP-ellipsis site E
may not be linearly contained in its antecedent site’); (iii) not all cases of alleged ACDs are indeed ACDs, but are rather the results of pseudogapping.

Katarina Hartmann’s paper ‘Background matching in right node raising constructions’ argues that right-node raising in German is not derived by movement, but by phonetic deletion of the right node raising target in the first conjunct. Hartmann also argues that the main condition for phonetic deletion is a parallel focus structure of the two conjuncts, which requires syntactic parallelism, as well as a symmetric distribution of pitch accents.

The second part of the book opens with Caterina Donati’s contribution called ‘Merge copy’. The idea that the paper develops is that movement and ellipsis are very similar: both are syntactic operations creating a copy that gets deleted at PF. The differences between movement and ellipsis are numerous however. To account for the differences, the authors suggests that while movement involves feature agreement and merge copy, the case of ellipsis is simpler: it involves only merge copy. The second part of the paper explores some empirical and conceptual consequences of this proposal.

The next paper is by Winfried Lechner. It is called ‘Phrase structure paradoxes and ellipsis’ and pursues two main objectives: (i) to introduce evidence for a remnant movement analysis of phrase structure paradoxes which arise with VP-fronting; (ii) to argue for the idea that (VP-) adjuncts can be merged in at least two distinct positions, and that the actual insertion point is determined by economy conditions. Two main conclusions are given: (i) merge, like move, is regulated by an economy metric (a new and interesting
(i) economy cannot be local, but must instead be evaluated on the basis of larger information units such as phases.

Uli Sauerland’s paper ‘Unpronounced heads in relative clauses’ argues that English relative clauses exhibit a general structural ambiguity. Either the relativized head raises from an internal position to that of the relative clause or it is base-generated in its surface position. It is further argued that when the relativized head is base-generated in its surface position there is an elided internal head. The structural ambiguity thesis allows the author to account for the well-known reconstruction facts related to relative clauses and the different readings one obtains depending on the relative clause one is dealing with. The conclusion of the paper is that a distinction should be made between the non-pronunciation of lower copies in a movement chain and non-pronunciation of PF-deleted material in ellipsis phenomena.

The volume continues with an article by Luis López and Suzanne Winkler entitled ‘Variation at the syntax-semantics interface: Evidence from gapping’. The authors investigate gapping in English and argue that it is in fact a focus construction. The construction is the result of two movement operations: (i) remnant movement to a stacked A’-position in the coordinated vP; (ii) subsequent ATB-movement of the verb. The first type of movement is a version of contrastive focus movement while the second displacement corresponds to the information structural function of defocusing. The paper closes the second main part of the book, and since it partly deals with focus,
the paper is a nice transition from the second main section to the third main section of the book which is on the relevance of discourse structure to ellipsis.

The third section of the volume begins with a paper by Daniel Hardt entitled ‘Ellipsis and the structure of discourse’. Hardt proposes that the matching conditions on ellipsis should be applied in accordance with discourse structure. He considers two versions of this matching condition and shows that both versions suffer from empirical limitations. The problems are solved if we take into account the discourse structure requirement. The author shows that the effect of this condition can clearly be observed in examples involving multiple ellipsis, where discourse structure plays a key role determining possible readings.

Next is Maribel Romero’s contribution ‘Correlate restriction and definiteness in ellipsis’. Romero’s paper is concerned with two characteristics of certain elliptical constructions: a restriction on possible correlates (or antecedent phrases) for the remnants of ellipsis, and a definiteness effect that makes non-definite phrases behave semantically as definites in ellipsis sites. The author shows that these two properties are found only in some ellipsis contruals, namely in German reduced conditionals and in sluicing, and she shows that they do not apply to the majority of known ellipsis types, for example VP-ellipsis and gapping. Romero proposes a unified account of the presence versus absence of such characteristics across ellipsis types, taking as the key ingredient the effects of focus in ellipsis and its interaction with the
general semantics of each construal (i.e. conditionals, interrogative clauses and declarative clauses).

Kerstin Schwabe’s piece is entitled ‘F-marking and specificity in sluicing constructions’ and shows that in various sluicing types, the WH-phrase in the sluicing sentence together with its associate must be F-marked. The associate must be an indefinite expression that must allow a specific interpretation. Specificity is defined as an anchoring relation between the discourse referent introduced by the indefinite expression and a discourse-given item.

We move on to Satoshi Tomioka’s contribution called ‘The semantics of Japanese null pronouns and its cross-linguistic implications’. Tomioka shows that phonologically silent pronouns in Japanese receive all sorts of semantic interpretations. The author argues that this diversity of interpretation is tied to the fact NPs in Japanese do not require a determiner. It is argued that the semantic tools required for the interpretation of such underspecified NPs can be used to derive the semantic variability of phonological silent pronouns.

Petra Gretsch closes off the volume with a paper entitled ‘Omission impossible?: Topic and focus in focal ellipsis’. In her article, Gretsch argues that the view on ellipsis according to which only redundant, backgrounded material can be omitted from a sentence is only partly correct. The paper introduces cases of focal ellipsis such as the following question-answer pair:
A: Munich is situated in Bavaria and Kleve in? B: I think in Northrhine-Westphalia. Here we have omission of parts of the syntactic focus domain.
The paper concentrates on the syntactic analysis and the semantic/pragmatic interpretation of focal ellipsis and shows how it differs from more traditional background ellipsis.

Very nicely edited, this book is a must for anyone interested or working on ellipsis. The volume introduces a wide range of approaches to the topic and should be useful to the researcher and the advanced student of elided structures.
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