

# Ellipsis (in Romance languages)

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## 1. Introduction: Approaches to Ellipsis

A pervasive goal of linguistic theory concerns the complex and manifold sound-meaning interactions of natural languages. Perhaps the hallmark of such interactions is ellipsis, a phenomenon whereby a chunk of an utterance is interpreted, but not heard. Thus, in a sentence like 1, the second clause (which illustrates a sluicing case, see §4.1. below) contains a *wh*-expression (*how many*) that stands as the remnant of a process that removes phonetic information that can be retrieved from the preceding discourse.

(1) Judas betrayed his friends for some pieces of silver, but I don't remember how many.

The literature on ellipsis over the last decades is vast, including books, doctoral dissertations and many handbook papers/volumes (cf. Gallego, 2011; Brucart & MacDonald, 2012; van Craenenbroeck & Merchant, 2013; Yoshida *et al.*, 2014; van Craenenbroeck & Temmerman, in press; and references therein).

There are, at least, three key questions worth addressing about this topic: (i) under what parallelism conditions does ellipsis operate? (ii) what mechanism (operation) is responsible for the deletion of phonetic material? and (iii) what parameters regulate the crosslinguistic variation of ellipsis?

Putting aside questions (i) and (iii) for the time being ((iii) is addressed below), there are various answers to (ii) that have been pursued in the literature. A first, non-

structural, approach to ellipsis assumes that there is nothing else than what meets the eye, phonetically or syntactically; in stark contrast with structural approaches, based on the idea that there is invisible syntactic or semantic material (cf. Merchant, 2018 for references endorsing each option and relevant discussion). These two opposite views can be illustrated in 2, where “*e*” stands for some empty category that is syntactically, and thus semantically, active.

(2) a. Judas received pieces of silver that night. I don’t remember how many.

b. Judas received pieces of silver that night. I don’t remember how many *e*.

There are non-trivial problems with 2a, as has been noted in the literature (Merchant, 2001 for discussion, among many others). As for 2b, it can be implemented in various ways. One option takes the *e* formative to be a *bona fide* proform (roughly in the GB sense; cf. Brucart, 1987; Lobeck, 1995), which nicely captures the connection between ellipsis and anaphoric dependencies. A second structural approach is built on Chomsky & Lasnik’s (1993) claim that ellipsis involves phonological reduction; more accurately, a radical form of deaccenting. From this perspective, a case like that in 1 or 2 is derived from a clausal structure whose phonological representation is stripped off after the narrow syntactic computation. This is the view adopted in this article. Unpronounced structure will be marked with strikethrough text throughout:

(3) ... I don’t remember how many ~~pieces of silver Judas received that night~~.

Some formulations of this account endorse the idea that ellipses involve a “Move-and-Delete” (M&D) process, which is often related to the presence of a construction-specific feature (cf. Brunetti, 2003; Ortega-Santos et al., 2014; Weir, 2014): an E(llipsis)-feature (Merchant, 2001). This is different from Chomsky & Lasnik’s (1993) proposal in that it requires a specific syntax for ellipsis to occur: a constituent must vacate the ellipsis site for (alleged) feature-checking reasons.

A final structural approach has recently been defended by Ott & Struckmeier (2016), who depart from M&D approaches in arguing that non-constituents can be the target of ellipsis. Capitalizing on Chomsky & Lasnik (1993), these authors submit that deletion in clausal ellipsis does not have to be a designated syntactic constituent, but the Sentential Background instead, which precludes deletion of discourse-new elements and extra-propositional elements.

As can be seen, various (and conflicting) options to approach ellipsis have been entertained in the literature. The other two questions highlighted above, which revolve around the parallelism constraints on ellipsis and the parameters that regulate its cross-linguistic variation are also under debate. The issue of parallelism is a complex one, for discussion and references see Merchant (in press).

This article will focus instead on reviewing the most relevant elliptical constructions in Romance languages. The discussion is divided as follows: §2 covers the different aspects of nominal ellipsis; §3 is devoted to the study of verbal ellipses; and §4 concentrates on clausal cases of deletion; finally, §5 summarizes the main conclusions.

## **2. Nominal ellipsis**

### ***2.1. Two types of nominal ellipsis***

There are two possible definitions of nominal ellipsis depending on the set of constructions that are included in it. In a broad sense, the term encompasses both argument ellipsis and partial nominal ellipsis. In a strict sense, only the latter is properly labelled as nominal ellipsis (henceforth, N-ellipsis). The strictest option is prevalent in the literature (van Craenenbroeck & Merchant, 2013; Saab, in press) and will be the one that will be followed here.<sup>1</sup> However, it is useful to consider, albeit briefly, the major differences between argument and N-ellipsis.

In argument ellipsis, the unpronounced site corresponds to an entire nominal argument  
4a. In partial ellipsis, the phonetic gap involves the head (or some projection of it) of a  
nominal projection (DP/NP) whose other constituents are overtly realized, as shown in  
4b, where the underscore represents the elliptical site and the lexical material in italics  
stands for the remnants of the N-elliptical projection:

(4) a. Italian

\_\_\_ ha telefonato ieri.  
has telephoned yesterday  
'He/She phoned yesterday.'

b. Spanish

Tu madre y *la* \_\_\_ *de María* son íntimas amigas.  
your mother and the of María are close friends  
'Your mother and Mary's are close friends.'

In Italian, pronominal subjects can be (and tend to be) elliptical, as opposed to French.  
Thus, the French equivalent of 4a must include an overt pronominal subject (*Il/elle a  
téléphoné hier*), as in English. The possibility of displaying elliptical subjects opposes  
null-subject or pro-drop languages (NSL), as Italian and most Romance varieties, to  
non-pro-drop languages, as French or English, and has been extensively studied in the  
literature since Chomsky (1981), a seminal work that set up the foundations for the  
study of empty pronominal categories.

Although some steps have been taken towards the unification of these different  
instances of ellipses (see Duguine, 2014; 2017 for a proposal along these lines and  
Lobeck, 1995 for a general theory of ellipsis) the mainstream view is that argument and  
N-ellipsis are distinct phenomena. The twofold approach to ellipsis phenomena is  
rooted in the distinction between Deep Anaphora (DA) and Surface Anaphora (SA),

first put forward by Hankamer & Sag (1976), according to which personal pronouns and argument ellipsis are instances of DA, whereas N-ellipsis exemplifies SA. For reasons of space, the diagnostics that put both classes apart cannot be presented. Brucart & MacDonald (2012:591-592) contains a summary of the tests and Saab (in press) thoroughly revises them.

The basic structural difference between the two classes is the atomic nature of the gap in DA, as opposed to the structurally complex elliptic site in SA. Consequently, both phenomena are often analyzed following opposite strategies: DA is generally represented by means of empty categories directly taken from the lexicon and entering the derivation by external merge, whereas SA is addressed as implying mechanisms of deletion (or phonetic deaccentuation) that affect the lexical material contained in the elliptical site.

## ***2.2. N-ellipsis in Romance languages***

N-ellipsis is subject to a high range of interlinguistic variation. In general, Romance languages are more permissive than English with regards to its availability. However, there are also important differences between them with respect the specific configurations which license it. In this subsection the different remnants that can occur in an N-ellipsis construction will be studied.

Among definite determiners, demonstratives generally license N-ellipsis:

(5) a. Spanish

Este asunto es más importante que aquel \_\_\_.

this matter is more important than that

‘This matter is more important than that one.’

b. French

Je préfère cette voiture- ci à cette \_\_\_-là.

I prefer this car here to this there

‘I prefer this car to that one.’

c. Romanian (Cojocar, 2003:80)

Vreau creionul acesta. –Pe \_\_\_ acesta? –Nu, pe \_\_\_ acela!

want pencil this in this no in that

‘I want this pencil. – This one? – No, that one!’

Possessives, in turn, require the combination with the article:

(6) a. Catalan

Els nostres drets són tan importants com els vostres \_\_\_.

the our rights are as important as the yours

‘Our rights are as important as yours.’

b. Italian (Renzi, 1988:608)

Chiedi in biblioteca un altro libro, se non vuoi prendere il mio \_\_\_.

requestin library an other book if not want to take the mine

‘Request another copy from the library if you don’t want to take mine.’

c. Portuguese

Sua própria história não é menos apaixonante que a minha \_\_\_.

his/her own story not is less thrilling than the mine

‘His/her own story isn’t less thrilling than mine.’

Due to its clitic nature, the behavior of the definite article as licenser of N-ellipsis is more complex. In Iberian languages, it can head an elliptical nominal, but only when combined with some other remnant (a possessive, a numeral, some quantifiers, an adjective, a PP complement headed by *de* or a restrictive relative clause):

(7) a. Spanish

*Las { mías/cuatro/otras/nuevas/de María / que vinieron } son buenas.*

the mine four other new of María that came are good.

‘{Mine/the four/the other} are good’; ‘The new ones/The ones {from Mary/that came} are good.’

b. Catalan

*Les {meves/quatre/altres/noves/de la Maria/que van arribar} són bones.*

c. Portuguese

*As {minhas/quatro/outras/novas/de Maria/que chegaram} são boas.*

In 7, the gap has not been represented because it should be placed to the right of the remnants when they are exclusively formed by determiners and quantifiers and between the article and the nominal complement in the rest of cases.

In French and Italian, the combinatorial possibilities of the article in these constructions are more constrained. When the remnant includes a complement of the noun which is not an adjective, the determiner demonstrative is required:

(8) Italian

a. *Le {mie/quattro/altre/nuove} sono buone.*

b. *Quelle \_\_ {di Maria/che siano venute} sono buone.*

(9) French

a. *Les {miennes/quatre/autres} sont bonnes.*

b. *Celles \_\_ {de Marie/qui sont venues} sont bonnes.*

As for quantifiers, their behavior is not unitary. Numerals (including the indefinite article when its form is homophonous with the first cardinal) can license the elliptical site by themselves or in combination with some complement:

(10) a. Portuguese

Um estudante de direito e um \_\_ de medicina.

one student of law and one of medicine

‘One student of law and one of medicine.’

b. Spanish

Hablando de entradas, necesito tres \_\_\_ que no sean demasiado caras.

speaking of tickets need three that not are too pricey

‘Speaking of tickets, I need three which aren’t very expensive.’

c. Romanian (Dobrovie-Sorin & Giurgea, 2013:275)

Uite, sunt acolo două \_\_\_.

look are there two

‘Look, there are two.’

The availability of other indefinite quantifiers to head N-ellipsis constructions is crucially conditioned by the notion of partitivity (Lobeck 1995, López 2000). Only those that can function as heads of a partitive phrase have the possibility of licensing the nominal gap:

(11) a. Spanish

He invitado a todos mis familiares, pero algunos \_\_\_ no vendrán

have invited to all my relatives but some not will come

‘I’ve invited all my relatives, but some won’t come.’

b. French

Certaines \_\_\_ ne sont pas applicables.

some NEG are not applicable

‘Some are not applicable.’

c. Italian

Molte \_\_\_ sono arrivate da fuori.

many are arrived from outside

‘Many came from outside.’

As Eguren (2010) points out, some cases of interlinguistic variation confirm the close relation between partitivity and N-ellipsis. Thus, French *quelques*, the apparent counterpart of Spanish *algunos*, cannot head a N-elliptical construction except when followed by the indefinite *un* (*mais {quelques-uns/\*quelques} ne viendront*). This contrast is reproduced in partitive NPs (*algunos de mis familiares* vs. *{quelques-uns/\*quelques} de mes parents*). In the opposite direction, Spanish *ciertos*, apparently equivalent to French *certaines*, could not be used in the translation corresponding to 11b (*\*ciertos no son aplicables*), as it cannot head a partitive construction (*certaines des mesures/\*certaines de las medidas* ‘certain of the measures’). The same parallelism predicts the unavailability of French *chaque* or Spanish *cada*, since both forms require the amalgamation with the indefinite *one* in partitive phrases (Sp. *{cada uno/\*cada} de los niños*; Fr. *{chacun/\*chaque} des enfants* ‘each of the children’). The theoretical reasons that explain the intimate relation between partitivity and N-ellipsis will be presented in §2.3.

It is worth noting that in languages which have a partitive clitic (such as French, Sardinian or Catalan), N-ellipsis of the internal argument detaches the presence of this pronominal form, as opposed to N-ellipsis of external arguments:

(12) a. French

J’ en ai vues certaines \_\_ au théâtre.

I PART have seen some at the theatre

‘I’ve seen some at the theatre.’

b. Catalan

N’ he llegit quatre \_\_ de molt interessants.

PART have read four of very interesting

‘I’ve read four that were very interesting.’

c. Sardinian (Jones 1993:76)

Nde appo bitu meta \_\_,de vinu.

PART have drunka lot of wine

‘I drank a lot of wine.’

In 12c, the prepositional coda of the partitive construction is right-extraposited, which triggers the presence of the partitive clitic affixed to the verbal form. Examples in 12 show that in these cases the gap is licensed by means of a pronominal strategy rather than a properly elliptical one.

So far it has been studied which determiners and quantifiers license a N-elliptical site. But, as in many of the precedent examples, also lexical modifiers can cooccur with them: mainly, APs, PPs and restrictive relatives. There are also interlinguistic differences as to the degree that such modifiers are productive in Romance languages: Sleeman (1996) notes that N-ellipsis with adjectives is more constrained in French than in Spanish, and that in Italian it is even less productive. In Catalan, when the remnant includes an AP and the empty nominal receives indefinite interpretation, the preposition *de* must precede the adjective, even though it is not extraposed:

(13) Catalan

En tinc quatre \_\_ de noves.

PART have four of new

‘I have four new ones.’

The possibility of having nominal complements opposes Romance languages to English, which is reported to always have simple remnants (but see Günther, 2012 for challenging data in English).

A currently much-debated issue regarding N-ellipsis is the possibility that, at least in some Romance languages, the remnant can consist exclusively of a nominal complement (AP, PP or a restrictive relative clause), without the presence of any determiner or quantifier. Although this possibility is not reported in most of the literature, Eguren (2010:437) and Cornilescu & Nicolae (2010:95) argue in favor of it on the basis of data from Spanish and Romanian, respectively:

(14) a. Spanish

Antes bebía cerveza alemana y ahora solo bebo \_\_ española.

before drankbeer German and now only drink Spanish

‘I used to drink German beer and I only drink Spanish [beer] now.’

b. Romanian

Ion vrea mașină de curse, iar Petre își dorește \_\_ de teren.

Ion wantscar of race but Petre it desires of terrain

‘Ion wants a racing car, and Petre wants a terrain one.’

The analysis of the constructions in 14 as cases of N-ellipsis, however, is controversial; see Saab (2008:513-516) for discussion.

### ***2.3. The interpretation of N-ellipsis gaps***

The semantic content of the N-ellipsis gap can be construed using three different mechanisms: (a) anaphorically, by means of its connection to a discourse antecedent; (b) deictically, via the information provided by the situational context, or (c) internally, from the features that can be associated to the remnant. The examples in 15 represent these three variants:

(15) a. French

Sur les 11 candidats, quatre \_\_ sont venus dans les Alpes du

out of the 11 candidates four are come in the Alpes of the  
Sud récemment.

South recently

‘Out of the 11 candidates, four have recently come to the Southern Alps.’

b. Italian

[An offer at the supermarket]

Prendi tre \_\_\_ e paghi due.

take three and pay two

‘Take three and pay two.’

c. Spanish

Los \_\_\_ que dicen eso mienten.

the that say that lie

‘Those who say so, lie.’

By far, the most frequent mechanism is the discourse anaphoric one. Conversely, the most restrictive is the third, limited to the denotation of the class of human beings, so 15c must refer to persons in general, not, for instance, to reports or to journalists. Naturally, the latter readings are possible when the interpretation of the elliptical site is anaphoric (*Tengo excelente opinión de los periodistas, pero los que dicen eso mienten* ‘I have a good opinion of journalists in general, but the ones that say so lie’). Empty nominals that receive internal interpretation of the gap frequently give rise to semi-lexicalized phrases, as in Sp. *los de al lado* (‘the neighbours’), *los de casa* (‘the family members’), *los que mandan* (‘the powers that be’) (cf. Saab in press), Sard. *sos meos* (‘my family’), *sos de Juanne* (‘John’s family’) (cf. Jones, 1993) or Fr. *les sans-abri* (‘homeless people’). When the remnant in these constructions is an adjective, the process of lexicalization can give rise to a deadjectival noun (Fr. *les pauvres* ‘the poor’,

It. *i ricchi* ‘the rich’) in a gapless structure. Nonetheless, the elliptical construction remains available, as shows the possibility of including a degree quantifier (*les très pauvres* ‘the very poor’). Cf. Borer & Roy (2010) for a detailed study of these cases.

Interestingly, Spanish and Italian distinguish deadjectival nouns and adjectives when the determiner is an indefinite article in masculine singular (Alexiadou & Gengel, 2012), since the noun takes the apocopic form (*un*) and the adjective the complete one (*uno*):

(16) Spanish

a. Un rico siempre quiere más dinero.

a rich always wants more money

‘A rich man always wants more money.’

b. Prefiero un marido culto a uno \_\_ rico.

prefer a husband learned to one rich

‘I prefer a learned husband to a rich one.’

(17) Italian

a. Un povero non sarà mai uguale a un ricco.

a poor not will be never same to a rich

‘A poor will never be the same as a rich.’

b. Che parità di opportunità ci potrà mai essere tra un

what equality of opportunities CL can.FUT ever be between a

bambino disabile povero ed uno ricco?

child disabled poor and one rich

‘How can a poor child with disabilities have the same opportunities as one rich.’

The ungrammaticality of *\*un muy rico*/*\*un molto ricco*, as opposed to the well-formedness of *uno muy rico*/*uno molto ricco*, shows that *rico/ricco* retains its adjectival

nature when preceded by a degree quantifier. Expectedly, if a noun is added to the former sequences, the result is grammatical: *un muy rico desayuno* (Sp) ‘a very rich breakfast’/*un molto ricco aroma* (It) ‘a very rich flavor’).

The existence of N-elliptical constructions without anaphoric or deictic interpretation poses the problem of deciding whether the pattern of 15c is identical to the one of 15a, b. Saab (in press) contends that 15c exemplifies a different structure, which he terms ‘empty noun constructions’. Using the framework of Distributed Morphology, he proposes the two following structures, where NumP stands for the syntactic projection of number, *n*P is the nominal categorial projection of the noun and  $\sqrt{P}$  represents the root projection:

(18) a. Empty nouns:  $[_{DP} D [_{NumP} Num [_{nP} \#_{human} ]]]$

b. N-ellipsis:  $[_{DP} D [_{NumP} Num [_{nP} \# [_{\sqrt{P}} \# ]]]]$

The main difference between both structures is that only the latter is a case of syntactic ellipsis with a mechanism of deletion affecting the strikethrough structure. Conversely, empty nouns are nominal empty categories that are directly inserted in the head of *n*P and are therefore an instance of Deep Anaphora. Their interpretation cannot be anaphoric because they are not the result of a deletion process under identity. For a proposal on different grounds, see Panagiotidis (2003).

A crucial contrast of N-ellipsis versus argument ellipsis involves the opposed nature of the relation between the gap and the antecedent. In argument ellipsis the relation is established between two arguments that are co-referent, that is, that represent the same entity in the universe of discourse. On the contrary, in N-ellipsis the gap does not represent an entity, but a class of entities, and the relation between the DP/NP that the elliptical noun heads and the one of the antecedent is not of coreference, but of identity of sense (Grinder & Postal, 1971). Consequently, the DPs linked by the anaphoric

relation refer to two different entities that have in common the fact that are members of the same class. Thus, in 15a the DPs *les onze candidats* ('the eleven candidates') and *quatre*\_\_ ('four\_\_') have in common that are members of the class of candidates. Moreover, in this case the relation between both DPs is partitive, so the second is a subset of the first. But this is not necessary: in 15b, *mașină de curse* 'a racing car' and \_\_ *de teren* 'a car of terrain' establish a partitive relation with the class 'car', as long as both denote subclasses of cars, but there is not a partitive relation between both DPs. The fact that N-ellipsis denotes classes and not individuals is at the basis of the different grammatical features that can have the antecedent and the gap:

(19) a. Catalan

Van entrar dos trens de rodalies i un \_\_ de mercaderies.

PAST enter two commuter trains and one of goods

'There entered two commuter trains and a freight one.'

b. French

Un indicateur de niveau composé de quatre LEDs, trois\_\_ vertes et

a indicator of level made of four LEDs three green and

une\_\_ jaune.

one yellow

'A level indicator made of four LEDs, three green and one yellow.'

Although the sentences in 19 contain number mismatches in the relation between the gap and the antecedent, they are well-formed. Note that both the antecedent and the gap can be independently singular or plural. The number of the latter is obtained by the information provided by the determiners or quantifiers that constitute the remnant of the elliptical DP.

As opposed to number features, gender ones must be identical in the antecedent and the gap:

(20) a. Italian

\* Il figlio di Maria e quella \_\_\_ of Patrizia.  
the son of Maria and that.FEM of Patrizia  
'(Int.) Maria's son and Patrizia's daughter.'

b. Portuguese

\* O gato do vizinho e a \_\_\_ minha.  
the cat of neighbour and the.FEM mine  
'(Int.) The neighbour's male cat and my female cat.'

Although the pairs *figlio/figlia* and *gato/gata* share the same root, they cannot be linked in a N-ellipsis relation. The asymmetry of the identity conditions of gender and number in N-ellipsis seems to be the result of their contraposed syntactic nature: whereas number is a purely syntactic category that heads its own projection (Ritter, 1991), gender features are intimately related to the lexical information of nouns as an inherent feature, possibly a word-marker (Bernstein, 1993) or a classifier expressing atomicity (Alexiadou & Gengel, 2012). The greater proximity of gender to the noun is structurally represented in (13b): the number projection is external to the lexical layer and remains unavailable for the mechanisms of deletion. Therefore, the determiners and quantifiers that form the remnant receive the number information from inside the elliptical DP. Conversely, the information of gender must replicate the one contained in the antecedent.

#### **2.4. The analysis of N-ellipsis**

In this subsection some influential proposals of analysis for N-ellipsis will be briefly reviewed. Ronat (1977)'s seminal work on N-ellipsis in French, framed in the extended standard theory of generative grammar, proposes an analysis that aims at explaining why only a subset of adjectives, namely the classifying ones (superlatives, color and measure adjectives and the ones expressing cardinality or ordinality) accepts N-ellipsis in this language (examples from Valois *et al.*, 2009):

(21) French

- a. J' ai entendu {la plus intéressante/ les deux/ le premier/ la  
 I have heard the more interesting the two the first the  
 verte foncé.  
 green dark  
 'I've heard {the most interesting/the two/the first/the dark green one}.'
- b.\*J' ai entendu l' importante.  
 I have heard the important  
 '(Int.) I've heard the important one.'

Ronat established different levels of dependency for adjectives to guarantee that only the closest to the nominal head (i.e., those dominated by N') could be deleted together with the noun.

With the emergence of the GB model, the interest shifted to determine the licensing conditions of the gap. The first attempts tried to establish a link between the rich inflectional morphology of Romance languages and the less constrained behavior of N-ellipsis with respect to English. Building on Harris (1991), Bernstein (1993) claims that the crucial element that legitimates nominal gaps in Spanish is a word-marker, which is syncretic with the exponent of gender, but that heads its own syntactic functional projection. The affixation of the word-marker to the determiner allows the empty noun

to be governed from D. Bernstein (1993) tries to apply the same analysis to French and concludes that it also has word-markers, even though they are phonologically null. For a critical assessment of Bernstein's theory, cf. Bouchard (2002), and see Alexiadou and Gengel (2012) for an updated theory focusing on the syntactic projection of morphological affixes.

Another influential line of research tries to connect N-ellipsis with the system of empty categories developed from Chomsky (1981) to account for argument ellipsis. Lobeck (1995) assumes that the gap of N-ellipsis is an empty pronominal category (*pro*) directly inserted in the derivation and interpreted at logical form by means of rules of lexical reconstruction. Just as the empty null subject of pro-drop languages is licensed by a rich inflection, N-elliptical *pro* must be properly governed by a c-commanding functional head that is specified for strong agreement. The notion of strong agreement implies the necessity of morphological realization of the agreement traits in a productive number of cases whether in the same governing head or in some element that agrees with it.

The following contrast, from Kornfeld & Saab (2004), shows that the inflection in the wh-determiner is the element that is responsible of the asymmetry:

(22) Spanish

{Cuáles/ qué} libros de Borges y {cuáles /\*qué} \_\_\_ de Bioy...?

which what books of Borges and which what of Bioy

'Which books by Borges and which ones by Bioy...?'

Formal accounts of N-ellipsis continue to be influential in formulations that are more akin to current theoretical assumptions. Thus, the current theories tend to avoid empty categories and interpretive rules of reconstruction for N-ellipsis in favor of mechanisms of deletion or deaccentuation, as in Merchant's theory of ellipsis (Merchant, 2001),

where a specific feature [E], merged in the derivation, is the responsible of the operations of deletion as a specific case of selection by a functional head.

Other theories, by contrast, emphasize the semantic conditions that characterize the relation between the gap and the antecedent. Two semantic concepts that seem to play an important role from this perspective: partitivity (Sleeman, 1996) and focus (Giannakidou & Stavrou, 1999; Eguren, 2010).

### 3. Verbal ellipsis

This section focuses on predicate/verbal ellipses. In these cases, it is the main predicate which gets deleted, possibly with some of its internal arguments. A fair amount of phenomena have been argued to fall under this ellipsis kind in the literature, but a terminological caveat is in order. Consider in this respect 23a, and its literal translation into Spanish 23b. Both illustrate a phenomenon which is referred to as *gapping*:

- (23) a. Mary read a paper and John \_\_\_ a book.  
b. María leyó un artículo y Juan \_\_\_ un libro.

Descriptively speaking, 23 would be a prototypical case of predicate ellipsis, as it has in fact been argued for by a number of authors (see Johnson, in press, for an overview). However, given that Romance languages display generalized V-to-T movement, one must assume that in 23b ellipsis must have affected a T node as well. Effectively, V-to-T movement in Romance somewhat blurs the distinction between verbal and clausal ellipsis in many cases<sup>2</sup>, including 23. So while a verbal ellipsis analysis may be entertained for 23a, it is implausible for 23b. A similar discussion carries over to stripping (Depiante, 2000). It is for this reason that gapping and stripping will be discussed in section 4.

Genuine verbal ellipsis in Romance therefore must only involve cases in which the verb does not raise to T. This is the case, for example, when T is occupied by an auxiliary or modal verb. English allows ellipsis of the VP in such configurations, which go by the name of VP-ellipsis:

- (24) a. John hasn't read this book, but Peter has ~~read this book~~.  
b. John couldn't read this book, but Peter could ~~read this book~~.

Let us focus first on cases where VP-ellipsis occurs after auxiliaries (i.e. 24a). A simple translation of this example into various Romance languages shows that such configurations are unavailable in Romance:

- (25) a. Catalan  
\* En Joan no ha llegit aquest llibre, però en Pere ha \_\_\_\_.
- b. French  
\* Jean n'a pas lu ce livre, mais Pierre a \_\_\_\_.
- c. Spanish  
\* Juan no ha leído este libro, pero Pedro ha \_\_\_\_.
- d. Italian  
\* Gianni non ha letto questo libro, ma Pietro ha \_\_\_\_.

The lack of VP-ellipsis in Romance has been discussed, among others, by Brucart (1987), Zagana (1988), Lobeck (1995), López (1999) and Depiante (2000). However, European and Brazilian Portuguese<sup>3</sup> constitute a notable exception, in that it allows VP-ellipsis after auxiliaries:

- (26) Portuguese (Cyrino & Matos, 2002:178)
- A Ana já tinha lido o livro à irmã mas a Paula não tinha \_\_\_\_.
- the Ana already had read the book to sister but the Paula not had
- 'Ana had already read the book to her sister but Paula hadn't.'

Main verbs also license VP-ellipsis in Portuguese, something which English, as well as most Romance languages, disallow:

(27) Portuguese

A Joana não deu o presente à mãe mas a prima deu \_\_\_\_.

the Joana not gave the gift to mother but to cousin gave

‘Joana didn’t give the present to her mother, but to her cousin.’

Such cases have been labelled V-stranding VP-ellipsis (Goldberg, 2005). As the name suggests, these examples involve ellipsis of a VP containing the trace of the V, which raises to T<sup>4</sup> (Portuguese, like all Romance languages, is a V-to-T language). Thus, the unavailability of V-stranding VP-ellipsis in English is fully expected. In turn, the unavailability of V-stranding VP-ellipsis in other Romance languages must be a corollary of their general lack of VP ellipsis, which brings us to the important question: what is there in the syntax of Portuguese that enables it to display VP-ellipsis altogether?

To answer this question, a final set of data needs consideration. The availability of VP-ellipsis in Romance correlates with the possibility to answer a yes/no question with a bare verb<sup>5</sup>, a grammatical option in Portuguese, 28B, but ungrammatical in Spanish, 28B’, where a polarity adverb must be used instead. See Martins (2016) for equivalent data in many Romance languages.

(28) A: Did you give him the book?

B: Portuguese

Dei. (lit. ‘gave’)

B’: Spanish

\* Di (lit. ‘gave’) / Sí. (lit. ‘yes’).

Unsurprisingly, the grammatical counterparts of 25 all feature a polarity adverb instead of the auxiliary verb, as shown in 29 for Catalan (cf. 25a). Such examples are referred to as *stripping*, a phenomenon which will be further examined in the next section:

- (29) En Joan no ha llegit aquest llibre, però en Pere sí.  
the Joan not has read this book but the Pere yes  
“Joan hasn’t read this book, but Pere has.”

For this reason, many authors have defended that the variation regarding the availability of VP-ellipsis in Romance should be rooted in the functional category  $\Sigma$ , which encodes polarity (Laka 1990). A more detailed link between VP-ellipsis and polarity cannot be developed here for space constraints, but see Martins (1994, 2016), López (1999), Depiante (2000) or Lipták (2012) for various implementations.

Turning now to cases in which VP-ellipsis follows a modal (cf. 24b), Romance languages all allow such configurations, which are frequently referred to as Null Complement Anaphora (NCA) after Hankamer and Sag (1976). Glosses and translation are only included in 30a, 30b-d are identical but in other languages:

- (30) a. Catalan  
En Joan no ha pogut llegir aquest llibre, però en Pere ha pogut.  
the Joan not has could read this book but the Pere has could  
“Johan couldn’t read this book, but Pere could.”
- b. French  
Jean n’a pu lire ce livre, mais Pierre a pu.
- c. Spanish  
Juan no ha podido leer este libro, pero Pedro ha podido.
- d. Italian  
Gianni non ha potuto leggere questo libro, ma Pietro a potuto.

The asymmetry between 25 and 30 has been subject to some debate. While Busquets and Denis (2001) defend that NCA has to be analysed akin to English VP ellipsis, Dagnac (2010) extensively argues that NCA in non-VP-ellipsis languages should be given an alternative analysis. Very briefly put, she defends that modals in these languages, unlike in English, are subject raising verbs which select a TP (cf. Wurmbrand, 2001).<sup>6</sup> Thus, NCA actually involves TP-ellipsis.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, consider *pseudogapping*, a construction first discussed by Levin (1978), which is essentially identical to VP-ellipsis to the exception that a verb internal argument also survives ellipsis, like the direct object in 31b (Gengel, 2013:20):

- (31) a. John invited Sarah, but Mary didn't.                   VP-ellipsis  
       b. John invited Sarah, and Mary will \_\_ Jane.   Pseudogapping

Since Jayaseelan (1990) pseudogapping is analytically related to VP-ellipsis, with A-movement of a verb-internal element out of the ellipsis-site prior to deletion. Romance languages do not exhibit this construction, which follows from the fact that they disallow VP-ellipsis. However, as Gengel (2013:20) shows, Portuguese bans pseudogapping, despite allowing VP-E:

- (32) Portuguese  
       \*João convidou Maria, e Sara vai \_\_ Jane.  
       John invited Mary and Sarah will Jane  
       ‘John invited Mary and Sarah will Jane.’

The reader is referred to Gengel (2013) and Silva (2014) for a proposal to this puzzle.

#### 4. Clausal ellipsis

Clausal ellipsis involves ellipsis of, minimally, a TP, “including the canonical subject position and the agreement domain, but often to the exclusion of one or more clause-

internal constituents” (Merchant and van Craenenbroeck, 2013:718). Various phenomena belong in this category; the most important ones are reviewed here: sluicing (§4.1), fragment answers (§4.2), gapping (§4.3), and stripping (§4.4).

#### **4.1. Sluicing**

Sluicing, 33, is a phenomenon whereby a full question is unpronounced to the exception of a wh-operator. It is commonly assumed that sluicing involves a two-step operation: (i) wh-movement of the wh-operator and (ii) PF deletion of the TP, 34, see Ross (1969) and Merchant (2001):

(33) Katja is reading something, but I don't know what.

(34) ...but I don't know [<sub>CP</sub> what<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~she is reading t<sub>i</sub>~~ ]].

Although typical examples of sluicing involve a subordinate question, like 33, sluicing can target matrix questions, for example in the following dialogue where one person states that Katja is reading something, and a second speaker shows surprise by asking: *Really? What?*

The advantages of the move-and-delete analysis have been extensively discussed in the literature (see Merchant 2001, 2016 for an overview); this approach is adopted here without discussion (see also §1). One important corollary of this view is that it predicts that the regular effects created by movement of the wh-operator ought to be observed under sluicing. This prediction is, however, not always borne out. Many authors have noted that the movement operation which feeds TP ellipsis unexpectedly creates discrepancies between the elided and non-elided forms. The most famous one was originally noted by Ross (1969), who observed that sluicing could alleviate island violations. Merchant (2001) shows that the suspension of locality violations in sluicing is systematic across island types and pervasive crosslinguistically. The relation between

sluicing and locality is an intricate one, and the reader is referred to Barros, Elliott and Thoms (2014). In this section other discrepancies regarding Romance languages are pointed out, some of which have received less attention in the literature.

#### 4.1.1. The P(reposition)-Stranding Generalization (PSG)

One of the strongest arguments in favour of the analysis in 34 comes from Merchant (2001:92)'s P(reposition)-stranding generalization (PSG). P-stranding refers to the possibility to move the nominal complement of a PP independently of the P, which ends up stranded. English is a P-stranding language 35a, but German isn't 35b:

- (35) a. Who<sub>i</sub> did you speak [PP with [NP t<sub>i</sub> ] ]?  
b. \*Wem<sub>i</sub> hat John [PP mit [NP t<sub>i</sub> ] ] gesprochen?

If sluicing involves movement of the wh-operator, we expect P-stranding to be possible only in P-stranding languages. The contrast in 36 suggests this is correct:

- (36) a. John was talking to someone, but I don't remember (with) who.  
b. John hat mit jemandem gesprochen, aber ich weiß nicht \*(mit) wem.

Albeit empirically robust, the PSG has been challenged by several languages. Rodrigues *et al.* (2008) show that in Spanish, 37a, and Brazilian Portuguese, 37b, PP remnants may appear prepositionless:

- (37) a. Spanish

Juan ha hablado con una chica, pero no sé (con) cuál.

Juan has talked with a girl but not know with which

'Juan talked to a girl, but I don't know which.'

- b. Portuguese

A Maria dançou com alguém, mas eu não sei (com) quem.

the Maria danced with someone but I not know with whom

‘Maria danced with someone, but I don’t know with who.’

This is striking, given that neither of the two languages allow P-stranding under regular wh-movement, 38, which raises the question as to how the prepositionless sluices are derived:

(38) a. Spanish

\* Qué chica ha hablado Juan con?

Which girl has spoken Juan with

‘Which girl has Juan spoken with?’

b. Portuguese

\* Quem que a Maria dançou com?

Which that the Maria danced with

‘Who has Maria danced with?’

Rodrigues et al. (2008) argue, however, that these languages do not constitute counterexamples to the PSG. Their claim is that the apparent P-stranding strings are derived from an underlying cleft based on a specificational copular sentence:

(39) Spanish

Juan ha hablado con una chica, pero no sé cuál es ~~la chica con la~~

Juan has spoken with a girl but not know which is the girl with the

~~que ha hablado Juan.~~

which has spoken Juan

‘Juan has spoken to a girl, but I don’t know which is the girl that Juan has spoken to.’

Their claim is based on the observation that the alleged cases of P-stranding under sluicing in these languages pattern like clefts, and unlike regular interrogatives, with respect to a list of properties. One such property is *else*-modification. Building on a test

by Merchant (2001), they show that *else*-modification is possible with regular interrogatives, 40a, but disallowed with clefts, 40b:

- (40) a. Harry was there, but I don't know who else was there.  
b. \* Harry was there, but I don't know who else it was that was there.

These authors show that *else* modification is impossible in Spanish sluices which exhibit P-stranding, 41, which confirms that they can't be derived from an interrogative source (cf. 40a):

- (41) a. Juan ha hablado con una chica rubia, pero no sé \*(con) qué chica más.

The facts are less clear for Brazilian Portuguese, though. This language allows *else* modification with P-stranding sluices. However, as shown by Rodrigues et al., in this language *else* modification is possible with clefts as well (see also Rodrigues 2017). Similar data to BP are reported by Dagnac (2017) for sluicing in French.

It is unclear, however, that all cases of alleged P-stranding in Romance can be given an analysis in terms of clefts. Romanian is one problematic case. As with the other languages already discussed, Romanian does not allow P-stranding under regular interrogatives (42a), but prepositionless remnants may appear under sluicing (42b):

- (42) Romanian (Nicolae 2012)

- a. \* Cui a reușit în viață datorită?

Who has succeeded in life thanks to

'Who has he succeeded in life thanks to?'

- b. A reușit în viață datorită cuiva, si un mă abțin să

Has succeeded in life thanks to someone<sub>DAT</sub> and not cl<sub>ACC</sub> refrain SUBJ

întreb (datorită) cui.

ask thanks to who<sub>DAT</sub>

‘He succeeded in life thanks to someone, and I can’t help myself asking who.’

When the preposition is missing, the *wh*-remnant maintains its case (dative in 42b). This is unexpected if the putative source for the prepositionless sluice is a cleft, as it would be expected to be displayed nominative, the case in which pivots of clefts invariably show up in this language. Roughly put, Nicolae proposes that P-stranding strings in Romanian derive from a kind of relative clause where the prepositionless *wh*-operator is linked to a resumptive pronoun headed by the corresponding preposition.

But leaving particular analyses aside, the case of Romanian is not in isolation. Languages like Emirati Arabic, Indonesian or Polish have been argued to constitute real counterexamples to the PSG, and the issue is far from settled (see references in Nykiel, 2017).

#### 4.1.2. French *quoi*

One empirical challenge that the move-and-delete view has to face concerns languages which do not employ *wh*-movement to Spec,CP to form questions. This is because under this approach ellipsis is contingent on *wh*-movement, and it is therefore predicted that sluicing will be unattested in *wh*-in situ languages like Japanese or Chinese. For some discussion in this topic, see Gribanova and Manetta (2016). Leaving aside these languages, a related challenge is found in the syntax of French. This language has two words for English *what*: *que* and *quoi*. They have a different distribution, however: *quoi* can never undergo *wh*-movement, 43c, it is an in situ *wh*-word 43b, as opposed to *que*, 43a:

- (43) a. Qu’ a acheté Pierre?  
          what has bought Pierre

‘What did Pierre buy?’

- b. Pierre a acheté quoi?
- c. \* Quoi a acheté Pierre? (cf. (21a)).

Merchant (2001)’s analysis predicts that *quoi* can never be a remnant in this language. However, the prediction is not borne out, 44. The grammaticality of this example is striking, given that the putative source for this sluice is impossible in French 44a, cf. 43c. An analysis in terms of clefts is impossible as well, given that *quoi* cannot undergo any sort of movement, 44b.

(44) French

Pierre a acheté quelque chose, mais je ne sais pas quoi.

Pierre has bought something but I not know not what

‘Pierre bought something, but I don’t know what.’

- a. \*... je ne sais pas quoi<sub>i</sub> Pierre a acheté t<sub>i</sub>.
- b. \*... je ne sais pas quoi<sub>i</sub> est la chose que Pierre a acheté t<sub>i</sub>.

One way to tackle this issue is to extend Kimura (2010)’s analysis of sluicing in Japanese. For this author, wh-remnants are not required to undergo movement to Spec,CP in sluicing contexts, that is they can stay in their base position. Under this system, movement is not a *sine qua non* condition for sluicing, and *quoi* sluices in French are thus expected to be possible<sup>8</sup>. Dagnac (2017) entertains a different solution, which has to do with the phonological properties of the two French wh-elements. She builds on Sportiche (2008)’s claim that the *que/quoi* alternation is a PF-phenomenon: *que* is a clitic, it needs to attach somewhere. When the TP is elided, however, *que* has nothing to cliticise onto, and *quoi* is used otherwise. The reader is referred to Dagnac’s paper for discussion on what the implications of this alternations are for the general theory of sluicing.

#### 4.1.3. Multiple sluicing

Multiple sluicing refers to the sluicing construction which features two wh-words. Assuming that movement of the wh-operator feeds TP ellipsis in sluicing, it follows that the two wh-phrases must undergo movement to the CP. The prediction is that multiple sluicing will only be available in languages which independently allow multiple wh-fronting. Romanian is the only Romance language which displays such a configuration

45. Multiple sluicing in this language is thus expectedly possible 46:

(45) Romanian (Rudin 1988:449)

Cine cu ce merge?

Who with what goes

‘Who goes by what?’

(46) Romanian (Hoyt and Teodorescu 2004:199)

Ion a dat cuiva ceva, și vreau să știu cui ce.

Ion PAST given someone<sub>DAT</sub> something and want SUBJ know whom<sub>DAT</sub> what

‘John gave something to someone, and I want to know what to whom.’

Surprisingly, multiple sluicing is attested in languages which disallow multiple wh-movement<sup>9</sup>, like Spanish, 47. It is important to emphasize that without TP-ellipsis, the example would be blatantly ungrammatical, 48:

(47) Alguno de estos catedráticos me recomendó una revista de filosofía,

some of these full professors to me recommended a journal of philosophy

pero no recuerdo cuál de ellos qué revista.

but not recall which of them which journal

‘One of these full professors recommended me a philosophy journal, but I do not remember which of them which journal.’ (Ortega-Santos 2016:138).

(48) \* ... pero no recuerdo cuál de ellos qué revista me recomendó.

Ortega-Santos (2016), building on Lasnik (2013), argues that only the first wh-operator in sluicing undergoes regular wh-movement to the left edge of the clause<sup>10</sup>; the second one undergoes focus-induced rightward movement. His analysis is supported by a number of interesting, yet intricate, facts regarding P-stranding and locality, but it cannot be fully addressed here for space limitations.

#### 4.2. *Fragment answers*

A question like 49 can be answered, at least, in two ways: as a complete sentence 49B or as a single DP 49B'. This latter option is referred to as a *fragment answer* (FAs):

(49) A: What did John win?

B: He won the T-shirt.

B': The T-shirt.

Merchant (2004), building on Morgan (1973), extends his analysis of sluicing to FAs. He proposes that the remnant undergoes focus-induced movement to the left periphery of the followed by TP ellipsis:

(50) [<sub>CP</sub> The T-shirt<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~he won t<sub>i</sub>~~ ]].

The most controversial issue regarding FAs has to do with the movement of the fragment. In Romance languages (as in English), focal constituents do not generally front when they constitute answers to questions (Brunetti 2003, Valmala 2007, Santos 2009 for Italian, Spanish and Portuguese respectively). Focus-movement to the left periphery is typically restricted to corrective contexts (Rizzi, 1997)<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, just as in sluicing, the movement of the remnant creates an unexpected asymmetry between elided and non-elided form. The problem is aggravated by languages like Mexican Spanish, which disallow focus fronting altogether (Gutiérrez-Bravo, 2002:171).

Some authors have taken these asymmetries as evidence against a deletion account of fragments (Culicover and Jackendoff, 2005; Stainton, 2006; Valmala 2007, a.o.). Others, instead, have defended that fragments do involve syntactically unpronounced structure, but argue against a M&D view, thus allowing remnants to stay *in situ*, in line with Kimura's (2010) account of Japanese sluicing (§5.1.2), see Ott & Struckmeier 2016, Fernández-Sánchez 2017).

The fragment analysis has been extended to other phenomena, like split questions, 51, and dislocated constituents, 52:

(51) Spanish

a. ¿Dónde vas, a Londres?

Where go to London

'Where are you going, to London?'

b. ¿Dónde vas, [<sub>CP</sub> a Londres<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~vas~~ <sub>t<sub>i</sub></sub> ] ]?

(52) Catalan

a. Hi he anat molts cops, a Londres.

there have gone many times to London

'I've been to London many times.'

b. Hi he anat molts cops, [<sub>CP</sub> a Londres<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~he anat molts cops~~ <sub>t<sub>i</sub></sub> ] ]

For a biclausal analysis of split questions, see Arregi (2010). For arguments that dislocated phrases in Romance should be given an analogous treatment, see Fernández-Sánchez (2017).

### 4.3. Gapping

Gapping involves the non-pronunciation of a finite verb in the second conjoint of a coordinate structure, 53a. The verb might be elided along with some of its arguments 53b:

(53) Catalan

a. En Pere va llegir una novel·la, i en Martí un poema.

The Peter PAST read a novel and the Martí a poem

‘Peter read a novel, and Martí (read) a poem.’

b. En Pere llegirà una novel·la avui, i en Martí la setmana vinent.

The Pere will read a novel today and the Martí the week next

‘Pere will read a novel today, and Martí (will read a novel) next week.’

Gapping is an extremely complex phenomenon, and probably one of the most studied among the elliptical phenomena<sup>12</sup>. Despite this, it continues to pose many empirical and theoretical challenges which are still open to debate. One of these is whether gapping actually involves elided structure. This is discussed in Johnson (2009), who argues that the gap is the result of across-the-board (ATB) movement of the verb from the two conjuncts to a position outside the coordination structure. Inasmuch as ATB-movement is only attested in coordination structures, Johnson’s account succeeds in explaining the distribution of gapping:

(54) En Pere va llegir<sub>i</sub> [t<sub>i</sub> una novel·la] i en Martí [t<sub>i</sub> un poema] (cf. 53a).

Another issue has to do with the structural height at which coordination holds in gapping, i.e. whether clausal or non-clausal (i.e. vPs) constituents are conjoined. Determining the nature of the conjoined constituent is challenging because of the conflicting evidence that exists (see Repp, 2009 for discussion). Precisely because of these contradictory data, Repp defends that not all gapping strings must be given a

uniform analysis. Within Romance, this hybrid analysis of gapping has been extended to Spanish (Centeno, 2011; Jung, 2017) and French (Dagnac, 2016).

Finally, another controversial issue regarding gapping concerns an observation by Hankamer (1979), who noted that gapping cannot be embedded, as in *\*John read a novel and I've been told that Mary a poem*. Embedded gaps have been reported in Spanish (Fernández-Sánchez, 2016) and Romanian (Abeillé, Bilbîie and Mouret, 2009). French, as suggested by Abeillé *et al.*, appears to pattern like English in disallowing embedded gaps (but see Wurmbrand, 2017 for discussion about English).

#### **4.4 Stripping**

Stripping (Hankamer and Sag 1976:409) sometimes also referred to as *bare argument ellipsis*, is a phenomenon in which a full clause is coordinated<sup>13</sup> with, minimally, a phrase (XP), which, in turn, is frequently accompanied by an adverbial element, typically a polarity adverb. The most studied cases of stripping in Romance involve those featuring sentential negation:

(55) Spanish

Juan leyó Hamlet, pero Othello no.

Juan read Hamlet but Othello not

‘Juan read Hamlet, but he didn’t read Othello.’

As discussed earlier, stripping is the equivalent of VP-ellipsis in the absence thereof (see §3) although this does not mean that they are mutually exclusive. Portuguese, which allows VP-ellipsis, 26, also displays stripping:

(56) Portuguese (Cyrino & Matos 2002)

A Anajá tinha lido o livro à irmã mas a Paula não.

The Ana already had read the book to the sister but the Paula not

‘Ana had already read the book to her sister but not Paula.’

Most of the literature on stripping in Romance concentrates on Spanish. Bosque (1984) noted that in this language, the relative order of polarity adverb and remnant could be reversed:

(57) Juan leyó Hamlet, pero no Othello. (cf. 55)

Whereas there is some consensus in the literature that strings like 55 are derived in terms of clausal ellipsis (see Villa-García 2016 for references), with the remnant undergoing movement to a functional projection FP above  $\Sigma P$  – the projection responsible for hosting negation, *pace* Laka (1990) – cf. 58, no such consensus exists with respect to strings where negation precedes the remnant. While some defend a clausal ellipsis too (Depiante, 2000, i.a.), others like Bosque (1984) and Bruccart (1987; 1999) contend that no ellipsis is involved in these cases.

(58) Juan leyó Hamlet, pero [<sub>FP</sub> Othello<sub>i</sub> [ <sub>$\Sigma P$</sub>  no [<sub>TP</sub> leyó Juan <sub>t<sub>i</sub></sub> ] ] ]

The order of adverb and remnant in stripping appears to be highly determined by information structural notions like topic or focus, but the jury is still out with regards to this issue. For related discussion and references, see Fernández-Sánchez (under review).

## 5. Conclusion

Because of its vast theoretical implications and its abundant empirical challenges, ellipsis is an immense area of research. This article has aimed at providing a general overview of some of the main issues regarding the formal study of ellipsis within the domain of Romance languages, some of which, as the reader has possibly noticed, are still far from settled.

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<sup>1</sup> A third class of nominal ellipsis, the so-called radical ellipsis, will not be considered either, given that it is not usual in Romance languages (but see Cornilescu & Nicolae 2010 for some data in Romanian).

<sup>2</sup> In their overview on elliptical phenomena in Spanish, MacDonald and Brucart (2012), in fact, only propose a two-fold distinction between nominal and verbal ellipsis, and treat cases of clausal ellipsis as a subtype of the latter.

<sup>3</sup> See also Costa, Martins and Pratas (2012) for discussion of Capeverdean, a Portuguese-based Creole language which also displays VP-ellipsis.

<sup>4</sup> V-stranding VP ellipsis is not a case of argument drop. As argued by Goldberg (2005), this phenomenon is attested in languages which do not allow object drop. See also Cyrino & Matos (2002) for discussion.

<sup>5</sup> VP-ellipsis also correlates with the possibility to have enclisis in tensed clauses. The reader is referred to Martins (1994, 2016) for discussion and references.

<sup>6</sup> Depiante (2000) proposes that these cases do not involve ellipsis, but rather a null proform without internal syntactic structure which is interpreted like a regular pronoun. See Dagnac (2010) and van Craenenbroek (2016) for arguments against this view.

<sup>7</sup> It should be mentioned that not all modals license NCA (Brucart 1999, Depiante 2001, Macdonald and Brucart 2012, p.586). Interestingly, as noted by Dagnac (2010, p.162 fn.9), the modals which disallow NCA are those which have been argued not to select a TP, but rather a VP instead.

<sup>8</sup> Note, however, that Kimura’s analysis has to assume the existence of non-constituent ellipsis. See Fernández-Sánchez (2017, chapter 4) for discussion and references.

<sup>9</sup> In these languages, judgements regarding multiple sluicing sometimes vary a lot across speakers. See Richards (1997) and Lasnik (2013) for discussion. The generalization is, however, that multiple sluices sound generally way better than their non-elided counterparts, and this is the striking effect.

<sup>10</sup> This analysis is extended in Ortega-Santos *et al.* (2014) to a similar phenomenon called Sluice-Stripping (*One of the professors talked to Susan, but I don’t know which to Mary*).

<sup>11</sup> As discussed extensively in Remberger (2010), Sardinian is a counterexample, in that information focused constituents can be fronted.

<sup>12</sup> However, as with many other phenomena, gapping in Romance has not received a lot of attention, the exception being Spanish (see Brucart 1987, Centeno 2011, Jung 2017).

<sup>13</sup> Stripping strings may occur across speakers, without being mediated by coordination. See Servidio (2014) for a detailed study of Italian, and Depiante and Vicente (2009) for Spanish. Further, some stripping strings can occur in embedded contexts, see Fernández-Sánchez (under review) for discussion.