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Focus-based Licensing Approach to Noun Ellipsis and the Pro-form *One* in English.

This presentation aims to show that the possibility of Noun ellipsis is subject to two conditions: contrastive focus and the overt agreement inflection. Noun ellipsis with the adjectival remnant has been argued to be possible in Old English (OE) due to the rich inflection on the adjective. Here follows a possible instance given by Haumann (2003).

(1)　　　se <u>legfamblawenda</u> seað & se 　<u>fula</u> … þæt wæs helle tintreges 　muð
　　　　　that emitting-foam 　pit 　& that foul 　RSP was hell's torment's mouth
　　　　　'the pit which foamed up with flame and was so foul … was the mouth of
　　　　　hell's torment' 　　(cobede,Bede_5:13.432.7.4345/translation in Miller (1891))

In (1), the second DP, namely *se fula*, consists of a determiner and an adjective, lacking a head noun. It has been argued that unlike OE, the lack of the adjectival inflection in Present-day English (PE) leads to this type of noun ellipsis, as in (2).

(2)　　　* John bought the red car and [the green]. 　　　　　　　　(Lobeck (1995))

The inflection-based analysis can explain the distinction between (1) and (2), successfully. However, we cannot ignore the example in (3), taken from BYU-BNC (Mark Davies (2004-)).

(3)　　　The size and amenities of **the new property** compared with **the old** is taken
　　　　　into consideration.

This example leads us to assume that we should not rely only on the inflection-based analysis. As argued in Günther (2011), noun ellipsis of this type is possible when a sharp contrast is present on the adjectival remnant. Corver and van Koppen (2008) provide the same argument based on noun ellipsis in Dutch.

(4)　　a.　　Over konijnen gesproken … (Talking about rabbits)
　　　　　　* Ik heb 　laatst 　nog 　een 　wit 　＿＿ 　gezien.
　　　　　　I 　have 　recently PRT 　a 　white 　　　seen
　　　　　　'I saw a white one recently.' 　　　　　　[Northern Standard Dutch]
　　　b.　　Over konijnen gesproken … (Talking about rabbits …)
　　　　　　Jij 　hebt 　een 　ZWART 　konijn, 　maar ik heb 　een WIT ＿＿＿.
　　　　　　you have 　a 　black_STRESS rabbit, 　but 　I 　have 　a 　white_STRESS.
　　　　　　'You have got a black rabbit, but I have got a white one.'
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[Colloquial Dutch]
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Corver and van Koppen (2008: 9ff.))

Dutch adjectives lack the inflectional ending only when they modify a neuter singular noun in an indefinite DP. Since the omitted noun *konijn* 'rabbit' is neuter and singular in (4), the inflection-based analysis predicts that noun ellipsis is not possible, as in (4a). However, it is ameliorated when the adjective is stressed, as in (4b). These facts allow us to assume that contrastive focus is the primary condition of noun ellipsis, and I propose that noun ellipsis is licensed under the following configuration.

(5)　　　$[_{DP}$ D $[_{<Foc, Foc>}$ AP$^{[+Foc]}$ $[_{FocP}{}^{[-Foc]}$ Foc^0 $\boxed{[_{NP}\ t^{AP}\ [_{NP}\ …\ ]]}]]]$, where $\boxed{}$ is deleted.

The adjectival remnant AP carries [+Foc], while Foc^0 carries [-Foc]. The merger of the AP$^{[+Foc]}$ and the FocP$^{[-Foc]}$ result in the label <Foc, Foc>. Ellipsis takes place only at the

complement of Foc^0. This focus-based analysis can explain noun ellipsis in PE.

However, we also cannot ignore the traditional observation that the adjectival inflection is responsible for the acceptability of noun ellipsis. I assume that the inflection on the adjectival remnant is required for the recovery/identification of the omitted constituent. In other words, the complement of Foc^0 in (5) can be identified as NP due to the agreement features on the adjective, even after its deletion. In sluicing (*… , but I don't know who*), for example, the same is true: the *wh*-feature on the *wh*-remnant identifies what follows it as the clausal constituent.

Returning to noun ellipsis, once the configuration in (5) is obtained, the DP will be a potential candidate for noun ellipsis. So, noun ellipsis like (3) is possible in PE. The acceptability of noun ellipsis also depends on the adjectival inflection, which makes the omitted NP accessible to the interpretive process. Therefore, the decline of noun ellipsis after OE would be explained by the loss of the adjectival inflection, as is generally assumed. However, note that the loss of the adjectival inflection did not cause the complete loss of noun ellipsis. Therefore, we should rely on contrastive focus with respect to the licensing.

In addition to (3), the insertion of the pro-form *one* salvages the ungrammaticality of (2):

(6)   John bought the red car and [the green *one*].   (cf. Lobeck (1995))

The pro-form *one* has been argued to rise to salvage noun ellipsis after the loss of the adjectival inflection. Based on the survey of *Penn-Helsinki-Parsed Corpus of Middle English, Second Edition* (PPCME2), Yamamura (2010) reports that the first instance of pro-form *one* is attested in a text composed in the fourteenth century. Considering that the adjectival inflection had already been levelled at the beginning of the Middle English period, why did the pro-form *one* rise around 200 years after its loss? Under the present analysis, this is because noun ellipsis is not licensed by inflection but contrastive focus, so the language did not have to immediately find an alternative to the adjectival inflection.

Thus, noun ellipsis in English has been possible under the two different but related conditions throughout its history: contrastive focus and the overt agreement inflection. The latter has been argued to be the central (or sometimes only) factor for the licensing of noun ellipsis, but I have argued that it is the secondary factor, and that noun ellipsis is primarily subject to contrastive focus.

References
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