

# THE PHENOMENON OF ELLIPSIS IN LINGUISTICS

**Abdullaeva Poshshajon,**

Senior teacher at the department of “Western Languages and Literature”, Mamun University

## Abstract

Ellipsis is considered as the most common grammatical cohesive device in written and spoken text and its main feature is the omission of certain parts of a sentence while preserving its meaning in a text or sentence and allowing the reader or listener to reconstruct the missing components from the context. The study explores the historical development of the concept, its theoretical interpretations, and its functional role in both written and spoken discourse. The findings show that ellipsis is a universal linguistic phenomenon that plays a significant role in ensuring cohesion and efficiency in communication. It is particularly characteristic of informal spoken language, where shared background knowledge allows for the omission of redundant elements without loss of meaning. This article provides information about the phenomenon of ellipsis and its types, they are analyzed using different examples.

**Key words:** Linguistics, ellipsis, omission, sentence, cohesive devices, context.

## Аннотация

Эллипсис считается одним из наиболее распространённых грамматических средств связности в письменной и устной речи. Его основная особенность заключается в опущении отдельных частей предложения при сохранении его смысла, что позволяет читателю или слушателю восстанавливать пропущенные элементы из контекста. В данном исследовании рассматриваются историческое развитие понятия эллипсиса, его теоретические интерпретации, а также функциональная роль в письменном и устном дискурсе. Результаты показывают, что эллипсис является универсальным языковым явлением, играющим важную роль в обеспечении связности и эффективности коммуникации. Он особенно характерен для неформальной устной речи, где общий фон знаний позволяет опускать избыточные элементы без потери смысла. В статье представлена информация о феномене эллипсиса и его типах, которые анализируются на основе различных примеров.

**Ключевые слова:** лингвистика, эллипсис, опущение, предложение, средства связности, контекст.

## Introduction

When discussing the phenomenon of ellipsis, it can be understood that this term has been applied over centuries to a wide range of phenomena. It covers situations ranging from those where words seem to be missing to a narrower set of specific textual constructions. Ellipsis is one of the cohesive devices, and its main feature is the omission of certain parts of a sentence. However, the meaning of the text can still be understood or reconstructed from the context.

In the history of linguistics, the topic of ellipsis has attracted significant interest and has been the subject of many discussions. This is because, although there may be no explicit form, meaning is still present, the content of an entire sentence can sometimes be understood even from a single word. For this reason, many linguists have conducted scientific research on this

phenomenon. The phenomenon of ellipsis refers to the omission of certain elements in a text or sentence. In English, it is also commonly known as “dot, dot, dot,” that is, “ellipsis”. The origin of this term is closely related to the Ancient Greek word “elleipsis,” meaning “omission”. Essentially, ellipsis involves leaving out certain parts of a sentence or text while preserving its meaning, in order to make the expression clearer and more concise for the reader.

### Literature Review And Methods

The phenomenon of ellipsis was first analyzed as a linguistic concept by the Russian linguist O. I. Reunova. In her work “*Ellipsis as a Linguistic Phenomenon*,” she attempted to address important issues such as the ways this phenomenon manifests itself and its role in literary texts. Indeed, when a component of a compound sentence is omitted, the meaning of that compound element is transferred to the remaining part of the expression. From this, it can be concluded that ellipsis contributes to the emergence of new meaning.

One of the earliest theoretical approaches was introduced by the prominent specialist in English functional grammar, M. A. K. Halliday. According to his view, ellipsis should be understood not from the perspective of the internal structure of sentences, but in terms of the relationships between them. The linguist also noted that ellipsis in a sentence can be replaced by substitution. He distinguishes three main types of ellipsis: nominal, predicative, and clausal ellipsis.

The well-known linguist Michael McCarthy defines ellipsis as follows: “Ellipsis usually involves the grammatical omission of elements within a sentence, however, speakers or writers assume that the meaning of the text can still be clearly understood even if certain parts are omitted” [2]. It can be concluded that ellipsis is a phenomenon related not only to written speech but also to spoken language. The scholar further interprets ellipsis as a universal feature of language.

According to the famous English linguist Randolph Quirk, it is essential to clearly identify which part of the sentence has undergone ellipsis and how the omitted element depends on the context. Ellipsis is not limited to written language but is also closely connected with spoken discourse. This idea is supported by both Quirk and McCarthy. Quirk also outlines several criteria necessary for the use of ellipsis. Firstly, Quirk emphasizes that the meaning of the omitted part must be clearly recoverable: “This implies the existence of cohesion in a context where there is no ambiguity, and there is no doubt about which words can be omitted” [3]. The second criterion concerns the grammatical incompleteness of the elliptical structure. It must be clear enough for the reader to recognize that certain words have been omitted, and the function of ellipsis is to explain why an element that is normally required in a grammatical sentence is missing. The third criterion indicates that once the omitted words are restored, we obtain sentences that contain certain elliptical elements but retain the same meaning as the original sentence. The last two criteria listed by Randolph Quirk are interrelated. One requires the reconstruction of the missing word or words from the text, while the other assumes that these missing elements exist in the text in exactly the same form. Quirk also identifies three types of ellipsis: textual ellipsis, structural ellipsis, and situational ellipsis. These types represent forms of cohesive ellipsis.

Many linguists have conducted research on the phenomenon of ellipsis. Significant work has also been carried out in Russian linguistics to address issues related to linguistic economy and ellipsis. Yu. S. Kubryakova states that the principle of economy in language resources is one of the strongest internal principles present in all languages of the world. In contrast, A.

Budagov argues that the principle of linguistic economy is not directly linked to language development, but rather to the emergence of ellipsis.

## Results And Analysis

Ellipsis is one of the most widespread means of creating syntactic expressiveness, and it is especially common in dialogic speech, as the constant connections between dialogue replicas provide favorable conditions for its use. When ellipsis is analyzed in literary texts, it is important to explain which part of the sentence has undergone omission and what purpose this omission serves. Furthermore, this phenomenon can also be observed in folklore, including proverbs, aphorisms, and phraseological units. Ellipsis is particularly widespread in proverbs. As a result of word omission, proverbs acquire a unique conciseness and expressiveness [4].

1. A good horse needs one whip, a bad horse needs a thousand.

2. Crops grow well in their own land,

A man - in his own people.

3. If you walk with the good, you will achieve your goal.

If you walk with the bad, you will be ashamed.

A later prominent English linguist who conducted extensive research on ellipsis is Ronald Carter. He defines this phenomenon as follows: "Ellipsis is one of the cohesive devices, and its main feature is the omission of words or phrases whose meaning can be recovered and understood from the context." According to Carter, ellipsis is used by speakers and writers- especially in spoken language- as a marker of informality [5]. The scholar demonstrates, through examples, that ellipsis is frequently used in spoken discourse by interlocutors who know each other well. Such speakers already share a common background of knowledge that facilitates mutual understanding. For this reason, Carter explains that it is not necessary to express all information in detail, since even if certain elements are omitted, the speaker or writer can still be understood. From this, it can be concluded that ellipsis is more characteristic of spoken language, and that omission does not affect the overall meaning of the text, but rather contributes to conciseness.

This can be clearly seen in the following example:

– *Can I borrow your pen?*

– *Yes, but what happened to yours?*

In this sentence, the pronoun "yours" in the nominal group is elliptical; the non-elliptical version would be "your pen". From this example, it can be understood that ellipsis is typical of informal style, and that nouns, pronouns, and auxiliary verbs are often omitted in sentences without changing their meaning.

## Conclusion

The phenomenon of ellipsis is one of the most widely studied topics in linguistics today. This phenomenon occurs in the linguistics of all languages. Their main feature is that ellipsis is the phenomenon of omitting a word from a sentence or text while keeping its content. It has caused a lot of discussion in linguistics, because ellipsis does not have a form, but there is a meaning, and the content of an entire sentence and text can be understood through a single word or sentence. In English, the types of ellipsis are such as nominal, that is, the omission of nouns and noun phrases, the omission of predicative, verb-like words, and sentence ellipsis, in which a whole sentence is omitted or certain parts are omitted, but the content of the text is preserved.



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