A new argument against strict identity in fragments
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The issue. The exact identity relation between antecedent (A) and ellipsis site (E) is a puzzle that revolves around the question whether identity is defined on a (morpho)syntactic representation or a semantic representation of sorts and whether it is strict or allows some 'looseness'. Strict syntactic approaches (e.g. Chomsky 1964, Lasnik 1995, Chung 2011, Merchant 2013) hold that the ellipsis site should be isomorphic in its syntax to its antecedent, such that it should be represented by an identical phrase marker and should contain the exact same terminal elements. Strict semantic approaches (within so-called structural approaches to ellipsis), like Merchant (2001 et seq.), operate with mutual entailment relation between antecedent and elided phrase.

For the case of fragments, concentrating on the identity of the lexical verbs in E and A, strict syntactic identity requires the exact same lexical item is used in E and A (while vehicle change and variation in the shape of indexical elements is allowed, Sag & Hankamer 1984). See (1) as illustration, with the remnant in situ (their exact position is inconsequential for our purposes). The strict semantic theory of mutual entailment between E and A also ensures that the same verb — in this case eat — is used in (1), as F-clo(A) and F-clo(E) only mutually entail each other if an identical predicate is used in them (cf. 2).

(1) A: What are you eating?       (2) F-clo(A) = \exists x. x you eat x
    B: I am eating a pizza.       F-clo(E) = \exists x. I eat x

This paper provides an argument against both kinds of strict identity theories and in support of accounts that allow some looseness between E and A via accommodation of the antecedent for the calculation of the identity relation with E.

The data. The novel data concern fragments attested in naturally occurring conversations, like (3B)-(5B), with argumental and adjunct remnants. They are well-formed in about a dozen languages we checked, and can be replicated with manner verbs and instrumental verbs (jog, rush, scrub, wipe, sweep, vacuum, fax, phone, yell, etc).

(3) A: What are you devouring?       (4) A: Where are you running to?
    B: A pizza, but I am not devouring it.    B: To school, but I am not running!
(5) A: When did you post the letter? B: On Monday, but I did not post it, I sent it via e-mail.

These data constitute a problem for strict syntactic and semantic identity theories as the ellipsis site in them cannot contain identical verbs to the verbs found in the antecedent. Observe the semantic incongruency of their non-elliptical equivalents below. The content of the but-clause is contradictory with that of the first clause.

(3') A: What are you devouring?
    B: # I am devouring a pizza, but I am not devouring it!
(4') A: Where are you running to?
    B: # I am running to school, but I am not running!

The grammaticality of (3)-(5) cannot be explained with reference to a non-isomorphic ellipsis site, e.g.an it-cleft or a pseudocleft, either. Firstly, the remnants bear a case marker or preposition that cannot occur as the nominative pivot of clefts in many languages that mark case overtly (and where these dialogues are fine). Secondly, paraphrasing the ellipsis site with a pseudocleft does not eliminate the problem of contradictoriness:
(6) A: What are you devouring?  
   B: # What I am devouring is a pizza, but I am not devouring it!

**THE ACCOUNT.** The pattern in (3)-(5) can be understood if we allow for ellipsis to make reference to accommodated antecedents. Following Fox (1999), Johnson (2012) and van Craenenbroeck (2013), Rooryck and Schoorlemmer (2014), and more specifically Thoms (2013), we argue that the identity relation can hold either between A and E, or between A' and E, where A' is an accommodated antecedent that is derived by manipulation of A. In our case, the accommodated antecedent is derived from the original question by replacing the original predicate by a less specific predicate. This replacement derives a set of less specific subquestions (Q1, Q2, Q3) all *entailed* by the predicate in the original question Q:

(7) A: Where are you **running** to?  
   Q = \( \exists x \ [\text{you run to(wards) } x] \)  
   \( Q_1 = \exists x \ [\text{you go to(wards) } x] \)  
   \( Q_2 = \exists x \ [\text{you go fast to(wards) } x] \)  
   \( Q_3 = \exists x \ [\text{you move to(wards) } x] \), etc.

The elliptical utterance answers one of these subquestions — e.g. Q2 with a manner adverb as part of the predicate (*I am going to school fast, but I am not running*) or Q2 without such an adverb (*I am going to school, but I am not running*) — and thus provides a *partial answer* to the original question.

(8) A: Where are you running to?  
   B: *I am going to school fast, but I am not running!*

The partiality of the answer provided is signaled by the presence of the *but*-clause, which spells out the fragmentary answer's relation to the original question, acting at the same time as an overt accommodation-seeking material (cf. Fox 1999). Clearly, if the *but*-clause is not present, the fragment must be understood as containing the exact same predicate.

(9) A: Where are you running to? B: *I am running to school.* / # B: *I am going fast to school.*

This account, if on the right track, provides an argument that the missing predicate in E can correspond to a predicate that is non-identical in exact form and exact meaning to the predicate in the overt antecedent. The difference in meaning between the two predicates can only concern aspects of meaning pertaining to adjunct modification — manner and instrument modification — and does not allow for argument structure mismatches (observe the ill-formedness of A: *When did you break the vase? B: # On Monday, but I didn't break it, it broke by itself?*). The phenomena thus provides novel evidence for Thoms' (2013) observation (and his account based on it) that ellipsis sites can show 'missing adverb' phenomena (the adjunct *blindly* in A missing in E):

(10) … Britain would *blindly* follow America, without asking why it would follow America.

I will show that the account provided here also allows for the possibility of representations of predicates in the ellipsis site that do not correspond to a single lexicalized verb, in line with Merchant's (2015) finding that ellipsis can 'repair' otherwise ineffable predicates.

**SELECTED REFERENCES.**  