

# ELLIPSIS AS A COHESIVE DEVICE IN ENGLISH AND POLISH: A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

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## 0.1. Opening remarks

Ellipsis as a cohesive device in sentence connection merits a closer contrastive analysis not only because of its pedagogical implications, but more importantly because of its high frequency of occurrence and significant differences that English and Polish in this very instance reveal. Shopen and Swieczkowski (1976) begin their paper on ellipsis with a kind of motto; "A command of ellipsis is a part of knowing a language", and observe further that ellipsis is part of that framework of grammatical structure within which the members of a culture can express their ideas. Strangely enough, these and other similar statements do not seem to have stimulated a wide-scale attack on ellipsis in contrastive studies. In contrast to other structural phenomena of language the study of ellipsis has still remained an underestimated domain, especially as regards its cohesive function in sentence connection. The former phenomenon, however, has been rarely touched upon in standard grammars of English and thus, apart from Quirk et al. (1972:708) — ellipsis in dialogue, the study of Halliday (1976) constitutes a praiseworthy exception. Neither has ellipsis paved its way in applied linguistics in spite of the commonly shared view among the teachers of English that to master ellipsis (above all verbal ellipsis) in English means to have a command of a great portion of English grammar.

As a matter of fact, much of what has been said about ellipsis within the sentence applies for the ellipsis among sentences in context. The structural properties of ellipsis remain unaltered. In sentence connection, however, ellipsis takes on one more function; that of a text-forming element. To examine the elliptical constructions that occur in sentence connection in the syntactic level, we shall have to concentrate mainly on ellipsis dependent on linguistic

context (contextual ellipsis) leaving aside such problems as ellipsis in subjectless clauses for instance. In other words, we shall concentrate on such structures contained in  $S_2$  whose understanding and interpretation are based on the preceding  $S_1$ , or strictly speaking, on the preceding item contained in that sentence which serves as a source of missing information for the elliptical item to follow and constitutes a structural clue for ellipsis. Accordingly, we shall discuss such cases of ellipsis which fall under the postulated formula:

$$S_1 \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP (H)} \\ \text{VP (Lv, Mv, Op.)} \\ \text{Clause} \end{array} \right\} + S_2 (\emptyset)$$

where  $S_1$  contains either a noun phrase (that contains a head), or a verb phrase (that contains a lexical verb, modal verb, or operator) or clause, all of which are ellipted in  $S_2$ . Similarly to Gunter (1974) by linguistic context we shall mean the immediately foregoing sentence ( $S_1$  uttered by someone other than the ellipsis maker in  $S_2$ ).

In our analysis of ellipsis we shall adopt the division applied by Halliday, based on the criterion of the grammatical function of the ellipted item. Thus, we shall discuss nominal, verbal, and clausal ellipsis respectively.

### 1.0. Nominal Ellipsis

To avoid terminological discussion on the components of a noun phrase we shall adopt the description of a nominal group presented by Halliday (1976) which, in fact, corresponds to that of Quirk (1972) and is accepted by most standard grammars. (For a more detailed contrastive analysis of noun phrase in Polish and English see: Fisiak et al. 1978:55 ff.). We shall view then, the primary structure of a nominal group as (M)-H+(Q) ie. Pre/Modifier + Head + Qualifier (Postmodifier).

Halliday observes (1976:148) that the principal function of nominal ellipsis is that of upgrading a modifier to function as head. Thus, in the context:

- 1 a) Which do you prefer: the Italian cars or the English cars?  
 b) The Italian are better, I think.  
 1 a') Które samochody wolisz, włoskie czy angielskie?  
 b') Myślę, że włoskie są lepsze.

'Italian' which is an epithet and consequently acts as modifier, is upgraded to function as head, or in other words, 'Italian' functions as modifier in 1a, and as head in 1b. We can, therefore, speak of the noun phrase in 1b as an elliptical nominal group. At this very point we should stress the importance of context and the role it plays in sentence connection. Thus, 1b divorced of its context would be completely meaningless if it were not for the source of information

supplied from the preceding nominal group 1a. Accordingly, "... a nominal group that is elliptical presupposes a previous one that is not, and is therefore cohesive, (...) and may always be replaced by its full, nonelliptical equivalent" (cf Halliday 1976:148). Ellipsis occurs as well with noun phrases consisting of head only. In such cases the head is ellipted altogether:

- 2a) George failed the examination.  
 b) Didn't he tell you that I passed.  
 2a') George nie zdał egzaminu.  
 b') Nie powiedział ci, że ja zdałem?

The examples in English and Polish we have provided so far reveal close structural similarity as regards their elliptical structures. Let us examine now the following set of instances:

- 3a) Here are my six white shirts.  
 b) Where are yours?  
 c) What about yours?  
 d) Let me see the next.  
 e) May I choose the best for myself?  
 f) I prefer mine.  
 3a') Oto sześć moich białych koszul.  
 b') Gdzie są twoje?  
 c') A jak tam twoje/twoja?  
 d') Pokaż mi następne/następną?  
 e') Mogę wybrać najlepsze/najlepszą dla siebie?  
 f') Wolę swoją/swoje.

The first difference that turns up in the above is that of number. This can be accounted for as follows: neither the adjective in English nor the possessives in the adjectival function are marked for the singular/plural distinction. Hence, the elliptical 3c, 3d, 3e, and 3f irrespective of their context may presuppose *your shirt vs your shirts* (3b), *the next shirt vs next shirts* (3d), *the best shirt vs the best shirts* and so on, provided the distinction of number is signalled by the verb as in 3b. Alternatively, there are instances of nominal ellipsis where English allows for two interpretations whereas in Polish due to the case forms which clearly distinguish between plural/singular number, the interpretation becomes more specific. This, however, in no way impoverishes the English system which to solve the ambiguity may resort to substitution, eg. *Let me see the one vs Let me see the next ones* or *the best one vs the best ones* as in 3d, e. This does not refer to the possessive pronouns *mine, yours* etc, which will always remain ambiguous (compare 3f). The same holds true for gender the lack of which may cause some ambiguity or hesitation as to which head is presupposed in;



4a) Do you like the house and the piece of land I bought?

b) Well, I prefer mine.

4a') Podoba ci się ten dom i działka, którą kupiłem?

b') Wolę swój/swoją/swoje.

The *mine* in 4b may presuppose either *the house* or *the piece of land*, or both. The inflected possessive *swój* in Polish (marked for gender and number) excludes such a scope of possible interpretations and consequently may be ascribed the feature of containing more cohesive power.

The distinction between number and gender is as well neutralized with *any* in contrast to Polish marked forms for respective indefinite pronouns:

5a) I want some books on animals.

b) We don't have any.

c) Take any.

5a') Chcę kilka książek o zwierzętach.

b') Nie mamy żadnej/żadnych

c') Weź którąkolwiek/którekolwiek.

where the presupposed nominal group in 5b, c, may refer to book, books, animal, animals, whereas in 5b', c', the indeterminacy that arises in the extent of presupposition is actually restricted to *żadnych* (+książek, zwierząt), *którekolwiek* (+książki, zwierzęta) as the respective plural forms correspond to each other.

Attention should be paid also to the difference that arises with the Polish counterpart for English *both* functioning elliptically. Let us examine the examples provided by Halliday and contrast them with Polish equivalents:

6a) The parents could not be traced.

b) Apparently both were abroad.

6a') Rodziców nie można było znaleźć.

b') Najwidoczniej obydwójce byli zagranicą.

7a) The parents may enjoy it but the children will be bored.

b) You cannot please both.

7a') Rodzicom może się to podobać ale dzieci się z nudzą.

b') Nie można zadowolić jednych i drugich.

It follows from the above that the English item *both* is expressed by *obydwójce* or *jedni i drudzy* in Polish. This distinction is brought about by the fact that *obydwójce* (which also enters into a case agreement with nouns) has exclusively the sense of 'two', and therefore refers back to a nominal group containing a head in plural presupposing only a set of two single entities (compare 6b' in contrast to 7b'). In the case of two or more sets in the presupposed nominal group Polish makes use of *jedni i drudzy*. The point is, however, that the usage of *jedni i drudzy* has no elliptical function in Polish but may be interpreted as an instance of

reference rather having the function similar to that of pronouns. Let us compare:

8a) Two students were standing in front of the building.

b) Both were called in.

8a') Dwaj studenci stali przed budynkiem.

b') Wezwano obydwu do środka.

9a) The students and professors were standing there, too.

b) Both were called in.

9a') Studenci i profesorowie stali tam również.

b') Wezwano jednych i drugich do środka.

*Obydwu* in 8b' entails the elliptical noun from the previous context ie. *Obydwu studentów*. *Jednych i drugich* in 9b' on the other hand, stands for or refers back to the two nouns *studenci i profesorowie* respectively, for we cannot have: \**Wezwano jednych i drugich studentów i profesorów...*". The distinction between *obydwójce* and *jedni i drudzy* allows as well for avoiding ambiguity which arises in the case of English *both* that may constitute an indetermined cohesive tie as in:

10a) John and Mary played ball with their younger friends.

b) Both were having good time.

10a') John i Mary grali w piłkę z młodszymi kolegami.

b') Obydwójce świetnie się bawili.

c') Jedni i drudzy świetnie się bawili.

where the cohesive ties can be interpreted as follows:

10b) — both=(John+Mary)+(their younger friends)

b') — obydwójce=(John and Mary)

c') — jedni i drudzy=(John+Mary)+(z młodszymi kolegami)

Thus, the semantic interpretation of *jedni i drudzy* in contrast to *obydwójce* is *wszyscy* (all).

*Jedni i drudzy*, moreover, can occur in singular with positive or negative meaning contrasting with English *both* and *neither*, for example:

11a) Did John write the short story or the poem?

b) Both.

c) Neither.

11a') John napisał opowiadanie czy wiersz?

b') Jedno i drugie.

c') Ani jedno ani drugie.

This leads us still to another observation that *both* in 11b cannot be realized in Polish by *obydwu* in 11b' as the correferential nouns in the previous context



11a' are two different entities (short story vs. poem). Thus, *obydwa* in Polish falls under additional restriction, namely: *obydwa* refers back to two single entities which must be the same. (Compare 8b') This restriction does not apply to *jedno i drugie* in singular (positive, negative) which can occur elliptically regardless of the sameness of the preceding nouns, along with *obydwa* and *żaden*, e.g.

12a) Which if the two books has John read?

b) Neither.

c) Both.

12a') Którą z tych dwóch książek przeczytał John?

b') Ani jedną ani drugą. (Żadną).

c') Jedną i drugą. (Obydwie).

To finish with, let us observe that Polish does not distinguish between neither (of the two), or none (of the many), both realized by *żaden*, eg.:

13a) How many books has John read?

b) None.

13a') Ile książek przeczytał John?

b') Żadnej.

The equivalent for *either* is *którykolwiek* or *albo jeden albo drugi*, eg.:

14a) Which side of the street should we park our car?

b) Either.

14a') Po której stronie powinniśmy zaparkować samochód?

b') Po którejkolwiek. (Po jednej albo po drugiej).

The remaining premodifiers (several, some, few, many, all, vs. *niektóre, nie-liczne, wiele, wszystkie*) reveal no structural differences in their elliptical properties in the two languages in question.

## 2.0. Verbal ellipsis

Verbal ellipsis does not constitute one system but is strictly connected with the fairly complex verb system of language. We shall not be concerned here with a detailed analysis of verb phrase structures in Polish and English (already done elsewhere, cf. Fisiak et al. 1978: 27ff., 123ff.) which might entail an unnecessary discussion about the particular structural and functional differences of verbal elements in the two respective languages. It seems convenient to discuss the phenomenon of ellipsis in sentence connection under the general headings of Modal/Operator Ellipsis and Main/Lexical Verb Ellipsis. Such two-fold division should simplify and facilitate the contrastive approach without violating the general principles of verb phrase structures in English and Polish.

## 2.1 Main/Lexical Verb Ellipsis

Halliday (1976) observes that any verbal group not containing a lexical verb is elliptical. However, a structural phenomenon that works in the system of one language does not have to hold true in the other. As we shall see below, English and Polish manifest in this respect a considerable discrepancy. Let us compare the following set of examples:

15a) Mary won't sing tonight.

b) She might tomorrow.

c) She could tomorrow.

d) She should tomorrow.

e) She must be all means.

f) She would if I asked her.

g) She will tomorrow then.

15a') Mary nie będzie śpiewać dziś wieczorem.

b') Mogłaby jutro.

c') Mogłaby jutro.

d') Powinna jutro.

e') Musi mimo wszystko.

f') Śpiewałaby gdybym ją poprosił.

g') Więc zaśpiewa jutro.

It follows from the above that there is a group of English modals which in this type of sentence connection find their close corresponding modal form in Polish and allow for lexical verb ellipsis (compare 15b — e, 15b' — e'). The difference arises with *will, would, shall*, whose equivalence in Polish is, as a rule, the repetition of the lexical verb (compare 15f, g, 20f', g'). The above structural difference results from; firstly, the lack of a structural *would* counterpart in Polish, (its equivalent is the inflected form of a verb marked for conditional mood, eg. *-bym, byś, -by* etc.) and secondly, the misleading similarity of Polish auxiliary *być* as a future marker *będzie* to the English modal *will*. Let us repeat after Fisiak (1978:123ff.) that "the English modals *shall, will* used as modals expressing intention or prediction do not have any counterparts in Polish". Thus, we face instances where lexical ellipsis cannot occur in Polish and is expressed by the repetition of the verb or the ellipsis of the whole predication, eg:

16a) Who will take the exams if Mary won't?

b) He will.

16a') Kto będzie zdawać egzaminy jeśli Mary nie zechce?

b') On. (On będzie zdawać).

17a) I'm afraid they will do it.

b) They won't, believe me.



17a') Obawiam się, że to zrobią.

b') Nie zrobią, wierz mi.

However, the contrast between English modal *will* and Polish future tenses in the light of ellipsis still requires certain comments. In the first place we know that *will* has two equivalents future imperfective or future perfective tense, eg: *będę pisać/pisał vs napiszę*. It can be easily noticed that future perfective never occurs with ellipsis in S. (compare 17b'). Likewise, we cannot have:

18a) I will wait till John returns.

b) I will, too.

c) I won't.

18a') Zaczekam aż John wróci.

b') \*Ja będę też. (Ja też., or Ja też zaczekam).

c') \*Ja nie będę. (Ja nie., or Ja nie zaczekam).

What makes ellipsis in Polish impossible in the above is the very lack of the auxiliary in the preceding sentence. When it comes to the future imperfective, however, the verdict about the acceptability of some elliptical rejoinders becomes more complex. Let us compare the following:

19a) I will be waiting here till John returns.

b) But I won't.

19a') Będę tu czekać aż John wróci.

b') Ale ja nie będę. (Ale ja nie).

20a) I won't be waiting here till John returns.

b) But I will.

20a') Nie będę tu czekać aż John wróci.

b') Ale ja będę. (Ale ja tak).

21a') Who will be waiting for John?

b) I will.

c) Mary will.

21a') Kto będzie czekać na Johna?

b') \*Ja będę. (?)

c') \*Maria będzie. (?)

22a) Why is Mary cooking dinner?

b) Because I won't.

c) Because my wife won't.

22a') Dlaczego Maria gotuje obiad?

b') \*Bo ja nie będę. (?)

c') \*Bo moja żona nie będzie. (?)

The sentences 19b' and 20b' sound emphatic. More naturally we would have the alternative forms *Ja tak/nie*. For most native speakers of Polish the accepta-

lity of 19b' and 20b' presents no doubt. It is not so however with 21b', c', 22b', c', that is to say, with answers to questions which do not seem to allow ellipsis of lexical verbs even if used in future imperfective, i.e. containing the *dzie* element. It is the lack of the former one in 22a' (the question asked with the lexical present form) that makes 22b', c' incohesive. Moreover 22c' might be interpreted as ambiguous, meaning something like: "Bo moja żona nie będzie na obiedzie". "Because my wife won't be to dinner." Compare also:

23a) Why won't be Mary inviting (won't invite) guests to dinner?

b) Because I won't.

23a') Dlaczego Maria nie będzie zapraszać gości na obiad?

b') Bo ja nie będę (zapraszać).

(na obiedzie).

It is not easy to establish an exhaustive list of restrictions or conditions as regards the *będzie*+ellipsis structure, as there seem to be many exceptions and individual preferences as to its acceptability. That is why the example provided in 15g' might be "Wtedy będzie jutro" and would to many pass as cohesive. What we can do is to give a minimum of three conditions under which the discussed ellipsis can occur:

1) S<sub>1</sub> Affirmative future imperfective.

S<sub>2</sub> Negative contrastive response.

2) S<sub>1</sub> Negative future imperfective.

S<sub>2</sub> Positive Contrastive response.

3) S<sub>1</sub> Yes/no question in future imperfective.

S<sub>2</sub> Negative answer. eg.

Will you be playing with me? No, I will not.

Będziesz się ze mną bawić? Nie, nie będę.

The properties of lexical ellipsis in English (with modals) also extend to auxiliaries *be* and *have*, in progressive and perfective tenses. As Polish has no special structural means to match English progressive vs. non-progressive, perfective vs. non-perfective distinction, therefore, no such instances of lexical ellipsis are possible (cf. Fisiak 1978:111 ff.). In this case, the equivalent of lexical ellipsis in Polish is either the repetition of the lexical verb or the omission of the whole of the predication, eg:

24a) He has been coming here since yesterday.

b) I know he has.

24a') Przychodzi tu od wczoraj.

b') Wiem, że przychodzi. (Wiem).

As we have noticed earlier there are instances of lexical verb ellipsis common to Polish and English when the non-modal verb is presupposed by modal (com-

pare 15b', c', d'). Whereas English has the property of working proportionally in two directions ie. non-modal presupposed by modal and modal presupposed by non-modal, the former one cannot occur in Polish, eg:

25a) He beats his wife every day.

b) He shouldn't.

25a') Bije żonę codziennie.

b') Nie powinien.

26a) He should beat his wife every day.

b) Why doesn't he?

26a') Powinien bić żonę codziennie.

b') Dlaczego nie bije?

27a) I can answer the question.

b) Why don't you?

c) Please, do.

27a') Mogę odpowiedzieć na to pytanie.

b') Dlaczego nie odpowiadasz. c') Proszę odpowiedz.

The lexical verb in  $S_1$  is as a rule repeated in  $S_2$ , which illustrates at the same time the non-occurrence of lexical verb ellipsis in Polish with *do*. The very fact, however, that the lexical verb is repeated in Polish does not alter the restriction we observe in both languages, namely; if the modal verb is presupposed by non-modal, the subjects in both sentences must be correferential:

28a) They can swim.

b) \*But we don't.

c) But they don't.

28a') Potrafią pływać.

b') \*Ale nie pływamy.

c') Ale nie pływają.

### 3.0. Modal/Operator Ellipsis

Modal verb ellipsis (Operator ellipsis) consists in involving only the omission of modals or operators whereas the lexical verb remains intact. The nature of this kind of ellipsis is such that it occurs mainly in very closely bounded sequences such as answers to questions, questions to statements and the like, and is usually accompanied by the omission of the subject and the entire verb system besides the lexical verb. The ellipted modal (operator) can be easily found by reference to the surrounding context. The sentence that follows  $S_1$  is very often a short response, eg. past participle only:

29a) He may have been caught by the police.

b) And arrested.

29a') Mógł być złapany przez policję.

b') I zaarrestowany.

where the ellipted elements are: *may have been* and *mógł być*. What brings about the main difference as regards modal/operator ellipsis in the two languages is the non-existence of the category 'operator', the lack of tense operators (auxiliaries) *be* and *have* in Polish, which make operator ellipsis in this language impossible, eg:

30a) Was she crying?

b) No, laughing.

30a') Płakała?

b') Nie, śmiała się.

31a) What have you been doing?

b) Learning English.

31a') Co robiłeś?

b') Uczyłem się angielskiego.

We can speak, therefore, of the non-existence of this kind of operator ellipsis in Polish due to the functional and structural difference in verb phrase structure, and the fact that the features of tense aspect and person are, in Polish, already signalled in the lexical verb itself. The same holds true for the modals *will* [*would* (as discussed above) whose counterparts in Polish are lexical verbs in their respective tense and mood.

Mention should be made as well of operator ellipsis in English with non-finite verbal clauses having the structure to be+present participle where the operator *to be* can be omitted in  $S_2$ , eg:

32a) What would you like your children to be doing?

b) Helping their mother.

32a') Co chciałbyś żeby twoje dzieci robiły?

b') Żeby pomagały matce.

The lack of correspondence between 32b and 32b' is caused by the non-existence of the to be+present participle structure in Polish. The structure in Polish which corresponds to the purpose construction in English is the complementizer *żeby*+the past tense third person form. It can be moreover observed that the elliptical response in 32b lacks, as it were, the cohesive power that can be traced in 32b'. 32b if deprived of the preceding context, might be interpreted as a possible response to a number of contexts:

What would you like to be doing? }

What are they doing? }

What will they be doing? }

What were they doing? }

} Helping their mother.



In Polish the responses would echo the structural signals in  $S_2$ . Thus, we would have: *pomagać...*, *pomagają...*, *pomagać...*, *pomagali swojej matce*, respectively.

#### 4. 0. Clausal Ellipsis

In this section we shall mainly concentrate on differences that occur between clausal ellipsis in the two languages under analysis. Thus, we shall not be concerned with the analysis of the principles and interdependencies of verbal ellipsis and the clause already presented in details in Halliday (1976:194 ff.). Neither shall we discuss the numerous instances where clausal ellipsis reveals a close correspondence in the two languages as in:

33a) Peter will be there.

b) Are you sure?

33a') Piotr tam będzie.

b') Jesteś pewien?

To begin with, we have to emphasize the fact that clausal ellipsis is directly bound up with the already discussed lexical verb and modal/operator ellipsis. This follows from the very structure of the verb phrase, that is to say, it depends on which verbal element is ellipted. Consequently, a clause can be looked at as having a two-part structure that consists of a modal element plus propositional element where any of them can be omitted (cf. Halliday 1976:197). What constitutes the greatest difference between English and Polish is, as a matter of fact, the propositional ellipsis in English answers to questions. Let us compare the following set of examples:

34a) Have you finished your work?

b) Yes, I have.

c) No, I haven't.

d) John has.

34a') Skończyłeś pracę?

b') Tak. (Skończyłem).

c') Nie. (Nie skończyłem).

d') John skończył.

35a) Is John going to school tomorrow?

b) Yes, he is.

c) No, he isn't.

d) Mary is.

35a') Czy Janek idzie do szkoły jutro?

b') Tak. (Idzie).

c') Nie. (Nie idzie).

d') Maria idzie.

36a) Should children obey their parents?

b) Yes, they should.

c) No, they shouldn't.

36a') Czy dzieci powinny być posłuszne rodzicom?

b') Tak. (Powinny).

c') Nie. (Nie powinny).

37a) Does she speak German?

b) Yes, she does.

c) No, she doesn't.

37a') Czy ona mówi po niemiecku?

b') Tak. (Mówi).

c') Nie. (Nie mówi).

The above instances of propositional ellipsis in English can be accounted for by what Halliday terms as a principle of marked polarity, i.e. the negative vs. positive selection which consists in preserving the modal/operator at the beginning of a verbal group whereas all else can be omitted. The preservation of the modal/operator from the previous context is a peculiar feature of English which has no counterpart in Polish. The positive and negative answers (*tak*, *nie*) which in themselves are sufficient entail the ellipsis of the whole clause or a sentence in fact, and might be as well referred to as sentence ellipsis.

It should be mentioned moreover, that in many cases the distinction between ellipsis and substitution is neutralised and both forms are undistinguishable or fused, eg.

Does Mary play piano? No, but John does.,

where *does* can be interpreted as an instance of ellipsis i.e. *does*+*play*, or as substitution i.e. *does*=*plays*. The possibility of substitution increases, as a matter of fact, the range of cohesive answers to questions in English.

There is still one further context for clausal ellipsis which occurs with what Halliday refers to as rejoinders to statements (1976:214). These rejoinders to the presupposed items which are not questions present a significant structural difference between the two languages. Let us compare:

38a) John is going to come.

b) Is he?

38a') John przyjdzie.

b') Czyżby? (Naprawdę?) Przyjdzie?

39a) He has just arrived.

b) Has he?

39a') Właśnie przyjechał.

b') Czyżby? (Naprawdę?) Przyjechał?

40a) John met Mary yesterday.

b) Did he?

40a') John spotkał wczoraj Mary.

b') Czyżby? (Naprawdę?) Spotkał?

The utterances marked b, b' are cohesive rejoinders that have the function of quering the preceding statements. In English they take on the form of interrogative clauses with propositional ellipsis similar to the question tags at the end of declarative clauses. The Polish equivalent is a lexical item that corresponds to English *really?*, *indeed?* or the repetition of lexical (or modal, operator) verbs with interrogative rising intonation. The former instance, seems to be, however, less frequent. This type of ellipsis, therefore, does not occur in Polish unless we accept the view that *czyżby* and *naprawdę* entail the ellipsis of the whole clause eg: *czyżby + przyjechał*, *naprawdę + spotkał*, etc.

As the final point in the discussion of ellipsis that deserves some attention is the interesting instance of zeugma or zegumatic answers. Zeugma is a rhetoric figure based on ellipsis which as Halliday puts it " ... involves a transfer from one element of clause structure to another" (1976:214). Zeugma produces a comic, unexpected effect characteristic of language humour. Zeugmatic answers are typical for particular structures of languages and, consequently, more often than not, untranslatable. One could provide a number of examples. Let us confine ourselves to some:

41) Wziął ją za żonę? Nie, za nogi.

42) Co pan reżyser ostatnio nakręcił? Zegarek.

43) Co wam nauczyciel zadał Cios.

44) Pan jest samochodem? Nie, magistrzem.

The untranslatability of zeugmatic effect is due to the lack of correspondance between collocations in particular languages. Thus, in 42 for example, *nakręcić* collocates in Polish with both *film* and *zegarek* whereas English distinguishes between *to shoot a film* and *to wind a watch*. (More detailed comments on zeugma are presented in Plett 1975:231 ff.).

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