

VERBAL ELLIPSIS IN RUSSIAN, POLISH AND CZECH¹

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1. Introduction

Verbal ellipsis (VE) refers to the syntactically null realization of a verb whose meaning can be understood or “recovered” from the context. All of the Slavic languages under discussion — Russian, Polish, and Czech (R-P-C) — permit VE more liberally than English; Russian permits far more VE than Polish or Czech. These cross-linguistic differences raise both practical and theoretical questions. This article focuses on the practical side: description, categorization, data analysis. It offers an overview of VE for anyone teaching, studying, or researching these languages.

1.1 THE THEORETICAL CONNECTION

Although theory in itself is not central to this article, I will make reference to the syntactic theory called Principles and Parameters Theory (P&P) because it provides explicit and well-motivated diagnostics for analyzing certain classes of elliptical sentences.² No technical aspects of the theory will be addressed, nor will any familiarity with it be assumed.

As a syntactic theory, P&P deals primarily with the formal structure of individual sentences, which excludes many aspects of language, like semantics (the meaning of language) and discourse (how sentences are put together).³ However, despite its narrowly structural approach, P&P amply describes the majority of patterns of VE found in natural language. It divides VE into four types based on what are called *licensing* and *recoverability* conditions for the ellipted category, i.e., those aspects of the context that permit ellipsis, and the means by which the ellipted material is understood. These are the same things any practical description of ellipsis must provide: rules for when a category can be ellipted, and means for understanding what was omitted.

All the languages under consideration — English, Russian, Polish, and Czech — employ all four types of VE delineated in P&P Theory. However, while these types of VE account for virtually all verbless sentences in

English, they fall short when it comes to R-P-C. The obvious task, then, is to establish explicit licensing and recoverability conditions for the left-over types of VE in Slavic, what I will call Slavic-Specific Verbal Ellipsis (SSVE). There is, however, one problem. P&P syntactic theory has little to say about semantics or discourse. But in sentences containing SSVE, semantics are no less important than syntax, and matters of discourse are often crucial as well. So, while one could muscle SSVE into a syntactic theory like P&P, that approach would necessarily gloss over a most interesting aspect of this ellipsis phenomenon: the interface between syntax, semantics, and discourse, which will be one focus of this study.

My work on ellipsis in Russian and Polish (McShane 1998) gave rise to the hypothesis that the difference in VE potential between these languages was connected to their differing employment of subject ellipsis. To test this hypothesis (whose validity is confirmed below) I added Czech to the ellipsis databank. Future work will incorporate more languages with the goal of achieving broader typological coverage of VE in Slavic.

1.2 ORGANIZATION AND GOALS

The first half of this paper describes the four types of VE proposed in P&P.⁴ The properties of each type are listed with supporting examples from English and R-P-C. Cross-linguistic variation in the employment of VE is shown to be typologically grounded.

The second half of the paper is devoted to SSVE, which encompasses all the seemingly exotic verbless sentences in R-P-C. Emphasis will be placed on typological differences in ellipsis potential between Russian (an East Slavic language) and Polish/Czech (West Slavic languages).

This paper has three primary goals:

- to provide an accessible account of VE for Slavic linguists and teachers and learners of R-P-C;
- to show that SSVE is a phenomenon dependent not only on syntax, but on semantics and discourse as well;
- to suggest typological implications of VE phenomena both within Slavic and between Slavic and non-Slavic languages.

2. The Four Types of Verbal Ellipsis Common to All the Languages Under Study

The four types of verbal ellipsis that are delineated in P&P Theory and employed similarly in all our languages are called Gapping, Stripping, Sluicing, and Verb Phrase Ellipsis. They are discussed below in turn.

2.1 GAPPING

Gapping refers to the ellipsis of the verb and, optionally, other parts of the verb phrase in the second clause of a coordinate or comparative structure:

e.g., *I ordered pancakes and my sister [e] French toast; Sam completed his Ph.D. in five years and Lou [e] in 9 years; Ivan defends communism more vehemently than Sally [e] capitalism.* Here, as in all the examples to follow, the ellipited category is represented by an emboldened [e], and the antecedent (the word(s) from which the ellipited category takes its reference) is emboldened as well.⁵

The formal restrictions on Gapping, which apply to all the languages under study, include the following:

- **The antecedent must be overt in the preceding clause**, it cannot merely be implied by the surrounding context. In addition, although the antecedent and its coreferential category must match semantically, they need not match morphologically (i.e., with respect to features like number and gender).⁶

(1a) R: Sara **xočet narisovat'** lodku, a Petr [e]—samolet.
 P: Sara **chce narysować** łódkę, a Piotr [e]—samolot.
 C: Sára **chce nakreslit** lod'ku, a Petr [e]—letadlo.
 E: Sarah **wants to draw** a boat and Peter [e] an airplane.

(1b) R: * Sara [e] lodku, a Petr [e]—samolet.⁷
 P: * Sara [e] łódkę, a Piotr [e]—samolot.
 C: * Sára [e] lod'ku, a Petr [e]—letadlo.
 E: * Sarah [e] a boat and Peter [e] an airplane.

- **The antecedent must precede the ellipited category.**⁸

(2a) R: Sara **xočet narisovat'** lodku, a Petr [e]—samolet.
 P: Sara **chce narysować** łódkę, a Piotr [e]—samolot.
 C: Sára **chce nakreslit** lod'ku, a Petr [e]—letadlo.
 E: Sarah **wants to draw** a boat and Peter [e] an airplane.

(2b) R: * Petr [e]—samolet, a Sara **xočet narisovat'** lodku.
 P: * Piotr [e]—samolot, a Sara **chce narysować** łódkę.
 C: * Petr [e]—letadlo, a Sára **chce nakreslit** lod'ku.
 E: * Peter [e] an airplane, and Sarah **wants to draw** a boat.

- **Gapping can occur in coordinate and comparative configurations, but not in subordinate ones.**

(3a) R: Marija **prigotovila užin** vo vtornik, a Petr [e]—v sredu.
 P: Maria **ugotowała obiad** we wtorek, a Piotr [e]—w środę.
 C: Marie **uvařila večeři** v úterý a Petr [e] ve středu.
 E: Mary **cooked dinner** on Tuesday and Peter [e] on Wednesday.

(3b) R: * Petr **prigotovil užin** v sredu potomu, čto Marija [e]—vo vtornik.
 P: * Piotr **ugotował obiad** w środę, bo Maria [e]—we wtorek.
 C: * Petr **uvařil večeři** ve středu, protože Marie [e] v úterý.
 E: * Peter **cooked dinner** on Wednesday because Mary [e] on Tuesday.

- **Remnants, the categories that remain overt in the Gapped clause, must be major constituents.** In the examples below, *with their dogs* is a preposi-

tional phrase, which is a type of major constituent. The words comprising the prepositional phrase cannot be split up such that some are included in the Gap and others are not.

- (4a) R: My **priexali** so swoimi koškami, a oni — [e] so swoimi sobakami.
 P: My **przyjechaliśmy** ze swoimi kotami, a oni — [e] ze swoimi psami.
 C: **Přišli jsme** se svými kot'aty a oni [e] se svými psy.⁹
 E: We **came with** our cats and they [e] with their dogs.
- (4b) R: * My **priexali** so swoimi koškami, a oni — [e] swoimi sobakami.
 P: * My **przyjechaliśmy** ze swoimi kotami, a oni — [e] swoimi psami.
 C: * **Přišli jsme** se svými kot'aty a oni [e] svými psy.
 E: ?? We **came with** our cats and they [e] their dogs.¹⁰
- (4c) R: * My **priexali** so swoimi koškami, a oni — [e] sobakami.
 P: * My **przyjechaliśmy** ze swoimi kotami, a oni — [e] psami.
 C: * **Přišli jsme** se svými kot'aty a oni [e] psy.
 E: * We **came with our** cats and they [e] dogs.

- **Gapping can be employed cooperatively**, meaning that two or more speakers can jointly create a Gapping structure.

- (5) R: «Mitja igraet na klarnete». — «I Nina [e] — na pianino».
 P: „Mitja gra na klarnecie.” — „A Nina [e] — na pianinie.”
 C: “Mit'a hraje na klarinet.” “A Nina [e] na piáno.”
 E: “Mitya plays the clarinet.” “And Nina [e] the piano.”

- **Gapping is recursive**, which means that the same elements can be Gapped in many clauses in a row.

- (6) R: «Ženščiny **mne kažutsja** privlekatel'nymi, mužčiny [e] — obxoditel'nymi, a deti [e] — vežlivymi».
 P: „Kobiety **wydają mi się** ładne, mężczyźni [e] uprzejmi, a dzieci [e] grzeczne” (*Auto*: 90).¹¹
 C: “Ženy **se mi zdají** pěkné, muži [e] příjemní a děti [e] slušné.”
 E: “The women **strike me** as pretty, the men [e] suave, and the children [e] polite.”

All the properties of Gapping listed above are syntactic in nature — that is, related to formal sentence structure. But Gapping also requires semantic parallelism between compared entities. For example, the sentence *I jog with pleasure, and the queen of England [e] in the park* (implying that the queen of England jogs in the park) fails on semantic grounds and will be ungrammatical in any language.

While the basic properties of Gapping apply to all our languages, there are a number of typologically grounded cross-linguistic variations. For purposes of illustration, let us focus on three such variations.

2.1.1 *Gapping and Style*

In English, Gapping is limited to rather formal or planned speech, while in R-P-C it is employed liberally in all speech registers. For example, in (7)

the speaker is a young girl and the interlocutor is her even younger brother. Whereas Gapping is natural in R-P-C, it would sound forced, if not strictly ungrammatical, in English.

- (7) R: «Značit tak: ty **ideš'** k šofěru, a ja [e] – v konec avtobusa . . .» (*Avto* 28).
 P: „A więc: ty **idziesz** do szofera, a ja [e] – na koniec autobusa.”
 C: “Takže, tohle je plán: ty **půjdeš** za řidičem a já [e] na konec autobusu.”
 E: ? “So, this is the plan: you go up to the driver and I [e] to the back of the bus.”

It is not surprising that Gapping is more prevalent in R-P-C than in English: after all, ellipsis on the whole is more prevalent in these Slavic languages.¹² Consider, for a moment, the global matter of ellipsis in natural language. It has been proposed that languages can be roughly categorized as discourse oriented and non-discourse oriented. Discourse-oriented languages, like R-P-C, tend to have morphological case marking, free word order and widespread ellipsis. Non-discourse-oriented languages, like English, tend to have no morphological case-marking, fixed word order, and more limited ellipsis.¹³ Therefore, the relatively greater frequency of Gapping in R-P-C, in contrast to English, is typologically driven.

2.1.2 Subject Ellipsis in the First Clause of Gapping Structures

Subject ellipsis is employed variously in R-P-C and English. In Polish and Czech, the norm is to ellipt unemphatic subjects; in Russian, unemphatic subjects are optionally ellipted; in English, subject ellipsis is precluded.¹⁴ This continuum of subject-ellipsis potential carries over to Gapping structures. The crucial question for Gapping is: can the subject of the first clause be ellipted? (The subject of the Gapped clause certainly cannot be because, as mentioned above, the Gap must be surrounded by the compared lexical items, one of which is generally a subject.) Consider the following minimal pair, paying special attention to *I*, the subject of *love*.

- (8a) P: Mylisz się grubo. Ja **kocham** ją i ona [e] mnie.
 C: Určitě se mylíš. Já **miluji** ji a ona [e] mě.
 R: Ty očēn' ošibaeš'sja. Ja **ljublju** ee i ona [e] menja.
 E: You are sorely mistaken. I love her and she [e] me.
- (8b) P: Mylisz się grubo. [e] **Kocham** ją i ona [e] mnie.
 C: Určitě se mylíš. [e] **Miluji** ji a ona mě.
 R: ? Ty očēn' ošibaeš'sja. [e] **Ljublju** ee i ona [e] menja.
 E: * You are sorely mistaken. [e] **Love** her and she [e] me.

When the subject of *love* is overt, as in (8a), Gapping is grammatical in all four languages.¹⁵ However, while this structure is stylistically neutral in Russian and English, it is emphatic in Polish and Czech, since Polish and Czech prefer subject ellipsis in non-emphatic contexts. The stylistically neutral variant for Czech and Polish is shown in (8b), where the subject of *love* is ellipted. This variant is only marginally possible in Russian and

impossible in English. The conclusion: in R-P-C and English, the use of subject ellipsis in the first clause of Gapping structures parallels the use of subject ellipsis language-wide.

2.1.3 *Case-Marking and Gapping*

Morphological case-marking is not a prerequisite for Gapping: after all, English permits Gapping despite its lack of morphological case-marking. However, there is one type of Gapping example that requires morphological case-marking. Of all our languages, only Russian employs it: English lacks the required case-marking, while Polish and Czech lack the relevant grammatical construction.¹⁶

Consider example (9), in which [e] represents *asked Misha*.

- (9) R: Mama **poprosila Mišu** spet', a otec [e]—sygrat' na pianino.
 E:* Mom **asked Misha** to sing, and Father [e]—to play the piano.
 'Mom asked Misha to sing, and Father asked Misha to play the piano.'

A Gapping interpretation is available in Russian because Nominative case-marking on *otec* unambiguously indicates that it is the subject of the Gapped clause. In English, by contrast, there is no way to signal that *Father* is intended to be the subject—it is, by default, always interpreted as the direct object in such structures.¹⁷ In other words, the only possible interpretation of the string of words “Mom asked Misha to sing and Father to play the piano” is that the mother is making one request of the son and another of the father. This makes *Father* the direct object of *ask*, and makes the sentence a non-elliptical structure containing coordinated verb phrases. Such an interpretation is, of course, available in Russian as well, as long as *Father* is case-marked Accusative (*otca*).

- (10) R: Mama poprosila Mišu spet', a otca—sygrat' na pianino.
 E: Mom asked Misha to sing and Father to play the piano.
 'Mom asked Misha to sing and (she asked) Father to play the piano.'

To reiterate, Russian has two interpretations of the string of words in (9)–(10), based on the case-marking of *Father* (*otec*_{NOM} versus *otca*_{ACC}), whereas English has only one interpretation, in which *Father* is understood to be the direct object of the verb *ask*.

There are, however, instances in which Russian's case marking fails to distinguish between the subject and the object, as when the sentence contains indeclinable foreign names ending in *-o*. In such sentences, Russian, like English, strongly favors the non-Gapping (verb-phrase coordination) interpretation as the default.

- (11) R: ? Margo **zastavila Bruno** počinit' mašinu, a Pedro [e]—počinit' gruzovik.
 E: * Margo **made Bruno** fix the car and Pedro [e] fix the truck.
 'Margo made Bruno fix the car and Pedro made Bruno fix the truck.'

- (12) R: Margo zastavila Bruno počinit' mašinu, a Pedro — počinit' gruzovik.
 E: Margo made Bruno fix the car and Pedro fix the truck.
 'Margo made Bruno fix the car and (she made) Pedro fix the truck.'

Technically, the Gapping interpretation shown in (11) is available in Russian, but only if strong contextual cues force it; e.g., if Pedro were out of the country and therefore could not fix the truck but could demand over the telephone that Bruno do it. In English, by contrast, no degree of contextual support can produce a Gapping interpretation for (11).

We conclude that although most of the formal properties of Gapping hold universally, some typologically grounded cross-linguistic differences do exist.

2.2 STRIPPING

Stripping, like Gapping, crucially depends upon structural parallelism between clauses. This elliptical process strips away all but one main constituent in the second clause under identity with the first clause; non-main constituents, like adverbs or negation, may be overt as well. For example, in the second clause of (13), all categories are stripped away except for the main constituent 'relatives' and the non-main constituent 'sometimes'.

- (13) R: **K nej** často **prihodjat** sosed'i i inogda [e] rodstvenniki.
 P: Często **przychodzą do niej** sąsiedzi, a czasem [e] krewni.
 C: Často **k ní přicházejí** sousedé, a občas [e] i příbuzní.¹⁸
 E: Often neighbors **come to visit her**, and sometimes relatives [e].

The following are among the fundamental properties of Stripping:

- **Only one main constituent may be overt in the Stripped clause.** However, non-main constituents, like adverbs or negation, may be overt as well. (See (13) above.)

- **The antecedent must precede the ellipted category.**

- (14a) R: Marija **ljubit zvonit'** Ivanu a ne [e] Petru.
 P: Maria **lubi dzwonić** do Iwana a nie [e] do Piotra.
 C: Marie **ráda volá** Ivanovi, ale ne [e] Petrovi.
 E: Mary **likes to call** Ivan but not [e] Peter.
- (14b) R: * Ne [e] Petru, no Marija **ljubit zvonit'** Ivanu.
 P: * Nie [e] do Piotra, a Maria **lubi dzwonić** do Iwana.
 C: * Ne [e] Petrovi, ale Marie **ráda volá** Ivanovi.
 E: * Not [e] Peter, but Mary **likes to call** Ivan.

- **Stripping cannot occur in a subordinate clause.**

- (15) R: * Èto tot klass, gde **my** obyčno **zanimaemsja** biologiej, a tam tot klass, gde inogda [e] ximiej.
 P: * To jest sala gdzie zwykle **uczymy się** biologii, a tam sala gdzie czasami [e] chemii.

- C: * To je třída, kde obvykle **studujeme** biologii a tam je třída, kde občas [e] chemii.
 E: * This is the classroom where we usually **study** biology, and there is the classroom where sometimes [e] chemistry.

• **Stripping can be realized cooperatively.**

- (16a) R: «Marija **ljubit zvonit'** Ivanu». — «A ne [e] Petru?»
 P: „Maria **lubi dzwonić** do Iwana.” „A nie [e] do Piotra?”
 C: “Marie **ráda volá** Ivanovi.” “Ale ne [e] Petrovi?”
 E: “Mary **likes to call** Ivan.” “But not [e] Peter?”

There are no apparent cross-linguistic variations in the employment of Stripping.

2.3 SLUICING

Sluicing refers to the ellipsis of embedded questions, as in (17) and (18).

- (17) R: **Piotr brosil aspiranturu**, no my ne znaem točno *počemu* [e].
 P: **Piotr wyleciał ze studiów**, ale nie wiemy dokładnie *dlaczego* [e].
 C: **Petr odešel z univerzity**, ale my nevíme určitě *proč* [e].
 E: **Peter dropped out of grad school**, but we don't exactly know *why* [e].
- (18) R: My dolžny kogo-nibud' **sprosit'**, no ne znaem *kogo* [e].
 P: Musimy kogoś **zapytać**, ale nie wiemy *kogo* [e].
 C: Musíme se někoho **zeptat**, ale nevíme *koho* [e].
 E: We need **to ask** someone, but we don't know *who(m)* [e].

The ellipsis of embedded questions in Sluicing structures is licensed by the immediately preceding question word, italicized in the examples. In terms of licensing, therefore, Sluicing is quite different from Gapping or Stripping: whereas Gapping and Stripping are licensed by structural parallelism between the antecedent and ellipsis clauses, Sluicing is licensed by a specific type of word — namely, a question (or “wh-”) word. Apart from the fact that Sluiced structures must include an overt antecedent, there are few other formal restrictions on Sluicing. Notably, there is no restriction on clause order, so the ellipsis clause can occur before or after the antecedent clause, as shown by the contrast between (17) and (17a).

- (17a) R: My ne znaem točno *počemu* [e], no znaem, čo **Piotr brosil aspiranturu**.
 P: Nie wiemy dokładnie *dlaczego* [e], ale wiemy, że **Piotr wyleciał ze studiów**.
 C: Nevíme určitě *proč* [e], ale víme, že **Petr odešel z univerzity**.
 E: We don't exactly know *why* [e], but we know that **Peter dropped out of grad school**.

There are no apparent cross-linguistic variations in the employment of Sluicing.

2.4. VERB PHRASE ELLIPSIS

Verb Phrase (VP) Ellipsis is the ellipsis of the whole verb phrase, which includes the verb and any objects or modifiers it might take. VP Ellipsis is licensed by the immediately preceding auxiliary, italicized in the examples.

- (19) a. I don't **eat meat**, but my boyfriend *does* [e].
 b. She **reads French novels**, but he *doesn't* [e].
 c. Mom isn't **going running today** but I *am* [e].
 d. I'm not **going** if you *aren't* [e].
 e. I'm forcing her to **do it** because I know she *can* [e].
 f. It's not that I can't **ask him for help**, it's that I don't *want to* [e].
 g. [*Eyeing two slabs of chocolate cake*] I *will* [e] if you *will* [e].

VP Ellipsis differs from all the other types of ellipsis discussed so far in that the antecedent can either be overt in the linguistic context, as in (a)–(f), or understood from the extra-linguistic context, as in (g). Like Sluicing, VP Ellipsis can occur in a subordinate clause (see, e.g., (19e) and (20)).

The employment of VP Ellipsis crucially depends upon the language's inventory of auxiliaries. For example, all our languages have an auxiliary meaning *know how*, and therefore can produce structurally comparable elliptical variants of (20).

- (20) R: Marija ne umeet **igrat' na organe**, no mne kažetsja, što Džim *umeet* [e].
 P: Maria nie umie **grać na organach**, ale wydaje mi się, że Džim *umie* [e].
 C: Marie neumí **hrát na varhany**, ale myslíme, že Jim *umí* [e].
 E: Mary doesn't know how to **play the organ**, but it seems to me that Jim *knows how* [e].¹⁹

However, many auxiliaries are found only in a subset of languages. For example, Russian and Polish (but not English or Czech) have a number of impersonal predicate words that can license VP Ellipsis: e.g., R: *možno* P: *można* '(it-is)-possible, (one)-may'; R: *nel'zja* '(it-is)-impossible, (one)-must-not'; R: *nado* '(it-is)-necessary, (one)-must'; P: *należy* '(one)-should'.²⁰

- (21) R: Ja choču posmotret' televizor. *Možno* [e]?
 P: Chcę pooglądać telewizję. *Można* [e]?
 (I) want to-watch TV (Is)-possible_{IMPERS} [e]
 'I want to watch TV. May I?'

On the other hand, English has a number of auxiliaries that R-P-C lack: *does/doesn't, is/isn't, has/hasn't*, etc. For example, in (22) the English auxiliary *didn't* licenses ellipsis of the VP *know*. R-P-C, lacking this option, employ a non-elliptical structure using *net/nie/ne*—words that arguably function as independent, non-elliptical predicates.²¹

- (22) R: Ja znala šestym čuvstvom, što takie ljudi časikov ne kradut, i mama znala, a babuška — net (*Čerez* 46).
 P: Dzięki szóstemu zmysłowi wiedziałam, że tacy ludzie zegarków nie kradną, i mama wiedziała, ale babcia — nie.
 C: Podle nějakého šestého smyslu jsem věděla, že lidé jako on nekradou hodinky, maminka to věděla také, ale babička ne.
 E: I **knew** by some sixth sense that people like him don't steal watches, and Mom **knew**, but Grandma didn't [e].

We conclude that VP ellipsis is formally similar in all of our languages, and that cross-linguistic variation derives from the specific lexical items available to license the ellipsis. Thus, although sentences like (21) may at first appear to be idiosyncratic to Russian and Polish (since [e] is licensed by an impersonal predicate word that does not exist in English), they actually represent a lexical variation on a cross-linguistically prevalent ellipsis licensing strategy.

2.5 SUMMARY OF THE FOUR COMMON TYPES OF VERBAL ELLIPSIS

The previous subsections have presented four types of VE that are employed similarly in English and R-P-C. The major properties of each type are summarized in Table 1. The English examples have direct counterparts in R-P-C.

The cross-linguistic differences associated with these types of ellipsis are typologically grounded.

- While Gapping is stylistically neutral and widely employed in R-P-C, it is stylistically marked and less widely employed in English. This “more prominent” status of Gapping in R-P-C corresponds to the “more prominent” status of all types of ellipsis in these discourse-oriented languages.
- While Polish and Czech freely permit subject ellipsis in Gapping structures, Russian severely restricts it and English blocks it altogether. This continuum of subject-ellipsis potential in Gapping structures corresponds to the continuum of subject-ellipsis potential in the languages on the whole.
- Morphological case-marking permits one type of Gapping structure in Russian that is not permitted in English, Czech, or Polish (see example (9)). English blocks this structure because it lacks morphological case-marking; Polish and Czech block it because they lack the relevant kind of infinitival structure.
- The most prominent cross-linguistic difference in VP Ellipsis derives from the fact that the languages in question have different inventories of auxiliaries and auxiliary-like words, which are the licensers of VP Ellipsis.

The main point for our purposes is this: speakers of English already know many of the patterns of VE employed in R-P-C, and need only become aware of minor language-specific variations. A different story altogether, however, is Slavic Specific Verbal Ellipsis, which is an elliptical process unlike any found in English, and unlike any treated in the largely Anglo-centered theoretical literature.

Table 1.

Name	Key Properties	Example
Gapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ellipsis of the verb and, optionally, other components in the verb phrase in the second clause of a coordinate or comparative structure. ▪ Licensed by structural parallelism. ▪ The antecedent must be overt and precede [e]. ▪ [e] must be surrounded by overt lexical items. 	<p>Sarah wants to draw a boat and Peter [e] an airplane.</p>
Stripping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ellipsis of all but one major lexical category in the second clause of a coordinate structure; non-major categories, like adverbs and negation, may be overt as well. ▪ Licensed by structural parallelism. ▪ The antecedent must be overt and precede [e]. 	<p>Mary likes to call Ivan but not [e] Peter.</p>
Sluicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ellipsis of an embedded question. ▪ Licensed by the question word that introduces the embedded question. ▪ The antecedent must be overt but need not precede [e]. 	<p>Peter dropped out of grad school but we don't know why [e]. We don't know why [e], but Peter dropped out of grad school.</p>
VP Ellipsis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ellipsis of a verb phrase. ▪ Licensed by the auxiliary or auxiliary-like word that introduces the verb phrase. ▪ The antecedent may be lexically overt or understood from the extra-linguistic context. 	<p>I'll have some cake if you will [e].</p> <p><i>[Eyeing two slabs of cake]</i> I will [e] if you will [e].</p>

3. Slavic-Specific Verbal Ellipsis

Sentences containing SSVE have no structurally identical counterpart in English, as shown by the incomprehensible literal gloss of (23).

(23) [*The speaker has just said or done something undesirable*]

R: «Ja [e] ne naročno».

P: „Ja [e] nienaumyślnie.”²²

C: „Já [e] nevědomky.”²³

I_{NOM} [e] unintentionally

‘I didn’t mean it.’

VE in such sentences is licensed by the *combination* of two or more overt categories in the ellipsis clause. In (23), *I* combines with *unintentionally* to license ellipsis of whatever verb is implied by the context – perhaps tripping someone, or offending him, or dinging his car in a parking lot. Comparing this type of ellipsis to the types discussed so far, we can say the following: unlike Gapping and Stripping, SSVE does not require inter-clause parallelism; and unlike Sluicing and Verb Phrase Ellipsis, SSVE requires at least two, not one, lexical licensers.

Although Russian, Polish and Czech all permit VE in (23), only Russian permits it in (24). In Polish and Czech, the verb must be overt.

(24a) R: Ja [e] v magazin.

P: * Ja [e] do sklepu.

C: * Já [e] do obchodu.

I_{NOM} [e] to store

‘I’m going <I’m off, etc.> to the store.’

(24b) P: Idę do sklepu.

C: Jdu do obchodu.

Am-going to store

‘I’m going to the store.’

SSVE is far more productive in Russian than in Polish or Czech, which raises the question of whether the same language strategy is at work in all three languages. SSVE is clearly a productive aspect of Russian grammar that can be described in broad terms and employed creatively even by non-native speakers. Not so, however, with respect to Polish and Czech. Native speakers of these languages accept only a limited number of such verbless sentences, and the possibility of creating more on the fly is highly restricted. In fact, Fominyx (1965) describes verbless sentences of this type in Czech as primarily emotive, affected, or idiomatic. The theoretical dilemma is obvious: how does one differentiate between a productive but lexically restricted elliptical process, and a series of set phrases that happen to lack a verb?

Since our purpose is practical and not theoretical, we need not pursue this question and can, instead, adopt an approach that provides descriptive adequacy in a maximally convenient way.²⁴ Thus, while SSVE in Russian

will be described as a productive process (focusing on types of licensers and types of recoverability conditions), SSVE in Polish and Czech will be presented as a finite list of set phrases. While this list is not intended to be exhaustive, the very process of assembling a list emphasizes the relatively non-productive nature of SSVE in P-C. The term SSVE will be used for all three languages because, although such sentences might well derive from different sources cross-linguistically, their surface realization is similar.

Why the Russian versus Polish/Czech split? Polish and Czech are somewhat more verb-oriented languages, while Russian is somewhat more subject-oriented, as evidenced by the languages' differing employment of subject ellipsis. As mentioned earlier, Polish and Czech have strong subject ellipsis, meaning that unemphatic subjects are preferably ellipted. Russian, by contrast, has only moderate subject ellipsis, meaning that it is perfectly common to express even unemphatic subjects overtly. Since one of the licensers of SSVE is often a subject, we would expect this elliptical strategy to be more prevalent in subject-prominent Russian.

In SSVE, semantics is as important as syntax in determining which elliptical sentences will be valid and which ones will not. That is, not even in Russian can one arbitrarily stick together any two words or phrases and expect them to license VE—the words or phrases must go together in a way that is both logical and acceptable for that language. However, defining what, precisely, constitutes “logical and acceptable” is anything but trivial. It requires analysis of the syntactic properties of such sentences, the semantics of the overt elements, and, in some instances, the extra-linguistic context.²⁵

The goal of this analysis of SSVE is three-fold: (i) to categorize sentences with SSVE using syntactic, semantic, and discourse diagnostics;²⁶ (ii) to present sufficient examples to provide a clear picture of the phenomena to teachers and learners of R-P-C; (iii) to show how SSVE fits into the larger picture of VE in R-P-C.

The analysis will be divided into two major sections. The first considers sentences lacking verbs of motion, speaking, and hitting, which are idiosyncratic in that the missing verb can be recovered without an antecedent: the words that license the ellipsis are sufficient to unambiguously convey verbal meaning. The second section considers the ellipsis of all other types of verbs in SSVE structures.

A number of aspects of SSVE will be of interest throughout the discussion:

- the meaning of the ellipted verb;
- the means by which verbal meaning is recovered: e.g., by a syntactically overt antecedent, an extra-linguistic antecedent, lexical cues within the sentence itself, or some combination of these;
- the syntactic nature of the overt licensers: e.g., a subject plus an adverb,

as in (23), a subject plus a prepositional phrase, as in (24), or some other combination of categories;

- the semantic nature of the overt licensors, which must jibe logically and, in combination, imply verbal action;
- the role, if any, of the extra-linguistic context.

3.1 VERBS OF MOTION, SPEAKING, AND HITTING

SSVE sentences expressing motion, speaking, and hitting are distinct not only because they require no antecedent, but also because a semantic *field*, rather than some narrowly specified action, is implied. Below we consider, in turn, SSVE structures expressing motion, speaking, and hitting.

3.1.1 SSVE_{MOTION}: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective

SSVE_{MOTION} is prominent in Russian but practically non-existent in Polish and Czech. Consider again examples (24a–b), repeated below.

- (24a) R: Ja [e] v magazin.
 P: * Ja [e] do sklepu.
 C: * Já [e] do obchodu.
 I_{NOM} [e] to store_{ACC/GEN}
 'I'm going <I'm off, etc.> to the store.'

- (24b) P: Idę do sklepu.
 C: Jdu do obchodu.
 Am-going to store_{GEN}
 'I'm going to the store.'

I have found only one acceptable SSVE_{MOTION} in Polish, and even this does not work in Czech. In Polish, one can omit the verb of motion when one person calls on another, as in (25).²⁷

- (25) [Someone enters a secretary's office. The secretary says:]
 R: Vy [e] k komu?
 P: Pan [e] do kogo?
 You_{NOM} to whom_{DAT/GEN}
 'Who are you here for?'

The next section is devoted to the very productive use of SSVE_{MOTION} in Russian. Polish and Czech have no verbless equivalents for any of the cited examples.

3.1.2 SSVE_{MOTION}: A Focus on Russian

Since SSVE_{MOTION} does not require an antecedent, only two aspects of these sentences must be considered: the syntactic and semantic nature of the ellipsis licensors. Most commonly, the overt licensors are a Nominative subject indicating a person or vehicle, and an adverb or prepositional phrase (PP) indicating the destination, source, goal or purpose of motion.

Occasionally an infinitive is the second licenser. The sentences below, which illustrate this basic licensing strategy, employ the combinations of licensers listed in Table 2. “. . .” in the table indicates that the list of examples could be extended indefinitely.

Table 2.

Nominative Subject	PP/Adverb/Infinitive
Efim	v ubornuju
on/ja	kuda/tuda
vy	s raboty
ja	k Vladimiru Alekseeviču
ty	za šapkoj
ja	pozavtrakat'
.

- (26) R: Efim . . . šlepaet v koridor, podbiraet gazetu i s gazetoj [e] – v ubornuju (*Šap*: 19–20).
 Yefim_{NOM} . . . tramps into hall picks-up newspaper and with newspaper [e] into bathroom_{ACC}
 ‘Yefim tramps into the hall, picks up his newspaper and heads off to the bathroom.’
- (27) R: «Kuda [e] on, tuda [e] i ja. My s nim nerazlučnye» (*Star*: 105).
 Where_{DIRECTIONAL} [e] he_{NOM} there_{DIRECTIONAL} [e] also I_{NOM} We with him inseparable
 ‘Wherever he goes, I go. We’re inseparable.’
- (28) R: Dobryj večer, Elena Efimovna. Vy [e] s raboty?
 Good evening Elena Efimovna You_{NOM} [e] from work_{GEN}
 ‘Good evening, Elena Efimovna. Are you coming home from work?’
- (29) R: «Proxodite, prisazivajtes’ . . .» – «Ja sobstvenno . . . Ja [e] k Vladimiru Alekseeviču» (*Proš*: 30).
 Come-in sit-down I_{NOM} actually I_{NOM} [e] to Vladimir Alekseevich_{DAT}
 ‘Come in, sit down . . .’ ‘I, actually . . . I’ve come to see Vladimir Alekseevich.’
- (30) R: «A ja tebja ne zametil . . . Ty tože [e] za šapkoj?» (*Šap*: 48).
 Oh I_{NOM} you_{ACC} NEG noticed . . . You_{NOM} also [e] for hat_{INSTR}
 ‘Oh, I didn’t see you . . . Have you come for a hat too?’
- (31) R: Ja [e] – pozavtrakat’.
 I_{NOM} [e] – have-breakfast_{INFIN}
 ‘I’m off <I’ve come, etc.> to have breakfast.’

Although a Nominative subject commonly participates in licensing SSVE_{MOTION}, it need not. For example, in place of a Nominative subject one can use a tensed verb, an impersonal predicate word, a Dative “logical” subject, or a second adverb, as shown by the next set of examples, whose licensers are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3.

Varied (as listed above)	PP/Adverb
uspeeš'	v tajgu
sobirajus'	v magazin
nadolgo	k nam
dumaju	v Moskvu
xočeš'	v kino
nado	v klub
možno	na pokoj
ej	na rabotu
.

- (32) R: «Na tvoem meste ja by snačala doučilsja. V tajgu ty vseгда uspeeš' [e]» (*Star* 106).
In your place I CONDIT first finish-school To taiga_{ACC} you_{NOM} always will-have-time [e]
“If I were you I'd finish school first. You'll have plenty of time to go to the taiga.”
- (33) R: Ja sobirajus' [e] v magazin.
I_{NOM} am-planning [e] to store_{ACC}
‘I'm off to the store.’
- (34) R: «Nadolgo [e] k nam?» — «Net, zavtra že dumaju [e] v Moskvu» (*Čaj* 434–5).
For-long [e] to us_{DAT}—No tomorrow PARTICLE think_{1.SG} [e] to Moscow_{ACC}
“Are you here for long?” “No, I think I'll head off to Moscow tomorrow.”
- (35) R: «Begi za biletami, esli ešče xočeš' [e] so mnoj v kino» (*Star*: 124).
Run_{IMPER} for tickets_{INSTR} if still want_{2.SG} [e] with me_{INSTR} to movies_{ACC}
“Hurry up and get tickets if you still want to go to the movies with me.”
- (36) R: «Čego že ty odna? . . . V klub tebe nado [e]» (*Sov*: 17–18).
Why PARTICLE you_{NOM} alone To club_{ACC} you_{DAT} (is)-necessary_{IMPER} [e]
“What are you doing here alone? . . . You should go to the club.”
- (37) R: «Kofe vypit, možno [e] na pokoj» (*Sad*: 566).
Coffee_{NOM} is-drunk (is)-possible_{IMPER} [e] to bed_{ACC}
“We've had our coffee, now we can retire.”
- (38) R: Potom on otrpravil Kukušu spat' (ej utrom opjat' [e] na rabotu) . . . (*Šap*: 57).
Then he sent Kukuša to-bed (he_{DAT} in-the-morning again [e] to work_{ACC})
‘Then he sent Kukuša to bed (she had to go to work again in the morning) . . .’

Two points about this set of examples must be emphasized:

1. Several examples contain additional overt categories that may appear to participate in licensing the ellipsis. The reason these aren't listed as licensers is that in some contexts they can be omitted. Consider, for example, (32)–(35). All four examples include a tensed verb plus a PP; however, whereas (32)–(33) contain a Nominative subject as well, (34)–

(35) do not. This suggests that the Nominative subject is not one of the minimal licensers of ellipsis in clauses of this general type; in other words, a tensed verb plus PP is sufficient to license the ellipsis. Examples (36)–(37) show a similar contrast: both have an impersonal predicate word plus a PP that jointly license the ellipsis, but only (36) has an overt Dative experiencer, which appears not to be a crucial component of the licensing strategy. Thus, to the extent possible, the generalizations presented here reflect minimal licensing requirements.²⁸ (Of course, if, for practical purposes, one wants to think of this licensing strategy as Nominative Subject + Tensed Verb + PP/Adverb with an optionally ellipted subject, there is no harm in that, either.)

2. Recall that tensed verbs can independently license VP Ellipsis, as was shown in section (2.4). However, the examples in this section do not represent VP Ellipsis: whereas VP Ellipsis removes the whole verb phrase and requires an antecedent, this subclass of SSVE removes only part of the verb phrase and requires no antecedent.

One final semantic aspect of SSVE_{MOTION} is noteworthy. These elliptical sentences tend to give the impression that the action is taking place in the given moment, before our eyes, regardless of when it happened in real time; they also convey a sense of immediacy and speed (Zolotova 1982:199). These nuances can be approximated in English by using present tense verbs.

- (39) R: Stali my boltat' o tom, o sem: vdrug smotrju, Kazbič vzdrognul, peremenilsja v lice — i [e] k oknu . . . «Čto s toboj?» — sprosil ja (*Bela*: Lermontov < Zolotova 199).
- Began we to-chat about this, about that: suddenly look_{1,SG} Kazbich_{NOM} shuddered, changed in face — and [e] to window_{DAT} . . . What_{NOM} with you_{INSTR}? — asked I_{NOM}
 'We began chatting about this and that. Suddenly I look: Kazbich shudders, the expression on his face changes, and he races to the window. "What's with you?" I ask.'

3.1.3 SSVE_{SPEAKING}: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective

SSVE_{SPEAKING} is highly productive in Russian, but is employed only in a small number of phrases in Polish and Czech. Consider the following minimal triads: the Russian variants have SSVE_{SPEAKING} but the Polish and Czech variants require an overt verb. (Ungrammatical elliptical sentences are not posited for Polish and Czech because they are wildly deviant.)

- (40a) R: Ja ne ob ètom [e].
 I_{NOM} NEG about that_{PREP} [e]
 'That's not what I'm talking about.'
- (40b) P: Nie o to chodzi <Nie o tym mowa>.²⁹
 NEG about that_{ACC} goes_{IMPERS} <NEG about that_{PREP} discussion_{NOM}>
 'That's not what I'm <he's etc.> talking about.'

- (40c) C: O to nejde.
 About that_{ACC} does-not-go_{IMPER}
 ‘That’s not what I’m <he’s, etc.> talking about.’
- (41a) R: Ja ne tebe [e].
 I_{NOM} NEG you_{DAT} [e]
 ‘I’m not talking to you.’
- (41b) P: Nie do ciebie mówię <To nie do ciebie>.
 NEG to you_{GEN} am-talking <This_{NOM} NEG to you_{GEN}>
 ‘I’m not talking to you.’
- (41c) C: S tebou nemluvím <Tobě to neříkám>.
 With you_{INSTR} am-not-talking <You_{DAT} this_{ACC} am-not-saying>
 ‘I’m not talking to you.’

Further discussion of *SSVE_{SPEAKING}* is divided into two parts: section 3.1.4 describes the productive licensing strategy for Russian, and 3.1.5 lists four instances of valid speech-related verbless sentences in Polish and Czech.

3.1.4 *SSVE_{SPEAKING}: A Focus on Russian*

Most commonly, *SSVE_{SPEAKING}* in Russian is licensed by a Nominative subject indicating the human speaker and one or more of the following:

- i. the thing spoken about, expressed as a prepositional phrase (e.g., *o sobake_{PREP}* or *pro sobaku_{ACC}* ‘about the dog’);
- ii. the addressee, occurring in the Dative case;
- iii. an adverb expressing how something is said;
- iv. what specifically is said, presented as a quotation.

The following set of Russian examples, for which there are no verbless Polish or Czech counterparts, illustrates these licensing strategies. The licensors from these examples (which are referred to simply as licensors 1,2,3 because of their variable categorial status) are listed in Table 4.

Table 4.

Licenser 1	Licenser 2	Licenser 3
ja	pro ženščinu	
ty	pro nee	ni slova
ty	o kom	
vy	mne	
ty/on	emu/tebe	“zdraste”
vy	pokoroče	
on	ser’ezno	
ja	k tomu, čto . . .	
prodavec	emu	svoe
.

- (42) R: «Ja tebjā vsegdā xorošo ponimal, a teper' ja tebjā ne ponimaju. Vasja, ja [e] pro ženščinu. Posle svad'by ty pro nee [e] ni slova, ja tak ponjal, što ee ne suščestvujet v prirode» (*Iju*: 56).
 I_{NOM} you_{ACC} always well understood but now I_{NOM} you_{ACC} NEG understand Vasja I_{NOM} [e] about woman_{ACC} After wedding you_{NOM} about her_{ACC} [e] not word_{GEN} I in-this-way understood that her_{GEN} NEG exists in nature
 “I’ve always understood you well, but now I don’t understand you. Vasja, I’m talking about the woman. Since the wedding you haven’t said a word about her; I take that to mean that she doesn’t even exist.”
- (43) R: «Interesno, što ètot kretin vykinul?» – govoril Pavlik. «Ty o kom [e]?» – «Da o ee synočke» (2/3 239).
 (Is)-interesting what that cretin_{NOM} did_{COLLOQ} – said Pavlik You_{NOM} about whom_{PREP} [e] – PARTICLE about her son_{PREP}
 “I wonder what the heck that cretin did,” said Pavlik. “Who do you mean?” “You know, her son.”
- (44) R: «Molodoj čelovek!» – pozvala počtal'onša Zinaida. Letčik ne obernulsja. «Mužčina!» – popravila sebja Zinaida. – «Vy [e] mne?» (*Tok* 475).
 Young man – called postal-carrier Zinaida. Pilot NEG turned-around Mister – corrected self Zinaida You_{NOM} [e] me_{DAT}
 “Young man!” called the postal carrier Zinaida. The pilot didn’t turn around. “Mister!” Zinaida corrected herself. “Are you talking to me?”
- (45) R: [*The speaker is advising the female interlocutor how to start up a conversation with a man*]
 «Značit, tak: ty [e] emu „zdraste”, on [e] tebe „zdraste“» (*Tok* 476).
 So this-way you_{NOM} [e] him_{DAT} ‘hi’ he_{NOM} [e] you_{DAT} ‘hi’
 “So, here’s what you do: you say ‘hi’ to him and he says ‘hi’ to you.”³⁰
- (46) R: «Mne govorili, budto ona pavela kakuju-to osobennuju žizn'. V čem delo?» – «Èto, doktor, dlinnaja istorija». – «A vy [e] pokoroče» (*Čaj* 432).
 Me_{DAT} said_{3,PL} as-if she adopted some-kind-of peculiar life In what deal_{NOM} –
 That(-is) doctor long story_{NOM} – Well you_{NOM} [e] more-succinctly
 “I heard that she’s adopted some peculiar kind of lifestyle. What’s going on?” –
 “That, doctor, is a long story.” “Well, give me the short version.”
- (47) R: «Ty ego ne znaeš'. Šutit on ili [e] ser'ezno – srazu u nego ne pojmeš' . . .» (*Proš* 358).
 You_{NOM} him_{ACC} NEG know Jokes_{3,SG} he_{NOM} or [e] seriously – immediately with him NEG understand_{2,SG,PFV}
 “You don’t know him. With him, you can’t tell right away whether he’s joking or being serious.”
- (48) R: «I voobščē, terpet' ja ne mogu . . . obščēžitij . . . Èto ja [e] k tomu, čo . . . Esli by ty soglasilsja . . . Slovom, živi u nas» (*Star* 146).
 And in-general stand_{INFIN} I_{NOM} NEG can . . . dormitories . . . This_{ACC} I_{NOM} [e] to that_{DAT} that . . . If CONDIT you agreed . . . In-a-word live_{IMPER} with us
 “And in general, I can’t stand . . . dormitories . . . I’m saying this because . . . If you’d agree . . . In short, live with us.”

- (49) R: «Začem že, govorit, vam sejščas davat' mne den'gi, a tem bolee mne ix u vas brat'?»
 A prodavec [e] emu svoe» (*Iju* 48).
 Why PARTICLE says_{3.SG} you_{DAT} now give_{INFIN} me_{DAT} money_{ACC} and moreover
 me_{DAT} it_{ACC} from you take_{INFIN} And salesman_{NOM} [e] him_{DAT} his-own_{ACC}
 “Why, he says, should you give me money, and more importantly why should I
 take it from you? And the salesman says his part.”

3.1.5 *SSVE*_{SPEAKING}: A Focus on Polish and Czech

Polish and Czech employ four verbless phrases that can imply speaking. I say “*can* imply” because the first two can also be interpreted more broadly, referring to general reactions, be they verbal or not.

In phrases 1–3 the human subject is a variable, while in phrase 4 both the subject and the *about*-phrase are variables. The presence of variables should not, however, be interpreted as evidence that the phrases represent productive syntactic processes, since idioms and set phrases regularly include variable elements.³¹

Finally, it is not clear whether [e] should be posited in these verbless clauses. Since positing it might incorrectly imply both that the elliptical process were productive and that a verb could readily be inserted, I provisionally leave it out and, instead, embolden the whole phrase for emphasis.

PHRASE #1

- (50) [In reference to Pavel's having learned some shocking news]
 P: „A co na to Pavel?” — „Ach, był za . . . zaszokowany” (*Lab* 280).³²
 C: „A co na to Pavel?” — „Był ś . . . šokován.”
 And_{CONTRASTIVE} what_{ACC} to that_{ACC} Pavel_{NOM} — (Ach,) was_{3.SG} sh . . . shocked
 “And how did Pavel react <What did Pavel say, etc.> to that?” “Oh, he was
 sh . . . shocked.”

PHRASE #2

- (51) P: „[Adam] twierdzi, że to znajoma z pracy i że ma kłopoty i że on chciałby ją pocieszyć i dlatego właśnie pogłaskał ją po rękę.” — „A ty co?” (*Lab* 148).³³
 C: . . . — „A co ty?”
 [Adam] asserts that it-(is) acquaintance_{NOM.FEM} from work and that has_{3.SG} problems and that he_{NOM} wanted her_{ACC} to-console and therefore precisely stroked her_{ACC} on hand And you_{NOM} what_{ACC}
 “Adam claims that this was an acquaintance from work and that she had problems and he wanted to console her and that's why he stroked her hand.” “And what did you say to that <how did you react, what did you do, etc.>?”

PHRASE #3

- (52) P: „Ona stawia czajnik: «Zimno». **Ja nic**” (*Pok* 341).
 C: “Ona stavi konvici: ‘Je zima.’ **Já nic** <Nevadí>.”³⁴
 She puts-on kettle: cold_{IMPERS} I_{NOM} **nothing**_{ACC}
 ‘She puts on the kettle: “It's cold.” I don't respond.’

PHRASE #4

- (53) P: „Nie mam ochoty uczestniczyć w tej sielance. Stary cymbał. Jego świat rozsypuje się, a on tylko o swoich przepisach” (*P.dz.* 103).

NEG have_{1.SG} desire to-participate in this idyll Old dolt His world is-going-to-pieces
 REFL and_{CONTRASTIVE} he_{NOM} only about self's regulations_{PREP}
 "I don't want to take part in this idyll. The old dolt. His world is going to pieces,
 and he keeps on about his regulations."

- (54) C: A on pořad <jen> o svých problémech.
 and_{CONTRASTIVE} he_{NOM} constantly <only> about self's problems_{PREP}
 "And he's always talking about <all he talks about is> his own problems."

3.1.6 SSVE_{HITTING}: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective

The semantic field of hitting/harming is one for which Russian, Polish, and Czech all permit relatively productive use of SSVE, so all three languages will be considered together. Why SSVE is more productive for this semantic field than for others in Polish and Czech is not clear; however, the fact that it is suggests that we must not jump to the conclusion that all SSVE in P-C represents frozen phrases.

Two basic combinations of overt categories can license SSVE_{HITTING}:³⁵

- The hitter_{NOM} + the person hit_{ACC/DAT} + the place hit, means of hitting and/or nature of the blow.
- The hitter_{NOM.1.SG} + the person hit_{ACC/DAT} + emphatic stress on the 1st singular subject.

The first group of examples illustrates the first licensing strategy. The examples are not presented as minimal triplets because translations from one language to another tend to sound not entirely natural – a translation issue not limited, of course, to verbless sentences.

Table 5.

Language	Licenser 1	Licenser 2	Licenser 3	Licenser 4
R	ja	emu	ne sil'no	
R	oni	ego	zdorovo	
R	ona	menja	po licu	
R	on	ego	za čto	
C	on	jeho	proč	
P	on	mnie	z byka	
P	ja	go	w szczękę	
R	oni	ee	čem-to tjaželym	po golove
P	ja	go	pięścią	w bok
C	já	mu	pěstí	do boku
P	Maciuś	mu	kulę	w samo oko
...

- (55) R: Ja emu [e] ne sil'no (RRR 306).
 I_{NOM} him_{DAT} [e] NEG hard
 'I didn't hit <punch, etc.> him hard.'
- (56) R: A zdorovo oni ego [e] (RRR 306).
 But INTENSIFIER they_{NOM} him_{ACC} [e]
 'And they really gave it to him <let him have it, beat him to a pulp, etc.>.'
- (57) R: Ja ot nee otvoračivajus' / ona [e] mēnja opjat' po licu (RRR 306).³⁶
 I_{NOM} from her turn-away / she_{NOM} [e] me_{ACC} again in face_{DAT}
 'I turn away from her; she hits <smacks, etc.> me in the face again.'
- (58) R: Otkuda ja znaju za čto on ego [e]? (RRR 306).
 Whence I_{NOM} know for what he_{NOM} him_{ACC} [e]
 C: Jak mám věděť, proč on jeho [e]?
 How have_{1.SG} to-know why he_{NOM} him_{ACC} [e]
 'How am I supposed to know why he hit him <beat him up, etc.>?'
- (59) P: On mnie [e] z byka, a ja go [e] w szczękę (Maciejewski 1991).
 He_{NOM} me_{ACC} [e] with head and_{CONTRASTIVE} I_{NOM} him_{ACC} [e] in jaw_{ACC}
 'He butted me with his head and I belted him in the jaw.'
- (60) R: Oni zamanili ee v pod"ezd i čem-to tam tjaželym [e] po golove / no ona vse-taki živa ostalas' (RRR 306).
 They_{NOM} lured her_{ACC} into doorway and something_{INSTR} PARTICLE heavy_{INSTR} [e]
 on head_{DAT} but she nevertheless alive remained
 'They lured her into the doorway and hit <smashed, etc.> her on the head with something heavy, but she lived.'
- (61) P: Ja [e] go pięścią w bok.
 I_{NOM} [e] him_{ACC} fist_{INSTR} in side
 C: A já [e] mu pěstí do boku.
 And I_{NOM} [e] him_{DAT} fist_{INSTR} to side_{GEN}
 '(And) I jammed my fist into his side.'
- (62) P: Wilk zęby wyszczerzył, tak go światło oślepiło. A Maciuś [e] mu kulę w samo oko (Mać 193).
 Wolf_{NOM} teeth_{ACC} bared so-much him_{ACC} light_{NOM} blinded And Maciuś_{NOM} [e]
 him_{DAT} bullet_{ACC} in the-very eye_{ACC}
 'Blinded by the light, the wolf bared its teeth. And Maciuś shot him right in the eye.'

The next two examples show the second licensing strategy, which is possible in Russian and Czech but not in Polish. Here, emphatic stress on the 1st person pronoun is obligatory.

- (63) R: Ja tebją [e] (RRR 306).
 I_{NOM} you_{ACC} [e]
 'I'm gonna give it to you <get you, etc.>!'
- (64) C: Ale já mu [e]!
 But I_{NOM} him_{ACC} [e]
 But I'll show him <I'll give it to him, etc.>!

3.1.7 Summary of SSVE for Verbs of Motion, Speaking, and Hitting

Verbs of motion, speaking, and hitting can be productively ellipsed in Russian using SSVE. The ellipsis is licensed by two or more syntactically and semantically compatible licensors, which by themselves provide sufficient information to recover verbal meaning without the need of an antecedent or extra-sentential supporting context. In Polish and Czech, ellipsis of verbs of motion and speaking in SSVE structures is highly restricted; in fact, the number of admissible sentences is so small that they can be listed. SSVE_{HITTING} is somewhat more productive in Polish and Czech, and closely resembles this elliptical strategy in Russian.

In discussing SSVE of motion, speaking, and hitting it was unnecessary to focus on antecedents and surrounding context because these sentences are entirely self-sufficient. However, when all other semantic fields of verbs are ellipsed in SSVE structures, antecedents and extra-linguistic context play a crucial role. Thus, the remainder of the paper will address all five central aspects of SSVE listed earlier: the meaning of the ellipsed verb, how it is retrieved, the syntactic nature of the overt licensors, their semantics, and the role (if any) of the extra-linguistic context.

3.2 BEYOND MOTION, SPEAKING, AND HITTING

SSVE structures for verbs conveying actions other than motion, speaking, and hitting (SSVE_{OTHER}) are liberally employed in Russian, but are much more restricted in Polish and Czech. Simply listing the common SSVE_{OTHER} structures in Polish and Czech is as good as any other approach for four reasons. First, while listing does not guarantee coverage of every possible eventuality (this disclaimer must be emphasized), it does underscore the fact that non-native speakers should not feel free to creatively employ this elliptical strategy. Second, using the listing approach for Polish and Czech, as opposed to productive syntactic/semantic analysis for Russian, emphasizes the vast difference between the scope of SSVE_{OTHER} among these languages. Third, some of the permissible patterns of SSVE_{OTHER} in P-C have quasi-idiomatic semantic nuances: e.g., in Pattern 1 below, the nuance of not being able to *stand* something or *go on* in the given circumstances is neither conveyed by the licensors nor imposed by the surrounding context, it is somehow inherent in this turn of phrase. Finally, since we are not pursuing theoretical questions of proper analysis, the most convenient approach — here, listing — can be deemed best.

3.2.1 The Most Common SSVE_{OTHER} Structures in Polish and Czech

Table 6 contains the most common SSVE_{OTHER} structures in P-C. Russian equivalents are provided as well, although their ultimate analysis will probably be quite different (i.e., these are arguably a subset of a larger, produc-

tive ellipsis licensing strategy). In the table, X represents a Nominative subject; the parentheses around it indicate that in some contexts it may be ellipited.

Table 6.

Pattern	Russian	Polish	Czech	Translation
1	(X) ne možet tak	(X) nie może tak	(X) nemůže tak	X can't take this <can't do <i>something</i> this way, etc.>
2	(X) ne možet bol'she	(X) nie może dłuzej	(X) nemůže dál	X can't stand this <go on like this, etc.> anymore
3	tak nel'zja	tak nie można	tak se ne dá	(one) mustn't act this way <do this, etc.>
4	X ne naročno X nečajanno	X nienaumyślnie	X nevědomky	X didn't mean it <didn't mean to do it, etc.>
5	X tak so vsemi	X tak ze wszystkimi	X tak s každým	X acts like this with <does this to, etc.> everyone

Below are examples of these verbless patterns in R-P-C. The language from which the example is drawn is presented first, followed by corresponding translations into the other languages. As earlier, it is not clear whether [e] should be posited in these sentences; in fact, here the problem is even more acute because the five patterns may well be 'set' to different degrees. For the sake of simplicity, and with no implications regarding theory or analysis, I do not include [e] in this set of examples and, instead, just embolden the whole phrase for emphasis.

PATTERN #1

(65a) P: „Przede wszystkim trzeba by tu zainstalować jakąś kuchenkę i piecyk. **Pan dyrektor nie może tak** w tym zimnie i wilgoci” (*Dwa* 45).³⁷

Above all (is)-necessary_{IMPERS} CONDIT here to-install some-kind-of small-stove and little-heater 'Pan' Director_{NOM} NEG can this-way in this cold and dampness
“Most importantly we need to install some kind of stove and heater in here. You can't go on like this, in this cold and dampness.”

(65b) R: «**Vy ne možete tak**, v ètom xolode i vlažnosti».

You_{NOM} NEG can this-way in this cold and dampness

C: „To **tak nemůžete**, v té zimě i vlhkosti.”

PARTICLE **this-way cannot**_{2,PL} in this cold and dampness
 “You can’t go on like this, in this cold and dampness.”

PATTERN #2

(66a) P: „A co do niego, Hermana . . . ci chłopcy przecież widzą, co się dzieje. Są tacy, co już nie mogą dłużej” (*P.dz.* 135).

And as for him Herman . . . these boys after-all see, what REFL is-happening

Are_{3,PL} **those**_{NOM} **that already NEG can**_{3,PL} **more**

“And as for him, Herman . . . after all these boys see what’s going on. Some people can’t stand it any longer.”

(66b) R: «Est’ te, kto ne mozet bol’she».

Exists those **who**_{3,SG} **NEG can**_{3,SG} **more**

C: „Jsou takoví, co už dál nemůžou.”

Are_{3,PL} **those**_{NOM} **who PARTICLE more cannot**_{3,PL}

“Some people can’t stand it any longer.”

PATTERN #3

(70) R: «Snova tost? Net, **tak nel’zja**, tol’ko vypili i snova. Dajte zakusit’» (*Jlu* 8).³⁸
 Again toast No **in-this-way (is)-impossible**_{IMPERF} just drank and again Let-(us) have-a-bite

P: „Nowy toast? Nie, **tak nie można**, przed chwilę wypiliśmy. . . .”

“Another toast? No, this isn’t the way to do it. We just had a toast and now another one . . . Let us have a bite to eat first.”

PATTERN #4

(67a) P: Podstawił jej nogę. . . . „Łobuzy!” – krzyczy gruba pani. – „**Ja nienaumyślnie**” (*Mać* 188).

Stuck-out_{3,SG} her_{DAT} foot Jerks – yells fat woman – **I**_{NOM} **accidentally**

‘He stuck out his foot to trip her. . . . “Jerks!” yells the fat woman. “I didn’t mean it.”

(67b) R: «**Ja ne naročno**».

C: “**Já nevědomky**.”

I_{NOM} **accidentally**

“I didn’t mean it.”

(68) R: [*Vlasakiev’s neighbor stained Vlasakiev’s doormat while painting his (the neighbor’s) front door*]

«Možet, **on nečajanno?**» – predložila Lidusja. «Možet, nečajanno, a možet, i naročno!» – s žarom otkliknulsja Vlasakiev (*Avto* 55).

Maybe **he**_{NOM} **by-mistake** – suggested Lidusja Maybe by-mistake but maybe PARTICLE on-purpose – with intensity retorted Vlasakiev

“‘Maybe he did it by mistake?’ suggested Lidusja. ‘Maybe by mistake, but maybe on purpose!’ retorted Vlasakiev heatedly.”

PATTERN #5

(69a) P: „. . . Na naszym podwórku jest jedna dziewczyna, to z nią rady nie można dać sobie. Sama zaczepia, a jak jej coś zrobić, żeby ją tylko ruszyć, zaraz zaczyna wrzeszczeć i leci na skargę. **I ona tak ze wszystkimi**” (*Mać* 181).³⁹

In our neighborhood is one girl and with her one cannot deal Self_{NOM} does-something-to-you and if her_{DAT} something_{ACC} do_{INFIN} if her_{ACC} only touch_{INFIN} immediately starts_{3,SG} scream_{INFIN} and runs to complain And **she**_{NOM} **this-way with everyone**_{INSTR}

“. . . In our neighborhood there's this girl who's impossible to deal with. She does something to you, and if you do something back, if you even touch her, she immediately starts screaming and goes to tell on you. And she's like this with everyone.”

(69b) R: «I *ona tak so vsemi*».

C: „To *ona tak s každým*.”

And/PARTICLE *she_{NOM} this-way with everyone*

“And she's like this with everyone.”

3.2.2 *Russian's Productive Strategy of SSVE_{OTHER}*

In Russian, many (perhaps even most) verbs can be ellipted if the clause contains two or more syntactically and semantically compatible overt categories that, in combination, imply verbal action. Most often, some generalized action is implied by the elliptical clause itself, but a more specific interpretation relies on contextual cues. These cues can either be external to the sentence or located within the sentence itself. Consider in this regard the following minimal pair:

(71a) R: Èto vy [e] farš? (RRR 296).⁴⁰

PARTICLE *you_{NOM} [e] (meat)-stuffing_{ACC}*

‘Is that meat stuffing you're making <eating, you bought, etc.>?’

(71b) R: Èto vy [e] farš takoj v magazine? (RRR 296).

PARTICLE *you_{NOM} [e] (meat)-stuffing_{ACC} this-kind_{ACC} in store*

‘Did you really get meat stuffing like this at the store?’⁴¹

(71a) cannot be unambiguously interpreted in isolation: while it implies that the interlocutor *did/is doing something* to the meat stuffing, the specific nature of the action is unclear. Of course, there are only a limited number of normal things one can do to meat stuffing—mix it, prepare it, buy it, eat it, serve it—so the nature of the object provides some clues as to what the ellipted verb probably means. Unambiguous interpretation, however, requires sentence-external cues. In this instance, if the speaker is watching someone unpack a grocery bag, ‘buy’ is implied; if he is watching someone mixing something in a bowl, ‘prepare’ is implied; if he is watching someone devour a meal, ‘eat’ is implied.

Sentence (71b), by contrast, strongly implies the interpretation ‘buy’ without the need of extra-sentential context because the adverbial *at the store* significantly restricts possible logical interpretations of the verb. (Of course, in theory one could *prepare* meat stuffing at a store if there were a kitchen in the back and one knew the store owner, but this interpretation would require extensive supporting context.)

The examples of Russian SSVE_{OTHER} cited below are organized according to two layers of diagnostics. The coarsest categorization is based on the

grammatical and semantic nature of the ellipsis licensers. Within each subclass thus defined, further classification derives from the recoverability conditions for the ellipsed verb.

None of the verbless Russian examples presented in the remainder of the paper have verbless Polish or Czech equivalents.

3.2.2.1 *Finite moč' + Prepositional Phrase or Adverb*. Finite forms of the verb *moč'*, in its auxiliary function, can combine with many types of PPs and adverbs to license SSVE_{OTHER} in Russian. *Moč'* is often negated in such sentences. Since the subject of *moč'* may be overt or ellipsed, it is not listed among the minimal licensers of ellipsis. Table 7 shows the combinations of licensers used in the examples that follow.

Table 7.

Finite moč'	PP/Adverb
ne mogli	v drugom meste
ne mogu	tak
ne mog	inače
...	...

Verbal meaning in the examples is recovered as follows: in (72), the preceding speech context provides an antecedent for [e], *vykopal orxideju* 'dug up an orchid'; in (73) the semantic nature of the overt licensers quasi-idiomatically conveys the idea *can't go on like this any longer* (cf. (65) above); and in (74) the semantic nature of the overt licensers implies *act/ behave*.

(72) R: «Na ploščadi **vykopal orxideju**. . . . Da razve èto xuliganstvo?» — «Èto neslyxannaja naglost'. Na ploščadi, pod nosom u milicii. Vy èto, v drugom meste ne mogli [e]?» (*Iju* 23).

In square dug-up_{1.SG} orchid. . . . PARTICLE really that-(is) hooliganism It-(is) unheard-of impertinence In square under nose at police You_{NOM} PARTICLE in another place_{PREP} NEG could [e]

"I dug up an orchid in the square. . . . Could that really be considered hooliganism?" "It's incredibly impudent. In the square, right under the police's nose. Couldn't you have done it somewhere else?"

(73) R: «Net, ja tebe ne verju. Otkuda ja znaju, možet, ty snova menja promenjaeš'. V interesax dela. Ja tak ne mogu [e]. Proščaj . . .» (*Iju* 66).

No I_{NOM} you_{DAT} NEG believe Whence I_{NOM} know maybe you_{NOM} again me_{ACC} will-sell-out In interests_{PREP} cause_{GEN} I_{NOM} in-this-way NEG can [e] Goodbye

"No, I don't believe you. How do I know, maybe you'll sell me out again. For the good of the cause. I can't go on like this. Goodbye . . ."

- (74) R: «Ja vse ponjala. Ty sdelał èto ne radi udovol'stvija, ponjala. Ty ne mog [e] inače, ponjala . . .» (*Iju* 66).
 I_{NOM} everything_{ACC} understood_{FEM.SG} You_{NOM} did this_{ACC} not-for-the-sake-of pleasure_{GEN} understood_{FEM.SG} You_{NOM} NEG could [e] otherwise understood_{FEM.SG}
 “I understand everything. You didn’t do this for fun, I understand. You couldn’t do otherwise, I understand . . .”

3.2.2.2 *Davaj(te) + Prepositional Phrase or Adverb*. The imperative form *davaj(te)* ‘let’s’ can combine with various types of PPs and adverbs to license SSVE_{OTHER} in Russian. Table 8 shows the combinations of ellipsis licensers found in the cited examples.

Table 8.

Davaj(te)	PP/Adverb
Davaj	bez šuma
Davajte	po porjadku
Davaj	bez paniki
Davaj	po novoj
...	...

This licensing strategy always implies *Let’s [do this] in the way specified*, with the referent for ‘this’ usually depending upon the larger discourse context. One notable aspect of this class of SSVE_{OTHER} is that the English translations are often structurally far from their Russian counterparts. For example, while one could translate (75) as ‘Let’s do this without fuss’ (staying close to the Russian structure), a more acceptable English translation is ‘And no fuss about it’ or ‘And I don’t want to hear another word about it’. The formal lack of correspondence between Russian and English is not surprising since this is highly colloquial speech — a register that shows particularly great cross-linguistic diversity.

- (75) R: «Pojdu — i nikakix. I davaj [e] bez šuma» (*Proš* 352).
 Will-go_{I.SG} and that’s-that And let’s [e] without fuss
 “I’m going and that’s that. And no fuss about it.”
- (76) R: [*The speaker is trying to understand the situation*]
 «Tak. Davajte [e] po porjadku. Vyxodit, ty — ego otec, a on — tvoj syn. Tak, èto li?» (*Star* 95).
 So Let’s [e] in order Turns-out_{IMPERS} you_{NOM} his father_{NOM} and he_{NOM} your son_{NOM}
 Right PARTICLE
 “OK. Let’s take this step by step. You’re his father and he’s your son. Right?”

- (77) R: «A razve čto-nibud' izmenilos'?» — «Izmenilos'? Nu čto ty. Prosto vse prošlo». — «Slušaj. Davaj [e] bez paniki» (*Oxot* 190).
 But really something_{NOM} changed Changed What are you talking about Just every-thing_{NOM} passed Listen Let's [e] without panic
 "Has anything really changed?" "Changed? What are you talking about. It's just all over." "Come on, let's not overreact."
- (78) R: «Slušaj, a kak tebjja zovut? Izvini, tam, v kafe, ja tolkom ne rasslyšal». — «Ja tože ne rasslyšal». — «Davaj [e] po novoj, čto li . . .» (*Trjasut drug drugu za ruku.*)
 «Busygin. Vladimir». — «Sevost'janov. Semen» (*Star* 76).
 Listen and what you_{ACC} call_{3, PL} Excuse-me there in cafe I clearly NEG heard — I also NEG heard Let's [e] again PARTICLE . . . (*Shake each other's hand*) Busygin Vladimir Sevost'janov Semen
 "What was your name again? Sorry, but there, in the cafe, I didn't exactly catch it."
 "I didn't catch yours either." "Let's start over . . ." (*They shake hands.*) "Busygin. Vladimir." "Sevost'janov. Semen."

3.2.2.3 *Možno/Nel'zja + Prepositional Phrase or Adverb*. Impersonal predicate words like *možno* and *nel'zja*, in their auxiliary function, can combine with PPs and adverbs of many semantic types to license SSVE_{OTHER}, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9.

Možno/Nel'zja	PP/Adverb
možno	ešče pjat' minut
nel'zja (li)	pospokojnee
nel'zja (li)	polegče
nel'zja	bez teatra
.

In most of the examples below, the nature of the verbal action must be derived from the broader discourse context. In (79)–(81) the ellipited verbs can generically be understood as 'do what you're doing', with proper English translations incorporating contextual information. In (82), by contrast, the overt licensors are semantically sufficient to convey that the verb in question is *live, go on*.

- (79) R: [*The horses are ready to go*]
 «Ne toropites', mnogouvažаемaja, pjat' minut ešče možno [e]» (*Čaj* 426).
 NEG rush_{IMPER} my-lady_{NOM} five minutes more (is)-possible_{IMPERS} [e]
 "Don't rush, my lady, you've got five more minutes <we can wait five more minutes>."

- (80) R: «Tak! Nadejus', vy ne budete menja dušit'? Zdes'! V moem dome!» – «Nel'zja li [e] pospokojnee?» (*Iju* 34).
 So Hope_{1.SG} you_{NOM} NEG will me_{ACC} strangle Here In my home Impossible_{IMPER}
 PARTICLE [e] more-calmly
 “So! I hope you’re not planning to strangle me? Here! In my own home!” “Take it easy.”
- (81) R: [*Pashka is trying to get close to Valentina in an inappropriately aggressive way. The dialogue is between Shamanov (who is trying to protect Valentina) and Pashka*]
 «Poslušaj-ka. Nel'zja li [e] polegče?» – «Če takoe?» – «Ja govorju, nel'zja li [e] polegče – s devuškoj» (*Proš* 330).
 Listen Impossible_{IMPER} PARTICLE [e] gentler What I_{NOM} say impossible_{IMPER}
 PARTICLE [e] gentler with girl
 “Listen, can’t you be a little gentler?” “What?” “I said, can’t you be a little gentler with the girl?”
- (82) R: [*The conversation is about theater.*]
 «Bez teatra nel'zja [e]» (*Čaj* 395).
 Without theater_{GEN} impossible_{IMPER} [e]
 “We can’t do without theater.”

3.2.2.4 *Nominative Subject + Prepositional Phrase or Adverb.* The combination of a Nominative subject and a PP or adverb is a common method of licensing SSVE_{OTHER} in Russian. The sample combinations of licensers in Table 10 are drawn from examples (83)–(87), which follow.

Table 10.

Nominative Subject	PP/Adverb/NP
ja	živo
ja	s udovol'stvijem
ja	ne oficial'no
on	ne iz mesti
vy	tixon'ko ot babuški
...	...

As regards recoverability conditions, in (83) and (84) the ellipsis antecedent is located in the preceding clause, emboldened. In (85) the antecedent is implied by the discourse context as well as the reference to *vopros* in the preceding clause: in contexts of questions, *asking* is the most common verbal action. In (86)–(87) the discourse context is fully responsible for implying the verbal action.

- (83) R: [*Everyone is leaving*]
 «. . . Ja **pojdu peškom na stanciju** . . . provožat'. Ja [e] živo . . . » (*Čaj* 426).
 I **will-go on-foot to station** to-see-off I_{NOM} [e] quickly
 “. . . I’ll walk to the station . . . to see them off. I’ll be quick about it.”

- (84) R: [In reference to an Alpine meadow]
 «Ja by razrešil tebe **pobegat' po nemu bosikom.**» – «Ja by [e] s udovol'stvie» (*Iju* 38).⁴²
 I CONDIT allowed you_{DAT} **to-run along it barefoot** I_{NOM} CONDIT [e] with pleasure
 "I'd let you run across it barefoot." "I'd love to."
- (85) R: «Ja ponimaju, vopros delikatnyj, no ja [e] ne oficial'no, ne s agenturnoj – xa-xa – točki zrenija, a kak . . . otec i daže kak ded . . .» (*Šap* 69).
 I understand question_{NOM} delicate but I_{NOM} [e] NEG officially NEG from secret-service_{ADJ} ha-ha point of-view but like . . . father_{NOM} and even like grandfather_{NOM}
 "I understand that this is a delicate question, but I'm not asking officially, not from a secret-service – ha, ha – point of view, but like . . . a father or even a grandfather."
- (86) R: «Ved' on ne iz mesti [e], vy ponimaete, što ne iz mesti?» – «Konečno. Mest' – čuvstvo, nedostojnoe rukovoditelja» (*Iju* 25–6).
 After-all he_{NOM} not from revenge_{GEN} [e] you_{NOM} understand that not from revenge_{GEN} Of-course Revenge_{NOM} feeling_{NOM} not-worthy-of director_{GEN}
 "After all, he's not acting this way out of revenge; you understand, that's it's not out of revenge, right?" "Of course. Revenge is a feeling not worthy of a director."
- (87) R: «Poslušajte, govorit, xotite so mnoju v teatr poexat'?» – «V teatr? Kak že babuška-to?» – «Da vy, govorit, [e] tixon'ko ot babuški . . .» (*Bel* 141).
 Listen says_{3.SG} want_{2.PL} with me to theater_{ACC} go_{INFIN} To theater_{ACC} what about Grandma PARTICLE you_{NOM} says_{3.SG} [e] quietly from Grandma
 "Listen, he says, do you want to go to the theater with me?" "The theater? But what about Grandma?" "Don't tell her, he says."

3.2.2.5 *Nominative Subject + Object*. In rather limited instances, a Nominative subject plus a single object can license SSVE_{OTHER}.

Table 11.

Nominative Subject	Object
vy	Remarka
vy	sardel'ku
bednye deti	i muzykoj, i jazykom, i čerte čem

This licensing strategy appears to occur most often when the object is of a semantic type that limits the possible verbal actions occurring to it. For example, the objects in (88) and (89) refer to an author and a type of food, respectively, making the default interpretations for the verbs *read* and *eat*. However, these verbs are not the only possibilities. For example, one could *buy* the works of Remarque or *buy* a small sausage. *RRR 1973* (295) notes that when an informant was asked to interpret sentence (88) outside of context he/she immediately interpreted it as *read* and only then realized that other verbs could be inserted as well. When asked why *read* was

selected first, the informant responded that “it somehow comes to mind first.” So, although verbless sentences with a semantically suggestive object can often receive a primary interpretation independent of context, that interpretation can be overridden by contextual cues.

(88) R: Èto vy [e] Remarka? (RRR 295).
 PARTICLE you_{NOM} [e] Remarque_{ACC}
 ‘Is that Remarque you’re reading?’

(89) R: Èto vy [e] sardel’ku? (RRR 295).
 PARTICLE you_{NOM} [e] a-sausage_{ACC}
 ‘Is that a sausage you’re eating?’

Besides semantics, there is another type of clue that can delimit verbal interpretation in SSVE_{OTHER} sentences: the case-marking of the object. For example, the objects in (90) are lexically case-marked Instrumental, and there are only a limited number of Russian verbs that impose this case-marking. Moreover, only one of those verbs, *zanimat’sja*, makes sense when the objects are things like *music* and *languages*. Therefore, the interaction of the semantic and formal aspects of the objects makes it clear, without contextual support, what verb is ellipted.

(90) R: Bednye deti [e] / i muzykoj / i jazykom / i čerte [sic] čem (RRR 305).⁴³
 Poor kids_{NOM} [e] / both music_{INSTR} / and language_{INSTR} / and God-knows what-
 else_{INSTR}
 ‘Those poor kids: they do <study, take, are forced to take, etc.> music and foreign
 language and God knows what else.’

3.2.2.6 *Nominative Subject + Object + Other Category*. In the following set of examples, three overt categories are required to license VE. While these categories also provide information toward recovering verbal meaning, they are not always sufficient to do so without extra-sentential support. Table 12 summarizes the licensers used in the examples that follow.

Table 12.

Nominative Subject	Object	Other
ja	ego	migom
vy	ee	za čto
my	ego	po doždčičku
my	ves’ kurs	za polgoda
revizor	k nemu	s pretenziej
ty	èti tufli	ščetkoj odežnoj
ja	golovu	šampunem
on	nogoj	o bort
my	s ètim	i v rajkom i v gazetu
...

The examples are presented in roughly decreasing order of context dependence: in examples (91)–(92), very little verbal meaning can be gleaned without the surrounding context; in (93)–(94) the combination of overt categories provides more semantic information for verbal retrieval, but discourse support is still helpful; and in (95)–(99) the combination of overt categories quite independently conveys verbal meaning.⁴⁴

- (91) R: «Če? snova za remont? Nu, Valjuša, podpisalas' ty s ètim palisadnikom! . . .
Ladno. Daj ja ego nalažu». – «Ne nado». – «Da ja ego migom [e]» (*Proš* 366).
What again at repairs PARTICLE Valjuša_{NOM} gone-crazy_{SLANG} you_{NOM} with this
garden OK Let I_{NOM} it_{ACC} fix NEG necessary_{IMPERS} PARTICLE I it_{ACC} in-a-flash [e]
“At it again? Valjusha, you’re taking this garden way too seriously! . . . Oh, all
right. Let me fix it for you.” “No need.” “I’ll do it in a flash.”
- (92) R: [*Looking at a dead bird on the ground*]
«Prolili krov', raskaivaemsja». – «Čto za zver'?» – «Soroka». – «Za čto vy ee [e],
bednjažku?» (*Iju* 50).
Spilled_{PL} blood repent_{1.PL.PRES} What_{NOM} as creature_{NOM} Magpie_{NOM} Why you_{NOM}
it_{ACC} [e] poor-thing
“We spilled blood, we repent.” “What kind of creature is it?” “A magpie.” “Why
did you kill it, the poor thing?”
- (93) R: [*Sayapin and Kuzakov are preparing to carry Zilov out of a cafe where he got dead
drunk*]
«Dožd' pošel». – «A vot my ego [e] po doždičku» (*Oxot* 230).⁴⁵
Rain_{NOM} started Well we_{NOM} him_{ACC} [e] in rain
“It’s started to rain.” “Then we’ll haul him off in the rain.”
- (94) R: I my za polgoda [e] ves' kurs (*RRR* 305).
And we_{NOM} in half-a-year [e] whole course_{ACC}
‘And we got through <did, finished, etc.> this whole course in half a year.’
- (95) R: «. . . Vyšel u našego prodavca izlišek. Nebol'shaja byla summa, tak sebe. Govorit'
ne o čem. A revizor [e] k nemu s pretenzijej: kak že tak, dorogoj tovarišč?» (*Iju* 47).
Came-out at our salesclerk surplus_{NOM} Not-big was sum not-much Nothing to speak
of But inspector_{NOM} [e] to him_{DAT} with objection_{INSTR}: how can this be dear com-
rade
“. . . Our salesclerk ended up with a surplus. A small sum, not much at all. Noth-
ing to speak of. But the inspector came to him complaining: how can this be, dear
comrade?”
- (96) R: A èti tufli ty [e] ščetkoj odežnoj? (*RRR* 306–7).
And these shoes_{ACC} you_{NOM} [e] brush_{INSTR} clothes_{INSTR.ADJ}.
‘And do you clean these shoes with a clothes brush?’
- (97) R: Golovu ja [e] šampunem obyčno (*RRR* 306–7).
Head_{ACC} I_{NOM} [e] shampoo_{INSTR} usually
‘I usually wash my hair with shampoo.’
- (98) R: On nogoj o bort kak-to neudačno [e] (*RRR* 307).
He_{NOM} leg_{INSTR} against side-of-the-ship_{ACC} somehow in-a-bad-way [e]
‘Somehow he banged his leg badly on the side of the ship.’

- (99) R: My už s ètim [e] i v rajkom i v gazetu (RRR 305).
 We_{NOM} PARTICLE with this_{INSTR} [e] both to district-committee_{ACC} and to
 newspaper_{ACC}
 ‘We’ve already approached both the district committee and the newspaper with
 this.’

3.3 SUMMARY OF SLAVIC-SPECIFIC VERBAL ELLIPSIS

SSVE is a type of verbal ellipsis that is licensed by a combination of two or more lexical licensers that “go together” both grammatically and semantically. There are two basic types of SSVE, distinguished by the recoverability conditions for the verb. In SSVE structures conveying motion, speaking, and hitting, no antecedent is needed, since the lexical licensers themselves provide sufficient information for verbal retrieval. In all other SSVE structures, either an antecedent or supporting context (sentence-internal or -external) is generally required to unambiguously convey verbal meaning. Whereas Russian employs both types of SSVE liberally, Polish and Czech do not, making it convenient to capture the licit verbless structures in these languages in the form of finite lists.

4. Conclusions

This paper has classified, described, and provided examples of all the types of VE employed in Russian, Polish, and Czech. It has shown that four of five VE licensing strategies are used similarly in R-P-C and English, with only minor cross-linguistic variations. These are Gapping (*Mary likes drama and her husband [e] comedy*) and Stripping (*They called John but not [e] Fred*), which are licensed by structural parallelism; and Sluicing (*I want something to eat but I don’t know what [e]*) and VP Ellipsis (*They have enough money, but we don’t [e]*), which are licensed by a specific type of lexical category. The fifth strategy, which I call Slavic-Specific Verbal Ellipsis, is used considerably more productively in Russian than in Polish and Czech, and is not used at all in English. SSVE is licensed by a combination of overt categories. In some instances, the ellipted verb can be unambiguously recovered by the same words that license the ellipsis (as with verbs of motion, speaking, and hitting), while in other instances a syntactic or extra-linguistic antecedent is required. Perhaps the most important feature of SSVE is that it depends upon the interface of syntax, semantics, and discourse, and therefore cannot be fully accounted for within any theoretical framework that is limited to but one of these aspects of the language system.

NOTES

- 1 Sincerest thanks to my language informants for their patience and insights: Katarzyna Hagemajer, Milena Šipková, Lenka Valova, and Michael Wilk. I am also grateful to

- Leonard Babby, Wayles Browne, Catherine Chvany, Stephanie Harves, James Lavine, Sophia Lubensky, Charles Townsend, and the anonymous readers from *SEEJ* for their helpful commentary on various aspects of this paper.
- 2 P&P is a continuation of Government and Binding Theory. For an introduction, see Haegeman 1994.
 - 3 P&P's Logical Form is connected to semantics, but is not intended to be a fully developed semantic component of the grammar.
 - 4 The properties of these types of ellipsis are drawn largely from the following sources: Ross 1967, Jackendoff 1971, Stillings 1975, Williams 1977, Neijt 1979 and 1981, Rooryck 1985, Hudson 1989, and Lobeck 1995. I consider these properties part of mainstream theory and do not indicate who first proposed them, amended them, etc.
 - 5 For our purposes, a "category" can be understood as a major component of the sentence: subject, verb, direct object, indirect object, prepositional phrase, or adverb.
 - 6 Following linguistic convention, I use a star (*) to indicate ungrammaticality and a question mark (?) to indicate questionable grammaticality. Word-for-word glosses are presented only when Slavic variants do not structurally match the English one. Grammatical information in word-for-word glosses is presented on a need-to-know basis in order not to clutter the presentation. Differences in punctuation conventions among the languages are grammatically irrelevant.
 - 7 (1b) would be acceptable in R-P-C (but not in English) as the response to a question like *Who wants to draw what?* However, such question-answer pairs arguably do not represent ellipsis (see McShane 1998: 118–119 for discussion).
 - 8 In some languages, like Hindi, so-called 'backwards Gapping' is permitted (Sjblom 1980). Backwards Gapping has been attributed to Russian, as well (Ross 1970), but my informants consider it marginal at best.
 - 9 See section 2.1.2 for discussion of ellipted subjects in Gapping examples.
 - 10 Some English speakers find this marginally possible, but certainly not as good as the (a) variant.
 - 11 Examples drawn from literary sources are indicated in abbreviated form following the example. A list of source abbreviations follows the body of the paper.
 - 12 See McShane 1998 for supporting evidence.
 - 13 See Li 1976 for discussion of related topics.
 - 14 See Franks 1995 and Nilsson 1982 for discussion of subject ellipsis in Russian and Polish.
 - 15 The English variant might sound a bit unnatural because Gapping is rarely used in English colloquial speech. Thus it is stylistic register rather than grammar that slightly degrades this sentence.
 - 16 Lacking an infinitival construction like *Mom asked Misha to sing*, Polish and Czech use a subordinate clause: *P: Matka poprosiła Michalę, aby zaśpiewała; C: Maminka poprosiła Michalę, aby zaspíval* 'Mother asked Misha_{ACC} that sang_{3.SG.MASC}'.
 - 17 Although English has morphological case marking on pronouns, it is systematically too weak to permit a Gapping interpretation of sentences like (9). Hankamer's No-Ambiguity Condition captures the impossibility of a Gapping interpretation in such sentences: "Any application of Gapping which would yield an output structure identical to a structure derivable by Gapping from another source, but with the "gap" at the left extremity, is disallowed" (Hamkamer 1973, 29). This condition applies as rigorously to Russian as it does to English; there are simply fewer ambiguous contexts in Russian.
 - 18 The particle *i* 'too' is added to the Czech example to make it sound more natural.
 - 19 In English one could also say ". . . Jim *does* [e]," but this variant employs an auxiliary that R-P-C lack.
 - 20 While a thorough analysis of Czech impersonal predicates lies outside the scope of this paper, several points deserve mention:

- Example (21) would be rendered in Czech as follows: *Chci se dívat na televizi. Lze to?* or *Je to možné?* Both of these translations contain *to*, which overtly refers to the whole VP.
 - Although *dá se* cannot be used in example (21), it can license VP ellipsis in examples like (i):
 - i) Myslíš, že bych tam našla dobrou práci? Dá se [e].
 think_{2.SG} that would_{1.SG} there found_{FEM.SG} good job_{ACC} Is-possible_{IMPERS} [e]
 ‘Do you think I would find a good job there? It’s possible.’
 - The closest Czech equivalent of R: *možno* and P: *možna* is C: *možné*, which is generally used in the non-elliptical verbal structure: *je možné + VP*, literally, ‘is possible + VP.’
 - Two other Czech impersonals are *lze* and *nelze* (the latter of which is lexically similar to Russian *nel’zja*); these are common to the literary style and generally do not license VP ellipsis.
- 21 McShane 1998 provides argumentation for considering *net/nie/ne* non-elliptical predicates.
- 22 This example comes from the following Polish text (Mać 188):
 Podstawił jej nogę. . . . „Łobuzy!” – krzyczy gruba pani. „Ja [e] nienaumyślnie.”
 ‘He stuck out his foot to trip her. “Jerks!” yells the fat woman. “I didn’t mean it.”’
- 23 Czech *Já nevědomky* has playful connotations. *Já neúmyslně* or *Já nechtěně* would be used in more formal contexts.
- 24 George Fowler (personal communication) suggested that a paradigmatic approach might be taken to decide whether such verbless sentences are idiomatic constructions or productively created structures with lexical restrictions. The difficulty then lies in specifying what, precisely, defines “paradigm” in this context.
- 25 For example, two time adverbials cannot license SSVE because, regardless of the syntactic or discourse context, they cannot convey sufficient semantic content to form a complete sentence: e.g., **In September at night* is unlikely to be a complete sentence in any language. Phrases like these can be used in series only in the literary stage-setting mode: *September. Night. Blue lights in the distance . . .*
- 26 Dun 1982 presents a finely categorized inventory of verbless examples of this type in Russian. None of my examples are drawn from this source.
- 27 In Czech, the following verbal structures would be used:
- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| i) Koho hledáte? | ii) Za kým jdeš? | iii) A vy ke komu jdete? |
| Whom _{ACC} look-for _{2.PL} | For whom are-coming _{2.SG} | And you _{NOM} to whom are-coming _{2.PL} |
- 28 The notion of minimal licensers (i.e., the minimum number of components required to license ellipsis) is of more theoretical than practical import; thus, I mention it only in passing.
- 29 The verb *to be* need not always be expressed overtly in Polish.
- 30 This is a highly colloquial sentence in Russian, and might better be translated by the American slang: “. . . You go ‘hi’ to him, and he goes ‘hi’ to you.”
- 31 Cf. Lubensky 1995.
- 32 In Russian, a verbless clause may be used, but it must be namely *A čto Pavel*, not **A čto na èto Pavel*.
- 33 Although Russian permits a parallel verbless sentence, *A ty čto?*, it must be used carefully—only with this word order and only with appropriate accompanying intonation (in Polish and Czech, word order is variable). These restrictions on the Russian structure may well be due to the fact that in Russian *Čto ty?! (varied)* is an idiom meaning ‘What do you mean! Is that so!’ Thus, in translating (51) into Russian, one might better choose a structure containing a verb: *A čto ty dumaeš?* ‘What do you think?’ or *A čto ty skazala?* ‘What did you say?’
- 34 One Czech informant accepts the verbless *já nic*, while another prefers the verbal form

- nevadí*. Both Polish *zimno* and Czech *je zima* are ambiguous; English *it's cold* (i.e., either the weather or the kettle/water) retains this ambiguity.
- 35 The properties of this type of ellipsis are drawn from RRR 306.
- 36 A slash is used in some linguistic texts to indicate a pause in spoken discourse.
- 37 *W tym zimnie i wilgoci* is a restatement of *tak*, and thereby does not contribute to licensing the ellipsis.
- 38 In Czech, this would be conveyed by one of two verbal structures, emboldened in this translation: *Další přípitek? Ne, **takhle se to nedá** <**takhle to nejde**>. *Právě jsme měli skleničku a teď další . . . Nech nás nejprve se najíst.**
- 39 This example includes several idiomatic turns of phrase, so the word-for-word translation only loosely represents the structure of the Polish variant.
- 40 The non-trivial role of *ěto*, here and elsewhere, lies outside the scope of this paper.
- 41 The most natural interpretation of this sentence is that the meat stuffing is very good and it is hard to believe that it is not homemade.
- 42 English permits the variant *With pleasure*, but not *I [e] with pleasure*. Polish technically permits *Ja, z przyjemnością*, but only in highly emphatic contexts, making it fundamentally different from the Russian. It is unclear whether the conditional particle *by* plays a role in licensing ellipsis in this sentence (Russian speakers feel that it does, since the variant with *by* is far more common than the variant without it). I leave this question open for future research.
- 43 Although RRR 1973 has *čerte*, it should be *čert-te*.
- 44 Even though these last sentences convey verbal meaning essentially without supporting context, they are still not comparable to SSVE of motion, speaking, or hitting for the following reasons: they convey a single verb, rather than a semantic field; they are less frequent and stable in the language; and such sentences must be carefully semantically stacked in order to permit VE outside of context.
- 45 The intonation of this last remark implies 'that'll do him good, it serves him right, that'll sober him up.'

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Polish

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