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Cross-linguistic Differences in English and French VP-Ellipsis

Hafissatou KANE
Department of English studies, Cheikh Anta DIOP University of Dakar, Senegal
Corresponding Author: Hafissatou KANE, E-mail: kanehafi@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The aim of this paper is to investigate the construction of Verb Phrase ellipsis in both English and French. More specifically, the paper examines whether English and French form the verbal ellipsis in a same way. The study also tests an assumption, stating that the semantic opposition between deontic and epistemic modal auxiliaries distinguishes English and French VP-ellipsis. In doing so, a number of French and English elliptical verb phrases have been examined using the contrastive method. After analysing several examples gathered from some studies in the existing literature, it is argued that these elliptical VPs are differently conventionalized in the two languages. What has been found is, English often expresses VP-ellipsis using an auxiliary or a modal verb followed by a gap (e.g. absence of the past participle or main verb) while this is rarely acceptable in French. Exceptions only exist after modal verbs. French on the other hand, has various means to form VP-ellipsis. The analysis finally confirms that ellipsis is possible in English after both deontic and epistemic modal verbs while French only accepts ellipsis after deontic modals such as devoir 'must, should' and pouvoir 'can, may'.

Introduction

In linguistics, ellipsis refers to the omission from a clause of one or more words that are nevertheless understood in the context of the remaining elements e.g. my *horse is faster than* <u>yours</u> (*your horse*). In this example, repeating the whole noun phrase '*your horse*' is redundantly perceived since the only possessive pronoun '*yours*' fully expresses the same idea. Goldberg and Perek (2016: 1-2) explain that every language balances the need to be expressive with the need to be sufficiently easy to produce. In a broad sense, the existence of elliptical constructions is clearly motivated by our need to express our messages economically. Thus, while speakers often have the option of redundantly expressing material that could be elided, non-elided counterparts sound quite odd, and ellipsis is required.

Since ellipsis is generally motivated by communicative purposes, it will be then something common to all languages. Yet, constructionist approaches predict that 'language constructions vary cross-linguistically' and elliptical constructions are no exception. That is the reason why speakers need to learn exactly the nuances of how individual ellipsis constructions are conventionalized in each particular language (Goldberg & Perek, ibd).

Knowing how language constructions vary from one language to another is also indispensable to second language learners such as Senegalese French-speaking students who are learning English. It can be expected that being able to identify how ellipsis functions both in French, the first language and English, the second language will help them to avoid confusion or negative transfers from one language to another.

Several elliptical forms have been discussed by linguists, but verbal ellipsis has been recognized to draw more attention in the literature. One example is given in (2.b) below where the second verb phrase corresponding to '*went to the ceremony*' in (2.a) is fully represented by the single finite auxiliary verb '*did*'.

1. She didn't go to the ceremony but her parents *went to the ceremony.
   She didn't go to the ceremony but her parents <u>did.</u>

The aim of this paper is to examine the verbal phrase ellipsis (verbs and complements elision) of both English and French. The study specifically investigates the elements used in either language to replace the elided Verb Phrase. To that effect, I first examine the predicate ellipsis, which is a Verb Phrase elision that occurs after a statement containing an auxiliary verb. The second objective will consist of analysing modal ellipsis, meaning the elision of a VP after a first statement containing a modal verb. One particular focus of this second section is to test whether the semantic opposition between deontic and epistemic modal verbs distinguishes English and French ellipsis.

Literature Review

Merchant (2016: 2) notes that in generative linguistics, research has focused largely on two sets of constructions. Central examples of the first set, drawn from English include sluicing, as in (3), predicate or verbal phrase ellipsis (VP-ellipsis) as in (4) and NP-ellipsis (or more broadly nominal ellipsis) as in (5).

2. *Sluicing*: Lauren can play something, but <u>I don't know what</u>.
3. *VP-ellipsis*: "Lauren can play the guitar and Mike, <u>can too</u>".
4. *NP*-ellipsis: Lauren can play five instruments, and Mike can play <u>six</u>.
5.

A second set of constructions in which ellipsis has been invoked include stripping (or 'bare argument ellipsis') in 6, gapping in 7, fragment answer in (8) as well as a host of other cases that fall under the general rubric of 'conjunction reduction'.

6. *Stripping*: a. Lauren can play the guitar, (and Mike, too/ and Mike as well/ but not Mike)
   b. Lauren can play the guitar better than Mike
7. *Gapping:* Lauren can play the guitar, and Mike the Violin.
8. *Fragment answer:* A: Who can play the guitar?
   B: (Not) Lauren.

Revisiting studies that have used experimental methods from psycholinguistics to address questions about the representation of sentences involving ellipsis, Johnson (2003: 60) explains that ellipsis phenomena are linguistically interesting because a clear interpretation is conveyed despite the absence of overtly expressed material. This leads to questions about how ellipsis is mentally represented and how the interpretation of the elided material is recovered. The search for answers to these questions is helped by the fact that each type of ellipsis is subject to a number of constraints.

In their work "A Constructionist Approach to Ellipsis", Goldberg and Perek (Ibd, 11-12) note that at first blush, French contains several very similar elliptical constructions as English, e.g., gapping in (9), sluicing in (10) and not-stripping in (11).

9. Elle conduisait la voiture <u>et toi la moto</u>.
   She drove the car <u>and you the motorbike</u>.
10. Elle sait qu'elle se marie dans quinze jours mais elle <u>ne sait pas avec qui</u>.
    She knows she's getting married in two weeks but she <u>doesn't know with whom</u>.
11. Ton oncle Daniel a le droit de jurer, <u>mais pas toi</u>!
    Your uncle Daniel has the right to swear, <u>but not you</u>!

Yet, they also admit that there are striking differences between the two languages with respect to the possibility of VP ellipsis. In particular, only a very limited number of verbs can be used in French VP ellipsis, such as the modal *pouvoir* (can) and a few other modal-like verbs. Neither *avoir* (have), nor *être* (be) in the simple perfect ("passé composé"), nor the passive auxiliary, nor copular verbs are allowed, while the corresponding English equivalents are fully acceptable.

In a similar research work, Busquets and Denis (2001: 4-5) investigating the status of some modal elliptical constructions in French, recognize that the phenomenon of verbal ellipsis has been more discussed in English than in several languages like

French. For them, the main justification that could be given to this omission is because VP- ellipsis does not exist in French. Researchers used to believe that only other types of ellipsis such as gapping in (9) above and sluicing (12) are accepted in French.

12. *Sluicing*: Harry is supposed to meet Sally, but he doesn't know when.
    'Harry est censé rencontrer Sally, mais elle ne sait pas quand.'

They further argue that if researchers believe that French speakers do not elide verbs in their speech, this is because they have long observed that the complements of the auxiliary verbs *avoir* (have) and *être* (be) cannot be phonetically empty as the ungrammaticality of examples (13.b) and (14.b) makes clear.

13. a. Charles crossed the Atlantic, but François didn't
    b. Charles a traversé l'Atlantique, mais François *n'a pas
14. a. Charles came to the ceremony, but François didn't
    b. Charles est venu à la cérémonie, mais François *n'est pas

<div align="right">Goldberg & Perek (Ibd, 12)</div>

Another explanation given in the absence of VP ellipsis in French is, French does not have a helping auxiliary verb like the English dummy auxiliary '*do'* which allows the elision of the verb complement shown in (2.b) repeated below.

She didn't go to the ceremony but her parents did

Busquets & Denis finally note that contrary to French, there are also some elements in English such as the infinitive marker '*to'* and the negation morpheme '*not'* in subjunctive forms that also accept verb elision, as indicated in (15) and (16).

15. a. Hobbes didn't have to do the washing up, but Calvin had to.
    b. Hobbes n'avait pas à faire la vaisselle, mais Calvin *avait à.
16. a. Jerry wishes that George come to the party, but he prefers that Newman not.
    Jerry aimerait que George vienne à la soirée, mais il préférerait que Newman *(ne) pas

Thus, the comparable elliptical constructions displayed in these above studies indicates that verb elision is much more restricted in French. While this type of ellipsis is frequently used in English, it becomes semantically inacceptable in French. However, despite these constraints, there exists one situation in which incomplete verb phrase constructions are acceptable in French. But, this time, the residues are modal auxiliaries, and not auxiliary verbs like *avoir* (have) and *être* (be) as examples (17) and (18) indicate below.

17. Elle n'a pas pu venir à la soirée, bien que ses parents, eux, aient pu.
18. Elle n'a pas répondu aussi vite qu'elle aurait dû.
19.

Dagnac also noted that there are two contexts within which a verbal form can be followed by a gap, as in English: after some lexical verbs like *oser* 'dare', and after (non-epistemic) modal auxiliaries such as *pouvoir* 'can', *devoir* 'must', and as shown by Authier (2011), *vouloir* 'want', *falloir* 'have to' and *avoir le droit* 'have the right'.

This phenomenon observed in the above examples, referred to as modal ellipsis, has not been largely discussed in French. Yet, some very famous research works include Abeillé (1991), Busquets and Denis (2001), Authier (2015) and Dagnac (2017) etc. As mentioned earlier, this work has two objectives. It first examines the predicate ellipsis both in English and French; and then proceeds with modal ellipses. A particular attention will be paid to the constraints that governed each language.

Methodology

In order to compare the verb phrase ellipsis of English and French; and identify their points of similarities and differences, several research works done in this field and other grammar books explaining ellipsis in the two languages have been used. To discuss the elliptical constructions of each language and their peculiarities, examples have been taken from the existing literature, mainly from Busquets and Denis (2001), Dagnac (2017) and Goldberg and Perek (2017). The remaining data used in this study has been gathered from Charles Brasart (2015)'s *L'Essentiel de la grammaire anglaise* and from Michael Swan's (1996) *Practical English Usage*. The data of both languages are described and analyzed through the contrastive method.

The contrastive method, I remind, is very popular in linguistic studies adopted from the middle of the 20th century. Through this method, linguists and language teachers and learners find the differences that exist between two languages that can make a particular language learning and teaching difficult to come over of it.

Analysis and Discussions

The analysis and discussion of this study examines two types of verb phrase ellipsis: predicate ellipsis (after auxiliaries); and modal ellipsis (after modal verbs).

Predicate Ellipsis

Dagnac (2017:1) observes that English-type predicate ellipsis are ruled out in present-day French, in particular after auxiliaries. In VP-ellipsis, an auxiliary can be followed by a gap in English while their French counterparts in direct translations cannot. The present study is restricted to these types of elliptical constructions including the following: short questions, tag questions, short answers and coordinating ellipsis.

Short questions

Short questions can fulfil three functions in a speech. In its first use, it can allow us to know if something expressed in a given predicate also applies to another person as indicated in (19). Short questions are also used to seek confirmation about a previous statement (20). Finally, these questions allow speakers to show their reaction to something previously said by someone else (21).

20. a. I am going to Sam's party tomorrow. <u>Are you</u>?
    b. Je vais à la fête de Sam demain. *<u>Es tu</u>?
    c. 'Je vais à la fête de Sam demain. <u>Et toi</u>?'
21. a. Eileen says we can trust you. <u>Can we</u>?
    b. Eileen dit que nous pouvons vous faire confiance. *<u>Pouvons-nous ?</u>
    c. 'Eileen dit que nous pouvons vous faire confiance. <u>C'est vrai?'</u>
22. a. "I've decided to quit smoking." "<u>Have you?</u>"
    b. "J'ai décidé d'arrêter de fumer." *«-<u>As-tu ?</u> »
    c. « J'ai décidé d'arrêter de fumer." « -<u>Ah bon!</u> / <u>C'est vrai?</u> »

As noted, ellipsis with short questions is differently expressed in English and French. English uses the subject and auxiliary of the first statement in an inverted structure to avoid repeating the same elements while this is not possible in French. The direct translations of the English elliptical phrases '*<u>are you</u>?*' in (19.a); '*<u>can we</u>?*' (20.a) and '*<u>have you</u>?*' in (21.a) show that their French corresponding phrases *<u>Es-tu?</u>* (19.b), *<u>Pouvons-nous?</u>* (20.b) and *<u>As-tu?</u>* (21.b) are all ungrammatical. French has various means of expressing ellipses in short questions which are different from the English subject-auxiliary forms. For instance, the right elliptical question in (19.c) is made of a conjunction + a personal pronoun '*<u>Et toi</u>?*', Sometimes it can be '*Pas toi?*', '*Et vous.?*', '*Pas vous*?' etc. depending on the object pronoun. In (20.c), the acceptable question is *<u>c'est vrai?,</u>* searching for confirmation and not *<u>As tu?</u>*. French also uses the same elliptical phrase *<u>c'est vrai?</u>* while expressing reaction to a previous statement as illustrated in (21.c) where is equivalent to '*Ah bon*' .

Tag questions

Tag questions which are frequently used in English are the small questions that often come at the ends of sentences in speech, and sometimes in informal writing. They can be used to have confirmation of something, or to ask for agreement. Examples are given in (22) and (23).

23. a. Your name's Jacky, <u>isn't it</u>?
    b. Vous vous appelez Jacky,* <u>n'est-il pas</u>?
    c. 'Vous vous appelez Jacky, <u>n'est-ce pas</u>?'
24. a. You don't have a crush on that girl, <u>do you</u>?
    b. Tu n'as pas le béguin pour cette fille, *<u>fais-tu</u> ?
    c. 'Tu n'as pas le béguin pour cette fille, <u>quand même</u> ?'

In English, when a first statement is positive, the tag will be negative and vice versa, as indicated in (22) and (23). This is not necessarily the case in French. Another difference between the two languages is, English only needs to repeat the subject and auxiliary verb of the first statement in an inverted structure as examples (22.a) '*<u>Isn't it</u>?*' and (23.a) '*<u>Do you</u>?*' indicate, while

French cannot. In French, one can use a number of expressions like '*N'est-ce pas*?', '*Pas vrai?*', '*Non*?', '*C'est ça?*' '*Quand même*?' etc. but repeating the auxiliary verb and the subject (pronoun) of the first statement as in *'*N'est-il pas*?* (22.b) and *'*Fais-tu*?* (23.b) is not acceptable. Therefore, it can be noted that the French right tag questions are "*N'est-ce pas*?" (22.c) and "*Quand même*" (23.c).

Short answers

These elliptical phrases are also common in English and are mainly used as answers to closed questions. They correspond to the French adverbs "*Oui*", "*Non*" and "*Si*" etc. Yet, besides being used in closed questions, they can also be used whenever a predicate needs to be repeated as in (27).

25. a. "Do you really think majoring in English is a good idea?"   "I do."
    b. Tu crois vraiment que c'est une bonne idée de faire des études d'anglais? *«-Je fais »
    c 'Tu crois vraiment que c'est une bonne idée de faire des études d'anglais? «-Oui »'
26. a. "Is your client willing to plead guilty, counsel?"   "She isn't your honor".
    b. Est-ce que votre cliente est prête à plaider coupable, maitre? *«-Elle n'est pas votre honneur »
    c.' Est-ce que votre cliente est prête à plaider coupable, maitre ? « -Non votre honneur »'
27. a. Does everybody here speak science? No they don't.
    b. Est-ce que tout le monde ici parle le scientifique? *Non ils ne font pas!
    c. 'Est-ce que tout le monde ici parle le scientifique? Eh bien non!'
28. a. I must have put it somewhere, I must have!
    b. Je l'ai forcément mis quelque part, *Je dois avoir!
    c. 'Je l'ai forcément mis quelque part, forcément!'

Example (24) - (26) have also proven that English only needs subject pronouns and auxiliary verbs to semantically express a whole answer while the direct translations are ungrammatical in French. Any of the English short answers '*I do*' (24.a), '*She isn't*' (25.a) and '*No they don't*' (26.a) or '*I must have*' (27.a) does correspond to their French direct translations *'*Je fais*' in (24.b), *'*Elle n'est pas*' (25.b), *'*Non ils ne font pas*' (26.b) or *'*Je dois avoir*' in (27.b). These forms are semantically empty in French therefore it uses other elliptical constructions. For instance, the equivalents of the English above mentioned short answers are: '*Oui*' (24.c); '*Non votre honneur*' (25.c); '*Eh bien non*' (26.c) and the adverb '*Forcément*' in (27.c).

Coordinate Ellipsis

The coordinate type of ellipsis is used when we want to say that something that applies to an already mentioned individual also applies to someone else. This predicate can be both positive and negative. In coordinating contexts, French has a specific type of stripping constructions, in which a particle appears in the fragment. As explained (Goldberg et al. Ibd. P: 12), the particle varies depending on the polarity of both the antecedent and the fragment. When the latter are both positive, this particle is *aussi* 'too' as (28.a) indicates; when the antecedent is positive and the fragment negative, the French particle becomes *pas* 'not' or *non* 'no' as in (29.a). The third coordinating context is when the antecedent is positive and the fragment negative, then French uses the particle *oui* or *si* 'yes' in the elliptical phrase, as in (30.a). The fourth and final context is when both the antecedent and fragment are negative. There, French uses the particle *non plus* 'neither, nor, not either'. In all the above presented contexts, French uses a specific particle preceded by the subject of the fragment.

English on the other hand, always needs to repeat the auxiliary verb of the first statement that can be preceded or followed by the subject of the fragment to forms coordinate ellipses. The constructions follow a strict structure as presented below:
Positive statement: so   +   *auxiliary + subject*
Negative statement: neither or nor   +   *auxiliary + subject*
"*So*" is used in an elliptical construction with a similar meaning to "*also*", in the structure *so + auxiliary verb + subject*. The structure is used to answer or add to the sentence before, and uses the same auxiliary verb. After a clause with no auxiliary verb, we use 'do' in the required tense.

29. a. Il adorait les Beatles et ses amis aussi!
    b. He loved the Beatles and his friends too
    c. "He loved the Beatles" "So did his friends"

30. a. il adorait les Beatles, mais pas ses amis / mais ses amis non.

b. He loved the Beatles, <u>but not his friends</u> / <u>but his friends no</u>

c. 'He loved the Beatles, <u>but his friends did not</u>'.

31. a. il n'aimait pas les Beatles, <u>mais ses amis oui / si</u>

   b.   He didn't like the Beatles, *<u>but his friends yes</u>.

   c.   'He didn't like the Beatles, <u>but his friends did</u>'.

   d.

Neither / Nor / Not either

We can use 'neither' and 'nor' as adverbs to mean 'also not'. 'Neither' and 'nor' come at the beginning of a clause, and are followed by inverted word order: Neither / nor + auxiliary verb + subject. We can also use Not… either with the same meaning and normal word order.

32. a. Il n'aimait pas les Beatles, <u>et ses amis non plus</u>.

   b. He didn't like the Beatles, *<u>and his friends not more</u>

   c. 'He didn't like the Beatles, <u>neither did his friends</u>'

33. a. Il n'aimait pas les Beatles, <u>et ses amis non plus</u>.

   b.   He didn't like the Beatles, <u>and nor did his friends</u>

34. a. Il n'aimait pas les Beatles, <u>et ses amis non plus</u>.

   b. He didn't like the Beatles, *<u>and his friends not more</u>.

   c. He didn't like the Beatles, <u>and his friends did not either</u>.

Goldberg et al. (Ibd. 13) note that the direct translations in English are (marginally) acceptable in the case of a positive antecedent (34.a, b). The translations involving a negative antecedent sound quite odd in English (35. a, b).

35. a. He loved the Beatles, <u>and his friends too</u>

   b.   He loved the Beatles, <u>but not his friends</u> / <u>but his friends no</u>

36. a. *He did not like the Beatles, <u>and his friends neither</u> / <u>his friends not either</u> / <u>not his   friends either</u>

   b. *He did not like the Beatles, <u>but his friends yes</u>

The analysis of short questions, tag questions, short answers and coordinate ellipses indicates that English and French differ in the specifics of their ellipsis constructions. In predicate ellipsis, English mainly repeats the auxiliary verbs and does not require the presence of a main verb while French has different means to form the same elliptical phrases. In no context, does French use an auxiliary followed by a gap (absence of a past participle or a main verb)

Instead, what would be correct in French, as explains (Dagnac 2016: 1), is to use substitutive proforms where the agentive VPs are anaphorized by *le faire* 'do it', as in (38.a); adjectival and passive predicates by *le* 'it', as in (38. b, c). French clausal complements can be represented by various pronouns (*le* 'it', *en* 'of it', *y* 'to it', *ça* 'that') according to the verb and the context.

37. a. Jean a acheté du vin mais Luc ne <u>l'</u>a pas fait /*n'a pas   (VP-anaphore).

   'Jean bought wine but Luc didn't do it'

   b. Jean est content mais Luke ne <u>l'</u>est pas / *n'est pas.

     'Jean is happy but Luke is not.'

   b.   Le garage sera démoli dès que la maison <u>le</u> sera /*sera

      'The garage will be destroyed as soon as the house will (be).

                              Dagnac (Ibd. 1-2).

Thus, it can be agreed that French seems more suitable for the study of anaphora than to the investigation of predicate ellipsis. I leave this issue for further research.

One of the questions that will be discussed in this paper is the lack of productivity of modal ellipsis observed in French. Therefore, the following section will examine whether the deontic or epistemic reading that exist with modal verbs can make English VP-ellipsis more productive than the French one.

Modal Ellipsis
Deontic vs. epistemic modal verbs' distinction
Basing on Swan (1996: 334), modal verbs can be divided in two groups. One is to do with degrees of certainty: they are used to say for instance that a situation is certain, probable, possible or impossible. This first type of modal verbs has epistemic functions. The other category is to do with obligation, freedom to act and similar ideas. They can be used to say that somebody is obliged to do something, that he/she is able to do something, that there is nothing to stop something happening, that it would be better if something happened (or did not), or that something is permitted or forbidden. These modal verbs fulfil deontic functions.

The principle modal verbs of English are: can, may, must, shall and will. Each modal auxiliary can play a deontic or epistemic function in a sentence. While English has various modal verbs, French mainly expresses these mentioned notions using three verbs: *pouvoir*, *vouloir* and *devoir* or adverbs (e.g. *surement*, *peut-etre*, *vraisemblement* etc.) or other phrases such as *il faut que* + subjunctive.
In this paper, I only consider two French modals: *pouvoir* and *devoir* and their equivalents in English.

VP-ellipsis after deontic or epistemic modal verbs
To answer the question of why modal ellipsis seems less productive in French, researchers believe that it is important to consider the distinction between the epistemic and non-epistemic functions of modal verbs. Busquest and Denis (Ibd; 14) reproduced the typology of Palmer (2001) where the two main meanings of *devoir* and *pouvoir* can be summed as follows:

	DEONTIC	EPISTEMIC
Pouvoir	Capacity Permission	Possibility
Devoir	Obligation	Probability Necessity (alethic)

What is going to be tested here is whether the possibility of a French Verb Phrase to be elided after a modal verb depends on the meaning of the latter. The following examples can give an answer to this hypothesis.

Pouvoir: Can, May
38. a. You can play the piano and I can, too   (***deontic: capacity, permission***)
    b. Tu peux jouer du piano et je peux aussi
39. a. Lions can be dangerous. Snakes can, too   (***epistemic: possibility***)
    b.   Les lions peuvent être dangereux. *Les serpents peuvent aussi.
40. a. She may come in, you may, too   (***deontic: permission***)
    b.   Elle peut enter, tu peux aussi.
41. a. He may be sick and his brother may, too   (***epistemic: probability***)
    b.   Il peut être malade et *son frère peut aussi.

Devoir: Must / should
42. a. I must attend that meeting and you must, too ***(deontic: strong obligation, necessity)***
    b.   Je dois assister à cette réunion et tu dois aussi.
43. a. Mr Barton must be at home and his wife must, too ***(epistemic: strong probability)***
    Mr Barton doit (certainement) être chez lui et *sa femme doit aussi

44. a. He should have his hair cut and I should too ***(deontic: weak obligation)***
    b.   Il devrait se faire couper les cheveux, et je devrais aussi
45. a. The first plane should land in a few minutes and the second should too ***(epistemic: weak probability)***
    b. Le premier avion devrait atterrir dans quelques minutes et *le deuxième devrait aussi

Following, Palmer (2001)'s French modal verbs' typology, the analysis of the above examples indicates that ellipsis is acceptable in English after both deontic and epistemic modal verbs. For instance, the types of ellipsis that occur after *Can*, *May*, *Must* and

should are all grammatically acceptable. Contrary to English modal verbs, the French equivalents *devoir* and *pouvoir* only accept ellipsis when they bear deontic meanings. Whenever they have an epistemic function in the sentence, ellipsis becomes ungrammatical. These restrictions can be seen in (38.b), (40.b), (42.b) and (44.b) repeated below for more clarity.

> *Les lions peuvent être dangereux. *Les serpents peuvent aussi.*
> *Il peut être malade et *son frère peut aussi*
> *Mr Barton doit (certainement) être chez lui et *sa femme doit aussi*
> *Le premier avion devrait atterrir dans quelques minutes et *le deuxième devrait aussi?*

Conclusion

This study has investigated the phenomenon of Verb Phrase ellipsis by examining how it differs between English and French. Results have indicated that these elliptical constructions are differently conventionalized in both languages. First, the analysis of short questions, short answers and tag questions shows that English mainly needs to repeat the auxiliary verb of the first statement and its subject (pronoun) while these elements are not sufficient in French ellipsis. French uses other phrases like *et toi?*, *Ah bon*!, *quand même*, *n'est ce pas?*, *Non*?, *Si*, *Oui*, *forcément* etc.

French fully expresses coordinate ellipses using the subject of the fragments and some particles such as *moi aussi*, *moi s*i; *moi non*, *moi non plus* etc. Unlike French, English still repeats the auxiliary verb of the antecedent that can be preceded or followed by the subject of the fragment. Depending on the forms, these phrases can go either with "so" as in '*So do I'*; or "nor, neither, not either" as in '*Nor do I'*, '*Neither do I'*, '*I don't either'* etc. Goldberg et al. (Ibd. 13) note that direct translations of some of these elliptical phrases are (marginally) acceptable between the two languages.

The analysis finally confirms that ellipsis is possible in English after both deontic and epistemic modal verbs while French only accepts ellipsis after deontic modals such as *pouvoir* 'can, may' and *devoir* 'must, should'. These findings corroborate Busquets & Denis 2001: 14) examples given below which illustrate that ellipsis is only acceptable in French if the modal has a deontic meaning as illustrated in (45).

> 45. a. ***Capacity***: Jerry peut résoudre l'énigme et Kramer peut aussi
> b. ***Permission***: Jerry peut venir à la soirée et Kramer peut aussi.
> c. ***Obligation***: Jerry doit faire ses devoirs et Kramer doit aussi.

> 46. a. ***Possibility***: *Jerry peut arriver d'un moment à l'autre et Kramer peut aussi
> b. ***Probability*** : *Jerry doit être malade et Kramer doit aussi.
> c. ***Necessity***: *Jerry doit (absolument) venir et Kramer doit aussi

The present analysis examining Verb Phrase ellipsis after auxiliaries and modal verbs informs on how languages are internally conventionalized. It shows that even two languages that are typologically close can adopt different grammatical or structural constructions. The distinction between deontic and epistemic meanings of modal verbs in this work can surely be a source of more implication on the study of modal verbs. Further research works could also be conducted in several other types of ellipsis in the future. As Merchant (2016:1) notes, there are many other kinds of phenomena that go under the rubric of ellipsis as well, some better investigated than others, including argument drop, article drop, haplology, diary language and headlinese, subjectless infinitivals, copula drop, situational ellipses, small ellipses, and many more; some are context-sensitive, and some are not.

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