
Anaphoric *one*: When ellipsis is blocked

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Where other languages use noun phrase ellipsis (NPE), English often requires use of the NP pro-form *one(s)*, as in (1). This is curious since English appears to have NPE, as in (2). One might therefore expect NPE to also be available where *one* appears, but this is not possible. Likewise, anaphoric *one* cannot appear in contexts where NPE is used.

- (1) Bill bought a long book, and I bought three short *(ones).
(2) Bill bought my books, and I bought yours / *your ones.

In this talk, I argue that *one* is used when the use of NPE is blocked by independent factors. First, I show that *one* cannot be construed as a reflex of NPE (*c.f.* Llombart-Huesca 2002) and must therefore be a distinct phenomenon, taking the position that it is simply a nominal pro-form that derives its interpretation anaphorically (Payne et al. 2013). I then argue that anaphoric *one* is used when NPE would target new or focused information. Since ellipsis cannot delete material that is not GIVEN (Tancredi 1992, Merchant 2001), *one* must be used instead. The apparent complementary distribution of the phenomena falls out if we assume that ellipsis is generally preferred to pro-forms when both are available in principle (Bentzen et al. 2013, Houser 2010, Payne et al. 2013). I then discuss some cross-linguistic variation.

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