

Squibs

1 Overview

- For this course, you must write a SQUIB. This is a short paper that does at least one of the following:
 - a. Describes a problem for an analysis
 - b. Introduces new data that have not been accounted for previously
 - c. Addresses a small problem raised in previous work
 - d. Develops a minor theoretical argument
- Often, squibs do not propose a (full) solution to the issues they bring up.
 - But they can make suggestions as to the direction research ought to head.
 - They may also argue that certain directions are untenable.
- In this course, the squib will be the first step to writing a paper.
 - This squib should outline a problem and may make a suggestion about what a solution could look like.
 - The problem must broadly be within the domain of ellipsis.
- Squibs are due on **30 October**, two weeks from today, to be turned in via the UofT Portal.

2 Requirements

- i. Squibs must deal with a topic in ellipsis, preferably extraction from ellipsis sites.
 - You can come talk to me about your topic before the squib is due.
 - Topics need not address something covered in the course readings, lectures, *etc.*.
 - You should come talk to me if your topic falls outside the course material (*e.g.*, discusses ellipsis, but not movement).
- ii. You need not propose a solution, but you should suggest a direction in which you will take your paper.
- iii. Squibs must be at least five pages in length, but no more than eight.

3 Topics

There are a number of ways to come up with an interesting paper topic. Good topics include:

- Applying a previous analysis to a new language
- Looking at a phenomenon under new assumptions
- A problem for a previous analysis of a language (e.g., new data, an apparent exception)
- Investigating an unanswered question about an existing analysis
- A critical comparison of two different analyses

4 Expectations

a. *Your squib should clearly address what the problem is:*

You should be able to describe, in words, what the problem you want to look at is. You must also include examples and data to demonstrate the problem.

b. *Your squib should explain why the problem is a problem:*

There are many sorts of problems, and you should say what kind yours is. Do existing approaches have trouble explaining the problem you describe? Does the problem look like an exception to an otherwise regular rule or pattern? Does the problem look like a deviation from a well-established cross-linguistic pattern?

c. *Your squib should address what, if anything, people have already said:*

This is a squib for a class, so there is no expectation that this will be exhaustive. Still, you should reference other work – perhaps work that you think does not address the problem you raise, or the work you are comparing your proposal to. (This may tie into point b.)

d. *Your squib should include a direction you'd like to go in:*

You should give an idea of how you plan on approaching your problem, and perhaps a bit about why. You might explain what you hope to uncover, or this may simply be a statement about how you will look at this in the context of a new or different theory. The point here is that you must at least point in the direction that you'd like to take this.

e. *Your squib should at least hint at why this is important:*

This is often the hardest part, especially at the level of a squib. If you can, though, try to state what impact a solution to your problem might have.