Elliptical appendices of relative clauses

My talk addresses the structure illustrated in (1).

(1) Am 11. März   begann   er mit   seinen   grausamen, rätselhaften Taten,
    on   11 March   began   he with his   cruel   mysterious   crimes

die   er mit   einer kleinen Kamera filmte
which.ACC   he with   a   small   camera filmed

und   (*er)   sich   dabei   wie   in einem   Actionfilm   inszenierte.
and   (*he)   himself   at.it   like   in a   action.movie staged

(Der Spiegel, Nr. 13/2012, S. 96)

'On 11 March, he began his cruel, mysterious deeds, which he filmed with a small camera, staging himself as if in an action movie.'

The elliptical appendix of a relative clause is found in line 3: *und sich … inszenierte*. This structure shows two remarkable properties:

1. It involves an obligatory subject gap (*er).
2. Verb last order (*…inszenierte.*) in German usually implies the presence of a complementizer or relative pronoun. However, neither is there any complementizer to be seen nor can the relative pronoun from line 2 (*die*) be easily conceived of as ATB-moved from/copied into/elided from line 3: the latter has its own object (*sich*) and cannot possibly accommodate another one.

I collected 34 usage examples of this structure, all coming from edited text types. In order to assess whether the structure is robust in mental grammar, I conducted a pseudo response time experiment online, using SoSci Survey. More precisely, participants were asked to tell apart so called mock sentences from real sentences as quickly as possible (forced choice). The total set of sentences included examples from the collection (slightly adapted), examples of deep coordination beneath the subject, examples of deep coordination beneath non-subjects and examples of Asymmetric Coordination (Reich 2009). For all items, I varied the type of connection (syndetic, asyndetic) and also the presence of the subject.

The results show that

- the acceptance rates for elliptical appendices of relative clauses are rather high (77–95/103)
- the acceptance rates for elliptical appendices of relative clauses approach the acceptance rates for Asymmetric Coordination (95/103)
- across all structures, asyndetic coordination is devaluated
- the subject gap in elliptical appendices of relative clauses is indeed obligatory.

These results are also reflected in the individual data. In sum, elliptical appendices of relative clauses appear to be quite robust in mental grammars.

Therefore, the talk will discuss how to generate this structure by using devices of the "mainstream generative analysis of German" (Sternefeld 2006:507). Additionally, I will draw on Hartmann's (2000:45) analysis of Asymmetric Coordination.

References

Hartmann, Katharina. 2000. *Right Node Raising and gapping: Interface conditions on prosodic deletion*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Reich, Ingo. 2009. *„Asymmetrische Koordination" im Deutschen* (Studien zur Deutschen Grammatik 75). Tübingen: Stauffenburg.

Sternefeld, Wolfgang. 2006. *Syntax: Eine morphologisch motivierte generative Beschreibung des Deutschen/2* (Stauffenburg Linguistik, 31/2). Tübingen: Stauffenburg.