Turkish Object Gaps: A Comparative Analysis of Verb-stranding Verb Phrase Ellipsis and Argument Ellipsis

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In the cross-linguistic literature on Verb-stranding Verb Phrase Ellipsis (VSVPE) versus Argument Ellipsis (AE), adjunct inclusion has emerged as a significant test for distinguishing between these two analytical frameworks. In this test, the VSVPE analysis should allow, but not enforce, the inclusion of the adjunct, whereas the target sentence should be interpreted without the adjunct meaning if the gap corresponds to a bare argument. Turkish is one of the languages that has been tested for adjunct inclusion, and the conclusion is that adjuncts are not included in the ellipsis site in Turkish; therefore, OGs cannot be analyzed as VSVPE[1]. However, the research, which solely conducts this test on one sentence, has limited scope, overlooking some factors that could influence adjunct availability. Consequently, the findings may not accurately depict the complete reality of adjunct inclusion in Turkish OG sentences.

The current study aims to uncover the ellipsis mechanism behind OGs in Turkish by comprehensively examining Turkish OG sentences, analyzing various factors such as adjunct types, focus positions, and some facilitative factors such as coordination with 'but', having a negated antecedent and a rich contrastive context. In order to minimize any possible biases, an acceptability judgement test with two factors is conducted. Factor 1 has eight levels: 3 types of adjuncts (1A according to 'x' adverbs, 1B simple manner adverbs (SMA), 1C complex manner adverbs (CMA)), 1D focused adverb, 1E non-focused adverb, 1F clauses coordinated with 'but', 1G rich contrastive context, and 1H negated antecedent. Factor 2 has two levels: 2A continuation type priming for adjunct inclusion and 2B continuation type priming for adjunct exclusion.

Preliminary results indicate that adjunct inclusion is allowed in Turkish, supporting the viability of VSVPE. The table below summarizes the statistical comparisons for each condition. Noteworthy are the conditions SMA, CMA, and non-focused adverb with statistically significant differences. I claim that the underlying reasons for the unavailability of adjunct inclusion in those conditions lie in other syntactic reasons, and they do not affect the availability of VSVPE in the language.

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[1] Şener, S., & Takahashi, D. (2010). Elllipsis of arguments in Japanese and Turkish. *Nanzan Linguistics, 6*, 79-99.

Table 1
Acceptability Judgement Test Results (Phase 1)

Condition	Comparison	P-value	Mean difference	95% CI
Adjunct according to 'x'	1A2A vs 1A2B	0.8633	0.07	From -0.74 to 0.88
Adjunct SMA	1B2A vs 1B2B	0.0183	-1.07	From -1.96 to -0.18
Adjunct CMA	1C2A vs 1C2B	< 0.0001	-2.25	From -3.05 to -1.44
Focused adverb	1D2A vs 1D2B	0.1312	-0.63	From -1.45 to 0.19
Non-focused adverb	1E2A vs 1E2B	< 0.0001	-1.72	From -2.51 to -0.92
Coordination with 'but'	1F2A vs 1F2B	0.2200	0.46	From -0.28 to 1.19
Rich contrastive context	1G2A vs 1G2B	0.5478	-0.25	From -1.05 to 0.56
Negated antecedent	1H2A vs 1H2A	0.1490	0.60	From -0.22 to 1.41

In conclusion, this study investigates the presence of VSVPE in Turkish, particularly focusing on adjunct inclusion within OGs. Preliminary results indicate the potential allowance of adjunct inclusion, supporting VSVPE as a viable option in Turkish contrary to the current literature. Notably, statistically significant differences in some conditions offer insights into the complexities of VSVPE and will be examined further.

Keywords: Verb phrase ellipsis, argument ellipsis, verb-stranding verb phrase ellipsis, object gap, adjunct inclusion, Turkish linguistics, syntax