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On an undocumented type of predicate ellipsis in Spanish and its consequences for the theory of ellipsis licensing

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Abstract

In this paper, we discuss a type of ellipsis in Spanish, undocumented in the previous literature, which we will refer to as Predicate Phrase Ellipsis (PredP-Ellipsis), and its consequences for the theory of ellipsis licensing. PredP-Ellipsis, is a type of ellipsis in which the complement of a copular verb undergoes deletion, whenever there is polarity focus on the copular verb.

Keywords: ellipsis; verbal ellipsis; PredP-Ellipsis; focus; Spanish

1. Introduction

In this paper, we will discuss a type of ellipsis in Spanish, undocumented in the previous literature, which we will refer to as **Predicate Phrase Ellipsis** (PredP-Ellipsis), and its consequences for the theory of ellipsis licensing. In short, PredP-Ellipsis, exemplified in (1), is a type of ellipsis in which the complement of a copular verb undergoes deletion, whenever there is polarity focus on the copular verb (indicated with SMALL CAPITALS in the examples throughout these pages):

(1) A: Deberías estar feliz.
should.2SG be happy
'You should be happy.'
B: ESTOY.
am
'I am indeed.'

As the following example shows, when there is no polarity focus, PredP-Ellipsis becomes ungrammatical:

(2) *Sonia está feliz y Paula también está.
Sonia is happy and Paula also is
'Sonia is happy and Paula is, too.'

Importantly, the ellipsis illustrated in (1) is not an instance of vP-Ellipsis. As is well-known, Spanish, as most Romance languages, lacks this latter type of ellipsis (see Zagona 1982, 1988, Lobeck 1995 and, more recently, Saab 2021, 2022):

(3) A: ¿Habías estado feliz?
had.2SG been happy?
'Had you been happy?'
B: *Sí, HABÍA.
yes had.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I had (been happy).'

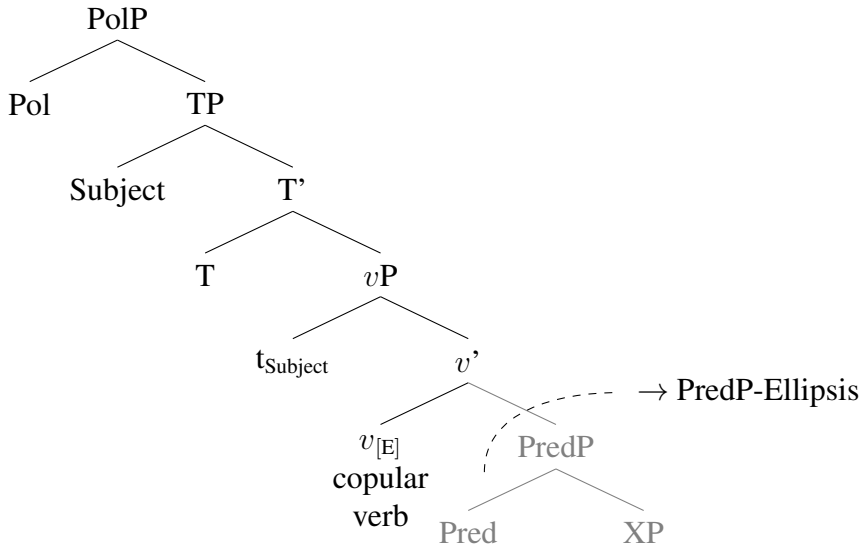
More generally, Spanish lacks Aux-Stranding or V-Stranding VP-Ellipsis, as the examples (4) and (5) demonstrate:

(4) A: ¿Habías comprado el libro?
had.2SG bought the book
'Had you bought the book?'
B: *Sí, HABÍA.
yes had.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I had.'

(5) A: ¿Le diste el libro?
CL.DAT.3SG gave.you the book
'Did you gave her/him the book?'
B: *Sí, DÍ.
yes gave.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.' (lit. 'Yes, I gave.')

In this respect, we will argue that PredP-Ellipsis targets a constituent below vP, namely, a Predicate Phrase.[1] More concretely, a sentence containing an elided PredP would look as follows, where the [E]-feature on *v* is Merchant's (2001) licensing feature (more on this below):

(6)



If this analysis is on the right track, we will have demonstrated the need for enriching the taxonomy of Spanish ellipses in the verbal domain, but more importantly, for answering a set of relevant questions mainly regarding the nature of ellipsis licensing. Particularly important for our main goals here is the question of why this sort of lower ellipsis is allowed in a language that, generally, does not allow for lower ellipses in the verbal domain. As most languages (even beyond Romance), Spanish typically licenses ellipsis in the inflectional domain, namely, TP-ellipses of different sorts. In the following examples, we illustrate this with cases of TP-ellipsis with left dislocated remnants, sluicing, and fragment answers respectively (see Saab 2008 for a detailed study of sentential ellipsis in Spanish):

(7) A Sonia la vi, pero a Paula no.
DOM Sonia CL.FEM.SG.ACC saw.1SG but DOM Paula not
'Sonia, I saw her but not Paula.'

(8) Sonia vio a alguien pero no sé a quién.
Sonia saw DOM someone but not know.1SG DOM who
'Sonia saw someone but I don't know who.'

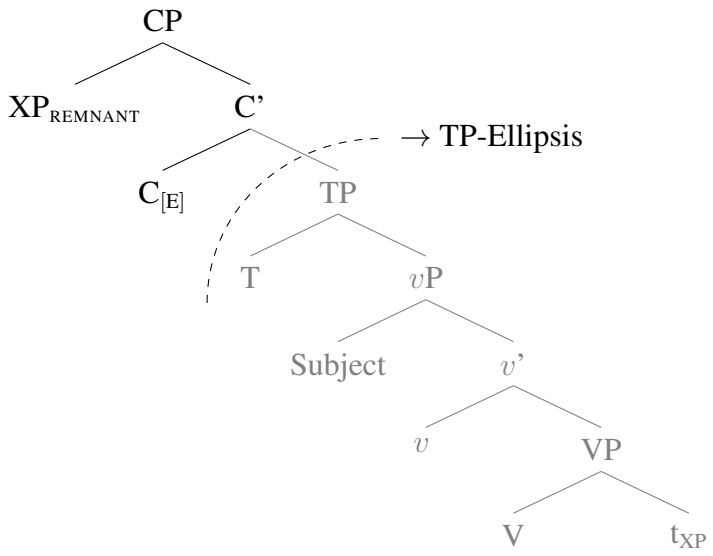
(9) A: ¿A quién viste?
DOM who saw.2SG
'Who did you see?'

[1] As far as we know, the term is first introduced by Bowers (1993) in his extensive study on the syntax of predication. The use we make here of PredP slightly differs from Bowers, for whom PredP is selected both by main I(nflection) and for some Vs. Here, we take a more restricted stance according to which only a subclass of verbs takes PredP as complement. It seems that this selection is mainly syntactic and cannot be entirely reduced to semantic factors, since, as we will show below, while true copular verbs select PredP, the so-called pseudo-copular ones do not.

B: A Paula.
DOM Paula
'Paula.'

Even with non-trivial differences among each of these elliptical sentences, all involve the same portion of elided structure, the TP:

(10)



Under Merchant's approach to ellipsis licensing, the absence of *v*P-ellipsis in Spanish would correlate with the absence of a *v* head with the relevant licensing feature. In contradistinction, as the trees in (6) and (10) illustrate, both TP-ellipsis and PredP-Ellipsis would be licensed by the active presence of such a licensing feature in T and the copular verb, respectively. It is one of our more general goals here to show that this approach misses some important facts connecting the availability to elide and to move any XP.

The structure of this paper is as follows. In Section 2, we describe the main properties and the syntactic distribution of PredP-Ellipsis in detail. As we will see, among the predicates that select small clauses in Spanish, true copular verbs are alone in their availability to license PredP-Ellipsis. We argue that this correlates with another relevant property of copular verbs: *lo*-replacement. In addition, classical tests for detecting ellipsis help us to conclusively prove the elliptical nature of examples like (1). In Section 3, we introduce PredP-Ellipsis into the debate regarding the verbal ellipsis parameter and show that an implementation of the observed intra and cross-linguistic distribution of ellipsis in the sentential domain in terms of the [E]-feature domain misses the important generalization that there is a correlation between the availability to elide any XP and the availability to move it. Crucially, in Spanish, *v*P cannot elide and cannot move either, but PredP can. We then argue that the [E]-feature is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for ellipsis licensing; there are also well-formedness conditions playing a crucial role in ellipsis licensing at PF. For instance, an XP cannot be elided (or moved) whenever its head is part of the structural description of some obligatory morphological rule requiring X to stay in place, unless PF can salve the potential illicit output by other means (Saab 2008, Saab and Zdrojewski 2012, and Saab and Lipták 2016, among others). Following Saab (2022), we claim that the verbal head in Spanish and other Romance languages forms a morphological complex with T by means of a morphological operation of restructuring

requiring strict adjacency between *v* and T. The consequence of this is *v*P frozeness effects, i.e., the absolute impossibility for *v*P to move or to elide. The same morphological requirement is absent between the head of PredP and v_{copular} and, consequently, PredP is free to move or to elide up to the presence of the required [E]-feature on v_{copular} and other specific syntactic and discourse conditions we will discuss in Section 4, when we implement a concrete analysis for PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish. In Section 5, we close this study by summarizing our main results and briefly discussing some general empirical and theoretical consequences within and beyond Spanish.

2. Properties of PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish

In this section, we describe the properties of PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish. First, we distinguish between true copulatives and pseudocopulatives, showing that PredP-Ellipsis is only available with the former, not the latter. Second, we show that PredP-Ellipsis can target any complement of a (true) copular verb, such as Adjetival Phrases (APs), Noun Phrases (NPs), and Prepositional Phrases (PPs). Third, we provide evidence for our claim that PredP-Ellipsis is only licensed when some type of polarity focus is present in the sentence. Fourth, we provide evidence that PredP-Ellipsis is indeed an elliptical construction; this evidence mainly comes from extraction tests and missing antecedents. Finally, we demonstrate that PredP-Ellipsis doesn't require verbal identity with its verbal copulative correlate in the antecedent, supporting our claim that this type of elliptical construction targets a very low portion of verbal structure.

2.1 *Copulatives vs. Pseudocopulatives*

As we mentioned in above, PredP-Ellipsis is a type of ellipsis in which the complement of a copular verb undergoes deletion, whenever there is polarity focus on the copular verb. PredP-Ellipsis targets the complements of *true copulatives*, and the three types of true copulative verbs in Spanish indeed allow for PredP-Ellipsis, as shown in (11B) for the verb *ser* ('to $\text{be}_{\text{individual level}}$'), in (12B) for the verb *estar* ('to $\text{be}_{\text{stage level}}$'), and in (13B) *parecer* ('to seem/look like'):

(11) A: ¿Sos feliz?
are.2SG happy
'Are you happy?'
B: Sí, SOY.
yes am
'Yes, I am.'

(12) A: ¿Estás feliz?
are.2SG happy
'Are you happy?'
B: Sí, ESTOY.
yes am
'Yes, I am.'

(13) A: ¿Parezco feliz?
seem.1SG happy

'Do I look happy?'

B: Sí, PARECÉS.
yes seem.2SG
'Yes, you do.'

Importantly, true copular predicates are those that allow for *lo*-replacement ('it'), as the following examples illustrate:

(14) A: ¿Sos feliz?
are.2SG happy
'Are you happy?'

B: Sí, **lo** SOY.
yes it am
'Yes, I am.'

(15) A: ¿Estás feliz?
are.2SG happy
'Are you happy?'

B: Sí, **lo** ESTOY.
yes it am
'Yes, I am.'

(16) A: ¿Parezco feliz?
seem.1SG happy
'Do I look happy?'

B: Sí, **lo** PARECÉS.
yes it seem.2SG
'Yes, you do.' (lit. 'Yes, you look.')

The availability of *lo*-replacement distinguishes true copulatives from pseudocopulatives such as *ponerse colorado* ('to blush') or *volverse loco* ('to go mad'), which don't allow *lo*-replacement:

(17) A: ¿Te pusiste colorado?
CL.2SG became.2SG red
'Did you blush?'

B: *Sí, me **lo** PUSE.
yes CL.1SG it became.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

(18) A: ¿Te volviste loco?
CL.2SG became.2SG crazy
'Did you go mad?'

B: *Sí, me **lo** VOLVÍ.
yes CL.1SG it became.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

If PredP-Ellipsis is only possible with true copulatives, and true copulatves are those that allow for *lo*-replacement, we predict that PredP-Ellipsis won't be allowed with pseudo-copulatives. This prediction is borne out:

(19) A: ¿Te pusiste colorado?
CL.2SG became.2SG red
'Did you blush?'
B: *Sí, me PUSE.
yes CL.1SG became.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

(20) A: ¿Te volviste loco?
CL.2SG became.2SG crazy
'Did you go mad?'
B: *Sí, me VOLVÍ.
yes CL.1SG became.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

Furthermore, other verbs that also select small clauses of the adjectival type, like *considerar* ('to consider') cannot license ellipsis of their small clause complements, regardless of the presence or absence of the ECM subject:

(21) A: ¿Considerás a Sonia inteligente?
consider.2SG DOM Sonia intelligent
'Do you consider Sonia intelligent?'
B: *Sí, (la) considero.
yes CL.FEM.ACC.3SG consider.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I do.'

Not surprisingly, like pseudocopulatives, this type of ECM clauses do not admit *lo*-replacement:

(22) A: ¿Considerás a Sonia inteligente?
consider.2SG DOM Sonia intelligent
'Do you consider Sonia intelligent?'
B: *Sí, **lo** considero.
yes it consider.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

Further evidence that this type of ellipsis involves a true copular verb selecting a PredP comes from the fact that not all copulas or related auxiliaries license this construction. As the following example shows, a passive auxiliary cannot occur as a remnant:

(23) A: ¿Fuiste reprimido por la policía?
were.2SG repressed by the police
'Were you repressed by the police?'
B: *Sí, fui
yes was.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I was.'

As expected, passives in Spanish are also incompatible with *lo*-replacement:

(24) A: ¿Fuiste reprimido por la policía?
were.2SG repressed by the police
'Were you repressed by the police?'
B: *Sí, **lo** fui.
yes it was.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I was.'

Finally, it is also worth-mentioning that the facts discussed in this section are clearly different from what Authier (2023) calls *l'être* anaphora (LEA) in French, in which a predicate variable *le* and copular *être* co-occur with PredP-Ellipsis.

(25) Mon compte a été activé, mais [le tien]$_i$ ne l'a pas encore été $\langle_{VP}$
my account has been activated but the yours NEG CL-has not yet been
~~activé t$_i$~~$\rangle$.
activated
'My account has been activated, but yours hasn't yet.'
(adapted from Authier 2023, ex. (25))

Authier convincingly shows that LEA cannot be modeled as a deep anaphora, since, among other crucial facts, it allows for extraction out of it:

(26) a. Ce livre a été prêté à quelqu'un, mais je ne peux pas vous dire à
this book has been loaned to someone but I NEG can not you tell to
qui il l'a été.
whom it CL-has been
'This book was loaned to someone, but I can't tell you who to.'
b. La Légion d'honneur sera accordée à ceux à qui le prix Nobel
the legion of-honor will-be awarded to those to whom the prize Nobel
l'a été.
CL-has been
'The Legion of Honor will be awarded to those to whom the Nobel Prize was.'
(adapted from Authier 2023, ex. (28))

As the example (24) illustrates, *lo*-replacement is impossible in analytical passive environments, and, as we will show in Section 2.4, sub-extraction out of *lo* is banned in Spanish, clearly indicating that there are non-trivial differences between PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish and French.[2]

To sum up, in this section we provided evidence for our claim that PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish is only possible with true copulative verbs (such as *ser* 'to be', *estar* 'to be', and *parecer* 'to seem'), but not with pseudocopulative verbs (such as *ponerse colorado* 'to blush', or *volverse loco* 'to go mad') or ECM predicates that select adjectival small clauses (such as *considerar* 'to consider').

[2]Further differences between the two languages are attested when it comes to evaluating the distribution of Spanish *hacerlo* ('to do it') and French *le-faire* ('to do it'). It seems that whereas in Spanish *hacerlo* behaves as a deep anaphora, it has an elliptical nature in French (see Saab 2010 for Spanish, and Authier 2023 for French).

2.2 *PredP-Ellipsis targets the complement of a copular verb*

PredP-Ellipsis can target any complement of a copulative verb, that is, Adjectival Phrases (APs), Noun Phrases (NPs), and Prepositional Phrases (PPs) as shown in (27)-(29):

(27) A: ¿Es [$_{AP}$ confiable]?
is trustworthy
'Is (s)he trustworthy?'
B: Sí, ES.
yes is
'Yes, (s)he is.'

(28) A: ¿Sos [$_{NP}$ un buen amigo]?
are.2SG a good friend
'Are you a good friend?'
B: Sí, SOY.
yes am
'Yes, I am.'

(29) A: ¿Estás [$_{PP}$ con Sonia]?
are.2SG with Sonia
'Are you with Sonia?'
B: Sí, ESTOY.
yes am
'Yes, I am.'

This means that any category contained within a PredP gets deleted when ellipsis applies, which in turn dispenses with the need for independent AP, PP, or NP-deletion operations.

2.3 *Polarity focus*

PredP-Ellipsis requires some kind of polarity focus on the copular verb, as the examples in (1), and (11)-(13) above show. In order to provide a complete empirical picture, below we provide evidence that PredP-Ellipsis can occur in contexts that do not involve a dialogue but nevertheless involve some type of contrastiveness:

(30) Sonia no es feliz, pero Bruno sí ES.
Sonia not is happy but Bruno yes is
'Sonia is not happy, but Bruno is indeed.'

(31) Sonia no está feliz, pero Bruno sí ESTÁ.
Sonia not is happy but Bruno yes is
'Sonia is not happy, but Bruno is indeed.'

(32) Sonia no parece feliz, pero Bruno sí PARECE.
Sonia not looks happy but Bruno yes looks
'Sonia doesn't look happy, but Bruno does indeed.' (lit. '...Bruno looks indeed.')

As predicted, in the absence of polarity focus, PredP-Ellipsis is not licensed:

(33) *Sonia es feliz y Bruno también es.
Sonia is happy and Bruno also is
Intended: 'Sonia is happy and Bruno is, too.'

(34) *Sonia está feliz y Bruno también está.
Sonia is happy and Bruno also is
Intended: 'Sonia is happy and Bruno is, too.'

(35) *Sonia parece feliz y Bruno también parece.
Sonia looks happy and Bruno also looks
Intended: 'Sonia looks happy and Bruno does, too.' (lit. '...Bruno looks too.')

Furthermore, any context that involves polarity focus licenses PredP-Ellipsis:

(36) A: ¡Deberías estar feliz! = (1)
should.you be happy
'You should be happy!'
B: ESTOY!
am.I
'I am indeed!'

(37) A: ¿Estás feliz? = (15)
are.2SG happy
'Are you happy?'
B: Sí, ESTOY.
yes am
'Yes, I am.'

(38) A: ¿No estás feliz?
not are.2SG happy
'Aren't you happy?'
B: Sí, ESTOY!
yes am
'I am indeed!'

There are more complex cases, in which there is a contrast in polarity but the focus feature is encoded in another constrative constituent. The examples (40) and (41) in the next section illustrate this scenario. Other legitimate instances of PredP-Ellipsis would involve contrastive focus in some lower functional category, like tense, like in the following example (see also the example (92) in the final section):[3]

(39) A: ¿Sos rico?
are.2SG rich
'Are you rich?'

[3]We are assuming a standard semantic alternative approach to verum focus, according to which a semantic feature encoded in grammar triggers the denotation $\{p, \neg p\}$ as the focus value of the verum focus feature. This approach predicts that verum focus and other foci cannot co-occur in the same sentence, an observation that seems to be correct in Spanish. However, the alternative semantic theory of verum focus is challenged in Gutzmann et al (2020), where it is shown that verum and focus can indeed co-occur in some languages.

B: No, ERA, pero ya no.
No, was.1SG but already not
'No, I was, but I am not anymore.'

It seems then that there are two different scenarios: the paradigmatic one in which emphatic polarity focus is encoded in the Pol head, and another one in which there is a discourse contrast in polarity but another category in the left periphery or the inflectional domain of the clause is the grammatical bearer of contrastive focus.

2.4 *Extraction*

The main evidence in favor of an ellipsis analysis of this construction (and against a non-sententialist analysis) comes from extraction tests: ellipsis sites can be extracted out of. As the examples in (40B) and (41B) show, the PPs *por robo* ('for robbery') and *de Atlanta* ('of Atlanta') have been extracted out of the ellipsis site:

(40) A: Sonia no está presa por robo.
Sonia not is in.prison for robbery
'Sonia is not in prison for robbery.'
B: ¡Sí! Por robo está.
yes for robbery is
'Indeed! For robbery, she is (in jail).'

(41) A: Sonia es fanática de Boca.
Sonia is fan of Boca
'Sonia is fan of Boca.'
B: ¡No! De Atlanta es.
no of Atlanta is
'No! Of Atlanta she is (a fan).'

In other words, we claim that the underlying structure of examples (40B) and (41B) are (42) and (43) respectively, where the PPs have been extracted out of the ellipsis site (indicated with ~~strikethrough gray~~ text in the examples above), surviving deletion:

(42) B: [Por robo], está ⟨~~presa~~ __⟩.
for robbery is ~~in.prision~~
'For robbery, she is ⟨~~in.prision~~⟩.'

(43) B: [De Atlanta], es ⟨~~fanática~~ __⟩.
of Atlanta is ~~fan~~
'Of Atlanta, she is ⟨~~a fan~~⟩.'

Crucially, extraction fails whenever *lo*-replacement applies, a fact that points to the indubitable conclusion that the combination v_{copular} + *lo* behaves as a deep anaphora in Spanish (but not in French, as shown in Authier 2023; see Section 2.1 above):

(44) A: Sonia es fanática de Boca.
Sonia is fan of Boca
'Sonia is fan of Boca.'

B: *¡No! De Atlanta **lo** es.
no of Atlanta it is
Intended: 'No! Of Atlanta she is (a fan).'

2.5 *Missing antecedents*

Another test to distinguish between deep and surface anaphora comes from missing antecedents. The main idea is that only surface anaphora (i.e., elliptical structures), but not deep anaphora, can licence pronouns with missing antecedents (see Grinder and Postal 1971, Bresnan 1971, Hankamer and Sag 1976, among others). As the examples below show, this is indeed the case in contexts of PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish. First, as shown in (45a), the clitic *la* ('it') cannot refer to *una banda* ('a band') given that it's under the scope of negation, and an 'indefinite NP under scope of negation cannot serve as an antecedent for coreferent Soniaphors' (Grinder and Postal 1971, p. 276). In contrast, (45b) is grammatical because *la* ('it') refers to the second occurrence of *una banda* ('a band'), which is not under the scope of negation and hence it's a legitimate antecedent. Finally, what the grammaticality of (45c) shows is that there is indeed an appropriate antecedent for *la* ('it'), which cannot be the occurrence of *una banda* ('a band') under the scope of negation, as discussed above:

(45) a. *Sonia no está en una banda$_i$, y la$_i$ odio.
Sonia not is in a band and CL.FEM.ACC.3SG hate
Intended: 'Sonia is not in a band$_i$, and I hate it$_i$.'

b. Sonia no está en una banda, pero yo sí estoy en una banda$_i$ y
Sonia not is in a band but I yes am in a band and
la$_i$ odio.
CL.FEM.ACC.3SG hate
'Sonia is not in a band, but I am in a band$_i$, and I hate it$_i$.'

c. Sonia no está en una banda, pero yo sí estoy y la odio.
Sonia not is in a band but I yes am and CL.FEM.ACC.3SG hate
'Sonia is not in a band, but I am, and I hate it.'

In consequence, the underlying structure for (45c) must be as in (46), where the ellipsis site contains the NP *una banda* ('a band'), which is a legitimate antecedent for *la* ('it'):

(46) Sonia no está en una banda, pero yo sí estoy ⟨~~en una banda$_i$~~⟩ y
Sonia not is in a band but I yes am in a band and
la$_i$ odio.
CL.FEM.ACC.3SG hate
'Sonia is not in a band, but I am ⟨~~in a band$_i$~~⟩, and I hate it$_i$.'

2.6 *No verb identity requirement*

Evidence that PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish shouldn't be analyzed as V-Stranding VP-Ellipsis comes from the fact that it does not require an identical verb as correlate, as shown in (47) and (48):

(47) No *sos* feliz, pero *parecés*.
not are.2SG happy but look.2SG
'You *are not* happy, but you *look* happy.' (lit. 'You *are not* happy, but you *look*.')

(48) A: Estás lindo.
are.2SG pretty
'You are pretty.' (stage level reading)
B: No *estoy*, SOY.
not $\text{am}_{\text{stage level}}$ $\text{am}_{\text{individual level}}$
'I don't look pretty, I am pretty.' (individual level reading)

That is, the Verb Identity Requirement (VIR, see Goldberg 2005; Saab 2008; Schoorlemmer and Temmerman 2012, among many others), which is typical of some V-Stranding languages (and has been assumed as a defining property of this construction), is not at play in PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish. This sharply contrasts with other languages that also has predicate ellipsis with copular verbs. For instance, Gribanova (2020) shows that Uzbek has a type of predicate ellipsis with certain verbs selecting small clauses:

(49) Farhod men-ga hursand ko'rin-d-i Zamira-ga esa,
Farhod 1SG-DAT happy seem.PST-3SG Zamira-DAT EMPH
ko'rin-ma-d-i.
seem-NEG-PST-3SG
'Farhod seemed happy to me. And to Zamira, [he] didn't seem [happy].'

(50) A: Hasan tez tayyor bo'l-d-i-mi?
Hasan quickly ready become-PST-3-Q
'Did Hasan become ready quickly?'
B: Ha, bo'l-d-i.
yes become-PST-3
'Yes, [he] became [ready quickly].'

(Gribanova 2020: exs. (49a)-(49b))

Now, unlike Spanish, predicate ellipsis in Uzbek obeys the verb identity requirement:

(51) a. Men tarvuz shirin **chiq-a-di** deb o'yla-d-im. Lekin u faqat
1SG watermelon sweet exit-PRS-3 C think-PRS-1SG but 3SG only
shirin **ko'rin-gan** e-kan xolos.
sweet seem-PTCP E-EVID only
'I thought the watermelon would be sweet but it only **appeared** sweet.'
b. *Men tarvuz shirin **chiq-a-di** deb o'yla-d-im. Lekin (u) (faqat)
1SG watermelon sweet exit-PRS-3 C think-PRS-1SG but 3SG only
ko'rin-gan e-kan xolos.
seem-PTCP E-EVID only
Intended: 'I thought the watermelon would be sweet but it only **appeared** [sweet].'

(Gribanova 2020: ex. (59))

This different behavior regarding the VIR between Spanish and Uzbek points to the conclusion that in Spanish the size of the elided phrase is even lower than in Uzbek, perhaps, as argued here, only of the PredP size.

2.7 *Interim summary*

In this section, we discussed the basic properties of PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish. First, we showed that PredP-Ellipsis is only available with true copulative verbs (i.e., those that admit *lo*-replacement, such as *ser* ('to be'), *estar* ('to be') and *parecer* ('to seem')), but not with pseudocopulative verbs (i.e., those that do not allow *lo*-replacement, like *ponerse colorado* ('to blush') or *volverse loco* ('to go mad')). Then, we provided evidence for our claim that polarity focus (or some contrastive focus above vP) is needed for PredP-Ellipsis to be licensed. Furthermore, we showed that the ellipsis site in this construction can include predicates of any category type (APs, PPs, and NPs), dispensing with the need for proposing independent deletion operations. In addition, we employed the sub-extraction test and the missing antecedent test to favor an ellipsis analysis of this construction. Finally, we demonstrated that PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish does not obey the verbal identity requirement, adding further support to the hypothesis that this construction is indeed different from other types of verbal ellipses. In the following section, we discuss PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish in the context of vP-Ellipsis in Spanish and other Romance languages.

3. PredP-Ellipsis and the vP-Ellipsis parameter in Romance

Spanish is a language without Aux-Stranding XP-Ellipsis (52a), or V-Stranding XP-Ellipsis (52b), like Catalan, French or Italian, and unlike other Romance languages like Portuguese (56) or Galician (57):[4]

(52) Spanish:

a. A: ¿Habías comprado el libro?
had.2SG bought the book?
'Had you bought the book?'

B: *Sí, HABÍA.
yes had.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I had.'

b. A: ¿Le diste el libro?
CL.DAT.3SG gave.2SG the book
'Did you gave her/him the book?'

B: *Sí, DI.
yes gave.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.' (lit. 'Yes, I gave.')

(adapted from Martins 1994, ex. (3))

[4]Lobeck (1995) illustrates the absence of VP-Ellipsis in French with examples like the following:

i. On a demandé si ils ont déjà mangè et ils ont.
we have asked if they have already eaten and they have
'We asked if they had already eaten, and they had.'

(adapted from Lobeck 1995, p. 158)

Here, we try to avoid ellipsis examples in non-contrastive coordinate structures, since, as we argue, there are languages licensing ellipsis only under polarity focus. In contradistinction, it seems that the opposite does not hold: if a language has VP-Ellipsis in coordinate structures, then it also has it under polarity focus.

(53) Catalan:

a. A: Li has donat el llibre?
him have.2SG given the book?
'Did you give him the book?'

B: *Sí, he
yes have.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I have'

b. A: Li has donat el llibre?
him have.2SG given the book?
'Did you give him the book?'

B: *Sí, he donat.
yes have.1SG given
'Yes, I did.' (lit. 'Yes, I have given.')

(adapted from Martins 1994, ex. (4))

(54) French:

a. A: Lui as-tu donné le livre?
him have.2SG given the book
'Did you give him the book?'

B: *Oui, j' ai.
yes I have.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

b. A: Lui as-tu donné le livre?
him have.2SG given the book
'Did you give him the book?'

B: *Oui, j' ai donné.
yes I have.1SG given
'Yes, I did.' (lit. 'Yes, I have given.')

(adapted from Martins 1994, ex. (5))

(55) Italian:

a. A: Gli hai dato il libro?
him have.2SG given the book
'Have you given him the book?'

B: *Si, ho.
yes have.1SG
'Yes, I have.'

b. A: Gli hai dato il libro?
him have.2SG given the book
'Did you give him the book?'

B: *Si, ho dato.
yes have.1SG given
'Yes, I have.' (lit. 'Yes, I have given.')

(adapted from Martins 1994, ex. (6))

(56) Portuguese:

a. A: Você tinha dado o livro pra Sonia?
you had.2SG given the book to.the Sonia
'Had you given the book to Sonia?'

B: Sim, tinha.
yes, had.1SG
'Yes, I had.'

b. A: Deste-lhe o livro?
gave.2SG-him the book?
'Did you give him the book?'

B: Sim, dei.
yes gave.1SG
'Yes, I did.' (lit. 'Yes, I gave.')

(adapted from Martins1994, ex. (1))

(57) Galician:

a. A: Vostede tíñalle dado o libro a Ana?
you had.2SG-him given the book to Ana
Did you give the book to Ana?

B: Sí, tiña.
yes had
'Yes, I had.'

b. A: Déchesllе o livro?
gave.2SG-him the book?
'Did you give him the book?'

B: Si, din.
yes gave.1SG
'Yes, I did.' (lit. 'Yes, I gave.')

(adapted from Martins 1994, ex. (2))

As argued in Saab (2022), Romance languages without vP-Ellipsis are correlated with (i) *uniform proclisis in finite tenses* (see also Martins 1994), and (ii) *absence of vP-fronting*. The following pair from Saab (2022) shows that *v*P-fronting is possible in Brazilian Portuguese (58a) but not in Spanish (58b):

(58) a. ... e estudado, eu tinha ⟨~~estudado~~⟩.
and studied I had studied
Literal: '... and studied, I had.'

b. *... y estudiado, yo había ⟨~~estudiado~~⟩.
and studied I had studied
Intended: '... and studied, I had.'

Most of the Italian speakers we consulted find *v*P-fronting also deviated:

(59) *... e comprato il libro, aveva.
and bought the book had.3SG
Intended: '... and bought the book, I had.'

According to Saab, this set of correlations follows from the fact that Spanish or Italian does not have V-to-T movement, but a post-syntactic rule of restructuring that requires strict locality between T and the vP. As in Rizzi's (1982) original theory, restructuring triggers proclisis, but it also triggers *vP-frozenness* in general, i.e., the ban of deleting or moving vPs. In this respect, PredP-Ellipsis presents a paradoxical behavior, since it does not seem to present vP-frozenness effects, as shown by the deletion facts above, and the putative possibility of vP-fronting in (60a), but it triggers proclisis, as shown in (60b):

(60) a. Contento, estoy.
happy am
'Happy, I am.'

b. Lo estoy.
CL.NEUTER am
'I am (happy).'

The puzzle vanishes if PredP-Ellipsis is not a type of vP-Ellipsis, but it arises as the result of deletion of a lower phrase, called here *Predicate Phrase* (PredP), as we propose here. Such operation leaves the copular verb stranded. This lower ellipsis is consistent with the proclisis facts like those in (60b) (i.e., T and v are still subject to restructuring) and with the existence PredP-fronting like in (60a). On this analysis, the prediction is that the category that must be frozen is the *v*P, since what is deleted or fronted is always the PredP, not the vP. The contrast regarding *v*P-fronting in (61a) and (61b) and the contrast regarding *v*P-ellipsis in (62) and (63) clearly demonstrate that the prediction is correct:

(61) a. *Sido lindo, hubiera.
been nice, had.SUBJ
'Been nice, it would have.'

b. Lindo, hubiera sido.
nice, had.SUBJ been
'Nice, it would have been.'

(62) A: No hubiera sido lindo.
not had.SUBJ been nice
'It doesn't would have been nice.'

B: Sí que hubiera SIDO.
yes that had.SUBJ been
'Yes, it would have been.'

(63) A: No hubiera sido lindo.
not had.SUBJ been nice
'It doesn't would have been nice.'

B: *Sí que HUBIERA.
yes that had.SUBJ
'Yes, it would have.'

The PredP-Ellipsis analysis we propose is schematically illustrated in (64), which contrasts with a vP analysis, provided in (65):

(64) PredP-Ellipsis: [$_{TP}$ T [$_{vP}$ v-/to be/$_{[E]}$ ⟨[$_{PredP}$ Pred]⟩]]
→ available in Spanish

(65) vP-ellipsis: [$_{TP}$ T$_{[E]}$ ⟨[$_{vP}$ v]⟩]
→ not available in Spanish

Our analysis, then, accounts for why Spanish is not a vP-language, despite allowing for some sort of lower ellipsis with verbs selecting PredPs. Yet, we still need to account for the fact that PredP-Ellipsis is exclusively restricted to polarity (focus) contexts and gives ungrammatical results in other contexts such as coordinated structures, in which polarity focus is not at play, as shown in Section 2.3.

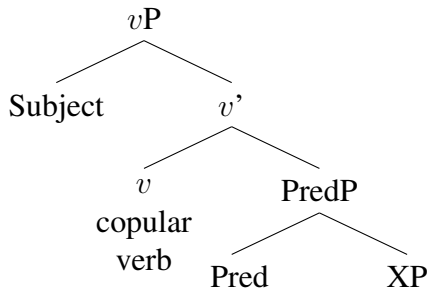
4. An implementation of PredP-Ellipsis licensing

In this section we put forth a formal proposal to derive and license PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish. The two main ingredients of this proposal are: (i) v bears an [E]-feature, which triggers ellipsis of its complement (i.e., a PredP), and (ii) the [E]-feature on v is only licensed if it enters into an Agree relation with a Pol head higher in the structure. In what follows, we spell out the specifics of our proposal.

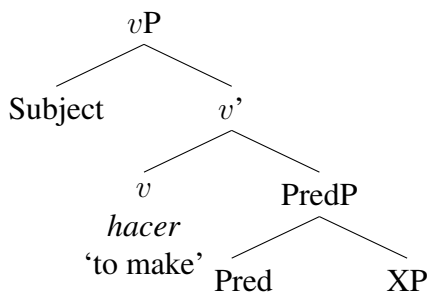
4.1 *The syntax of true copulative verbs*

First, we assume a syntax of true copulative verbs, as schematically shown in the tree in (66), where the v head is the stative, nonagentive counterpart of the nonstative, agentive pro-verb *hacer* ('to make') (67) (see, e.g., Saab 2010 and Authier 2023):

(66) Syntax of true copulative verbs:



(67) Syntax of the proform *hacerlo*:



More specifically, we assume a structure where v selects a PredP, interpreted as an event predicate or a stative predicate depending on the selector head, as shown above.[5]

Note that, unlike Bowers (1993), we assume that the Pred head does not introduce the subject, only the predicate. The main reason to conceive the structure of PredP in this way connects to an already discussed particularity of this construction—*lo*-replacement, which replaces the predicate head and its complement with exclusion of any subject:

(68) Sonia lo es.
Sonia it is
'Sonia is.'

If the replacement affected a PredP with a subject in its specifier, then subject extraction would be blocked, as we observed with other constituents inside PredP in Section 2.4. What is more, that extraction of the complement of the Pred head is incompatible with *lo*-replacement:

(69) *Inteligente, lo es.
intelligent it is
Intended: 'Intelligent, she is.'

As we have already shown above, PredP can indeed be extracted whenever *lo*-replacement does not apply:

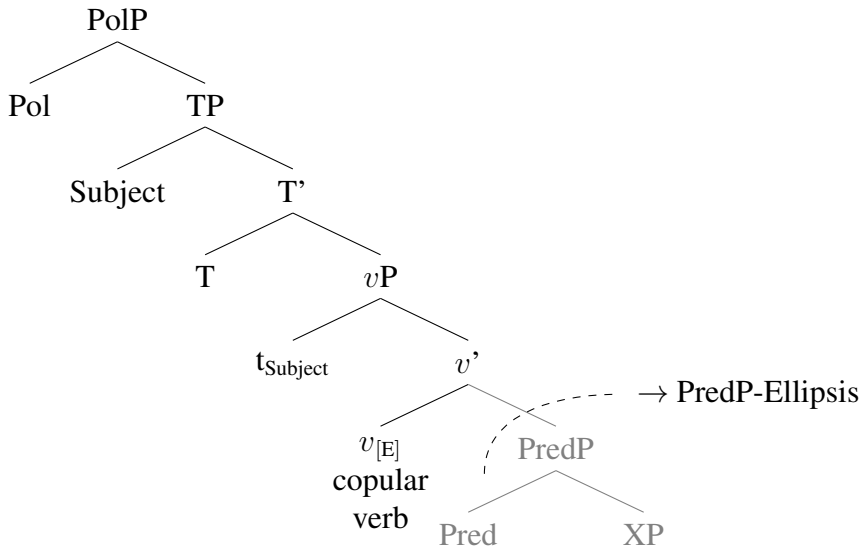
(70) Inteligente, es.
intelligent is
'Intelligent, she is.'

4.2 *The size of the elided category*

As we argued above, PredP-Ellipsis is not a type of vP-Ellipsis. On the contrary, we claim that PredP-Ellipsis arises as the result of deletion of a lower phrase—a PredP. Such elliptical operation leaves the copular verb 'stranded'. This is schematically shown in the tree in (71). Here, we assume that ellipsis is triggered by an [E]-feature (Merchant, 2001). In PredP-Ellipsis, it's this v the head that bears the [E]. Furthermore, following Merchant's proposal (and subsequent work), we argue that [E] triggers deletion of the complement of the head that bears it, in this case, the PredP:

[5]Beyond the semantic nature of the selector head, there are other nontrivial differences between *serlo* and *hacerlo* regarding the obligatory nature of *lo* in the latter. Such obligatoriness comes in two forms: (i) *hacer* always selects *lo*, and (ii) *lo* cannot be dropped. We left a full comparison between *serlo* and *hacerlo* for future research, but refer to Authier (2023) for a recent study on the contrast between *le fair* and *l'être* in French, which, as noticed in section 2.1, have a different distribution than in Spanish.

(71)



4.3 *Formal licensing through Agree*

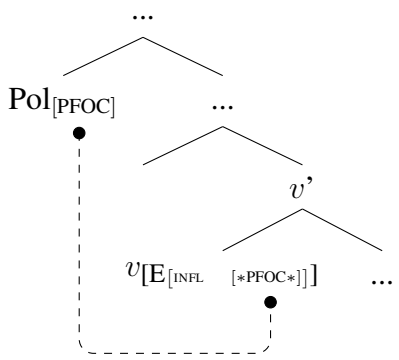
In order to explain the distribution of PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish, we offer a concrete implementation of ellipsis licensing, which uses both the idea of formal licensing through a designated licensing feature—the [E]-feature mentioned above—and the operation Agree. Concretely, we follow Aelbrecht (2010) (see also Stigliano 2022 for a recent implementation of this proposal) in that each type of ellipsis is triggered by a specific [E]-feature, and that [E]-features are made of *categorical*, *inflectional* and *selectional* features. According to this author, the inflectional feature corresponds to the category feature of the ellipsis licensor. This means that the [E]-feature that triggers PredP-Ellipsis will only be licensed if it establishes a checking relation with its licensor, a Pol head with a focus feature, which we represent as Pol_{PFOC}. Finally, the selectional feature corresponds to the head that each [E]-feature is compatible with: in this case, only a v_{copular} head, given that this type of ellipsis is found only with true copulative verbs, as described in Section 2.1:

(72) Formal composition of [E]:

$$\text{E}\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & [\text{E}] \\ \text{INFL} & [*\text{PFOC}*] \\ \text{SEL} & [v_{\text{copular}}] \end{bmatrix}$$

An [E]-feature with such a specification requires, then, licensing through Agree with a proper valued polarity feature present in the Pol head, in the left periphery of the clause. The Agree dependency between [E] and Pol ensures that the distribution of PredP-Ellipsis will be restricted only to those syntactic environments in which polarity focus is syntactically active. This is illustrated in the tree in (74), where the dotted line represents the Agree operation. The agreement relation established between [E] and Pol, where we simplify the matrices above, including only the relevant features:

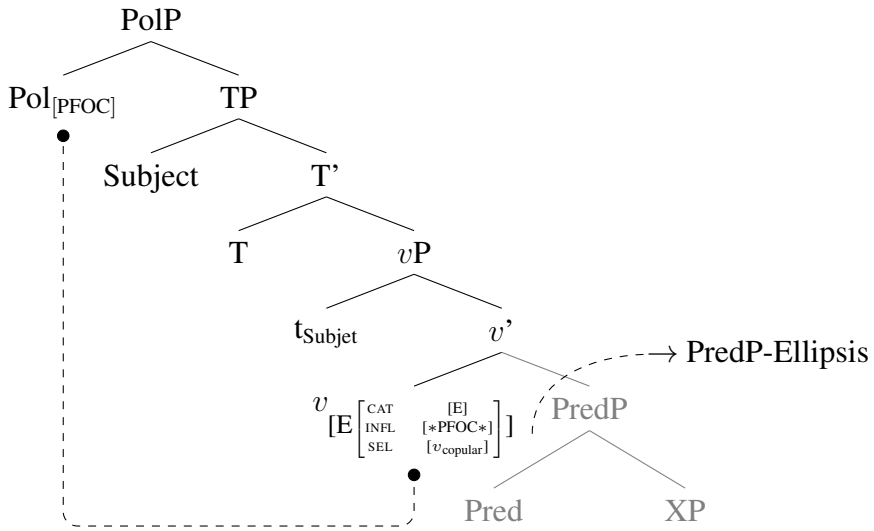
(73)



4.4 *Interim summary*

To sum up, in this section we provided a formal approach of deriving PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish. Crucially, the derivation and licensing of this elliptical construction is based on the presence of an [E]-feature on v, which triggers ellipsis of its complement (i.e., PredP), and the need of an Agree relation between the [E]-feature and a Pol head higher in the structure. The proposal is summarized in (74):

(74)



This analysis is enough to capture all the properties that characterizes PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish, described in Section 2. First, it accounts for the contrast between true copulatives and pseudocopulatives. Recall that only the former license PredP-Ellipsis:

(75) A: ¿Sos feliz?
are.2SG happy
'Are you happy?'
B: Sí, SOY.
yes am
'Yes, I am.'

(76) A: ¿Te pusiste colorado?
CL.2SG became.2SG red
'Did you blush?'

B: *Sí, me PUSE.
yes CL.1SG became.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

According to our approach, only true copulatives select PredP and, consequently, are able to elide it. On the contrary, pseudocopulatives directly select their adjectival complements, which are not suitable categories for ellipsis in Spanish. The main evidence for this distinction comes from the correlation with *lo*-replacement. This proform is a predicate variable replacing PredPs, not AdjPs.

Second, the same hypothesis also explains why PredP-Ellipsis can target any category type (i.e., APs, NPs, and PPs):

(77) A: ¿Es [$_{AP}$ confiable]?
is trustworthy
'Is (s)he trustworthy?'
B: Sí, ES.
yes is
'Yes, (s)he is.'

(78) A: ¿Sos [$_{NP}$ un buen amigo]?
are.2SG a good friend
'Are you a good friend?'
B: Sí, SOY.
yes am
'Yes, I am.'

(79) A: ¿Estás [$_{PP}$ con Sonia]?
are.2SG with Sonia
'Are you with Sonia?'
B: Sí, ESTOY.
yes am
'Yes, I am.'

In our account, these categories are complements of a Pred head. Put differently, this type of ellipsis deletes the entire PredP, including any complement of the Pred head.

Third, the Agree mechanism proposed here is able to capture—as it is particularly designed for this—why PredP-Ellipsis is only possible under polarity focus. Recall the basic contrast below, where an example like (81) is directly ruled out because of the absence of a Pol head with the required formal makeup, namely, Pol$_{[PFOC]}$.

(80) Sonia no es feliz, pero Bruno sí ES.
Sonia not is happy but Bruno yes is
'Sonia is not happy, but Bruno is indeed.'

(81) *Sonia es feliz y Bruno también es.
Sonia is happy and Bruno also is
Intended: 'Sonia is happy and Bruno is, too.'

The argument could be make that examples like (39), repeated below in (82), would require slightly adjusting the analysis proposed here:

(82) A: ¿Sos rico?
are.2SG rich
'Are you rich?'

B: No, ERA, pero ya no.
No, was.1SG but already not
'No, I was, but I am not anymore.'

It seems that, in cases like these, the crucial feature must be on T, not on Pol. Mechanically, the adjustment is easy to implement, but it is worth-exploring the empirical or theoretical consequences of such an adjustment. The observation, that needs to be checked cross-linguistically, would be that some ellipses require *some* focus grammatically encoded above the bearer of the [E]-feature. As we already commented, the paradigmatic examples of PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish are those in which the relevant feature is on Pol, but it seems that some accommodation is possible. In any case, introducing corrections through focus marking in other categories beyond Pol always implies a contrast in polarity. So the theory of ellipsis licensing in this domain could still be formulated making uniform reference to properties of sentence polarity.

Fourth, as we have already noted, the possibility of sub-extraction out of PredP and the availability to refer to a missing antecedent are also directly accounted for under the hypothesis that PredP-Ellipsis has internal structure, i.e., it is a surface anaphora.

(83) A: Sonia no está presa por robo.
Sonia not is in.prison for robbery
'Sonia is not in prison for robbery.'

B: ¡Sí! Por robo está.
yes for robbery is
'Indeed! For robbery, she is (in jail).'

(84) A: Sonia es fanática de Boca.
Sonia is fan of Boca
'Sonia is fan of Boca.'

B: ¡No! De Atlanta es.
no of Atlanta is
'No! Of Atlanta she is (a fan).'

(85) a. *Sonia no está en una banda$_i$, y la$_i$ odio.
Sonia not is in a band and CL.FEM.ACC.3SG hate
Intended: 'Sonia is not in a band$_i$, and I hate it$_i$.'

b. Sonia no está en una banda, pero yo sí estoy en una banda$_i$ y
Sonia not is in a band but I yes am in a band and
la$_i$ odio.
CL.FEM.ACC.3SG hate
'Sonia is not in a band, but I am in a band$_i$, and I hate it$_i$.'

c. Sonia no está en una banda, pero yo sí estoy y la odio.
Sonia not is in a band but I yes am and CL.FEM.ACC.3SG hate
'Sonia is not in a band, but I am, and I hate it.'

Finally, the absence of verbal identity effects (86) follows from the fact that PredP-Ellipsis affects a very low portion of structure, the complement of the copular verb and nothing else:

(86) No *sos* feliz, pero *parecés*.
not are.2SG happy but look.2SG
'You *are not* happy, but you *look* happy.' (lit. 'You *are not* happy, but you *look*.')

(87) A: Estás lindo.
are.2SG pretty
'You are pretty.' (stage level reading)
B: No *estoy*, SOY.
not $\text{am}_{\text{stage level}}$ $\text{am}_{\text{individual level}}$
'I don't look pretty, I am pretty.' (individual level reading)

In a nutshell, since the copular verb is not part of the elided structure, it does not need to be in any identity relation with another copulative verb contained in a putative *v*P antecedent.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, we have analyzed an undocumented type of ellipsis in Spanish, which we dub Predicate Phrase Ellipsis (PredP-Ellipsis). We argued that PredP-Ellipsis deletes a lower predicate phrase selected by copular verbs in the lower domain of the clause. We implement this analysis through Merchant's (2001) theory of ellipsis licensing supplemented with some further elaborations in Aelbrecht (2010), according to which the [E]-feature sometimes needs enter into Agree dependencies with other categories in its syntactic environment. On this account, the entire set of distributional facts discussed here are correctly captured. It's worth mentioning that further research will shed light on the distribution of this type of ellipsis and determine how it fits (if it fits at all) into the taxonomy of verbal ellipses discussed in this study. Finally, further research in Romance and beyond will inform us whether some of our particular implementations can be derived from other, more abstract, Universal Grammar principles that, at this stage of our research, we are not able to detect. In principle, the licensing mechanism of PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish is not a fortuitous property of the Spanish grammar. In fact, the distribution of PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish parallels the distribution of other types of verbal ellipses in other languages that are also uniquely licensed through (polarity) focus. For instance, Lipták (2019) shows that Hungarian is divided in at least two patterns regarding the licensing of vP-Ellipsis. In one dialect, verbal ellipsis (both of the auxiliary or verb stranding type) occurs only under polarity focus (88), whereas in other dialects, vP-Ellipsis, like in English and other *v*P-ellipsis languages, is also licensed in coordinate or embedded structures without any indication of polarity focus (89):

(88) A: Fel hívta Bea a szüleit tegnap?
PV called.3SG Bea the parent.POSS.3SG.PL.ACC yesterday
'Did Bea call her parents yesterday?'
B: Fel hívta.
PV called.3SG
'She did.'

(89) Bea fel hívta a szüleit tegnap. Ibi is fel
Bea PV called.3SG the parent.POSS.3SG.PL.ACC yesterday Ibi also PV
hívta.
called.3SG
'Bea called her parents yesterday. Ibi also did.'
(adapted from Lipták 2019, exs. (22)-(23))

As we discussed in the previous section, we propose to explain both patterns in Spanish and beyond making exclusive reference to the formal make-up of the [E]-feature. In those cases in which ellipsis is restricted to a particular polarity licensing head, we propose that [E] comes endowed with inflectional feature that requires an instance of Agree with a designated head: Polarity, in this case. This division has the important implication that now it becomes possible to provide better tools for diagnosing ellipsis in the relevant domains. For instance, a great part of the ellipsis literature has claimed that Spanish does not allow ellipsis of progressive phrases (e.g., *está cantando* '(s)he is singing'). Yet, the claim has been made only considering coordinate, non-contrastive structures, as in (90):

(90) *Sonia está cantando y Bruno también está.
Sonia is singing and Bruno also is
Intended: 'Sonia is singing and Bruno is, too.'

It turns out, however, that when polarity focus is taken into consideration, some Spanish dialects at least seem to license this type of ellipsis:

(91) ?Sonia no está cantando pero Bruno sí ESTÁ.
Sonia not is singing but Bruno yes is
'Sonia is not singing and Bruno is, indeed.'

Furthermore, when there is a contrast in the tense of the copular verbs (i.e., *estás*, 'you are' vs. *estaba*, 'I was'), PredP-Ellipsis is perfectly possible:

(92) A: ¿Estás cantando?
are.2SG singing
'Are you singing?'
B: No, ESTABA (pero ya no).
no was.1SG (but already not)
'No, I was (but I am not now).'

In this respect, our findings force us to refine our diagnostic tools in ways that really permits us determining whether some types of ellipsis are really licensed in a given language.

Finally, we are aware that ellipsis of (at least part of) small clauses is an almost unexplored issue in the literature. We hope, for instance, that this study brings new insights to the theory of ellipsis and small clauses in Spanish and beyond. As we have shown in Section 2.1, only true copulatives, i.e., those that allow for *lo*-replacement, license PredP-Ellipsis in Spanish. Beyond pseudocopulatives, which do not license it, we tentatively suggested that this behavior also includes predicates of the *considerar*-type and we provided the examples (21) and (22) that show the correlation between absence of predicate ellipsis and *lo*-replacement, respectively. Below we repeat both examples below:

(93) A: ¿Considerás a Sonia inteligente?
consider.2SG DOM Sonia intelligent
'Do you consider Sonia intelligent?'
B: *Sí, (la) considero.
yes CL.FEM.ACC.3SG consider.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

(94) A: ¿Considerás a Sonia inteligente?
consider.2SG DOM Sonia intelligent
'Do you consider Sonia intelligent?'
B: *Sí, **lo** considero.
yes it consider.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I did.'

We are left to ponder the status of other small clauses, in particular, those that select infinitival complements. At a first approximation, it seems that whereas the infinitival complements of perception verbs seem to elide, the infinitival complements of causative *hacer* ('to make') do not:[6]

(95) A: ¿(La) escuchaste cantar a Sonia?
CL.FEM.ACC.3SG heard.2SG sing.INF DOM Sonia
'Did you hear Sonia sing?'
B: Sí, **la**$_i$ escuché $\langle[_{\text{TP}}$ ~~t$_i$ cantar~~$]\rangle$.
yes CL.FEM.ACC.3SG heard.1SG sing.INF
'Yes, I heard her (sing) '

(96) A: ¿(La) hiciste cantar a Sonia?
CL.FEM.ACC.3SG made.2SG sing.INF DOM Sonia
'Did you make Sonia sing?'
B: *Sí, **la**$_i$ hice $\langle[_{\text{TP}}$ ~~t$_i$ cantar~~$]\rangle$.
yes CL.FEM.ACC.3SG made.1SG sing.INF
Intended: 'Yes, I made her sing.'

Interestingly, unlike the facts observed when we compared copulatives and pseudocopulatives, here *lo*-replacement is banned in both cases:

(97) A: ¿(La) escuchaste cantar a Sonia?
CL.FEM.ACC.3SG heard.2SG sing.INF DOM Sonia
'Did you hear Sonia sing?'

[6]Note that, if ECM subjects of perception verbs are generated inside the infinitival clause, we would have a clear piece of evidence in favor of an ellipsis analysis, since, as we have already mentioned, only surface anaphora admit extraction out of it. Further support in favor of this elliptical approach to examples like (95) are provided by cases of missing antecedents, like the following:

i. Sonia no escuchó a Paula cantar una canción, pero yo sí la escuché
Sonia not heard.3SG DOM Paula sing.INF a song but I yes CL.FEM.ACC.3SG heard.1SG
y era hermosa.
and was beautiful
'Sonia didn't hear Paula sing a song, but I did, and it was beautiful.'

B: Sí, **lo** escuché.
yes it heard.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I heard her sing.' (lit. 'Yes, I heard it.')

(98) A: ¿(La) hiciste cantar a Sonia?
CL.FEM.ACC.3SG made.2SG sing.INF DOM Sonia
'Did you make Sonia sing?'

B: *Sí, **lo** hice.
yes it made.1SG
Intended: 'Yes, I made her sing.' (lit. 'Yes, I made it.')

Yet, there is another correlation that would account for the sharp contrast between (95) and (96): the size of the infinitival complement. As shown in Saab (2014, 2015), infinitival complements of causatives with *hacer* and perceptions verbs distinguish each other in the size-type. Concretely, whereas infinitival complements of perception verbs are at least of the TP size, infinitival complements of analytical causatives are of the vP size. If this correct, then the grammaticality of (95) and the ungrammaticality of (96) would follow from the productive existence of an operation of TP-Ellipsis and the absolute impossibility of vP-Ellipsis in the language. Comparative studies should inform whether or not this is a plausible line of research. A first look at Brazilian Portuguese, a Romance language that allows for v-Stranding vP-Ellipsis, gives initial support to this hypothesis. As it can be observed in the following examples, there seems to be a similar TP-Ellipsis effect with perception verbs, which, like in Spanish, also allows for the omission of the infinitival complement:[7]

(99) A: Você escutou a MARIA cantar?
you heard.2SG the Maria sing.INF
'Did you hear Maria sing?'

B: Não, escutei o PEDRO.
no heard.1SG the Pedro
'No, I heard Pedro (sing).'

Omission of the infinitival complement with analytical causatives is unacceptable, just like in Spanish:

(100) A: Você fez a MARIA cantar?
you made.2SG the Maria sing.INF
'Did you make Maria sing?'

B: Não, fiz o PEDRO *(cantar).
no made.1SG the Pedro sing.INF
'No, I made Pedro sing.'

However, unlike Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese allows a v-Stranding vP-Ellipsis output, with the infinitival and causee subject both stranded, an unnoticed fact, as far as we know:

[7]Many thanks to Samara Almeida for her Brazilian Portuguese judgments.

(101) A: Você fez o Pedro dar o livro pra Sonia?
you made.2SG the Pedro give.INF the book to.the Sonia
'Did you make Pedro give the book to Sonia?'
B: Não, fiz o PAULO dar.
no made.1SG the Paulo give.INF
'No, I made Pedro give the book to Sonia.' (lit. 'No, I made Paulo give.')

This is consistent with the patterns observed in finite clauses, although, in principle, sentences like (101) also seem to challenge those analyses that put too little structure inside analytical causatives in Brazilian Portuguese (see, for instance, Sheehan and Cyrino 2023). If v-Stranding vP-Ellipsis requires T as a licensor head, analytical causatives should project at least a TP:

(102) to make $[_{\text{TP}}\ v\text{+T}_{\text{[E]}}\langle[_{\sout{v\text{P}}}\ \sout{\ldots\ v\ \ldots}]\rangle]$

An alternative analysis consistent with Sheehan and Cyrino (and related works on Romance causatives) would conclude that, in fact, Brazilian Portuguese licenses a very low type of verbal ellipsis, concretely, V-Stranding VP-Ellipsis, as schematized below:

(103) to make $[_{v\text{P}}\ \text{V}\text{+}v_{\text{[E]}}\langle[_{\sout{\text{VP}}}\ \sout{\ldots\ \text{V}\ \ldots}\ ]\rangle]$

The existence of such a lower ellipsis, but of the auxiliary-stranding type, was already proposed by Merchant (2008) to explain an asymmetry in voice mismatches in VP-Ellipsis vs. pseudogapping in English. Merchant's conclusion is that verbal ellipsis only targets the VP, not the vP (his VoiceP). Whether this is indeed the case in Brazilian Portuguese is an open question we leave for future research. Nevertheless, the facts discussed through this study show how useful ellipsis can be when it comes to making hypothesis on the internal structure of the verbal domains, including, the internal structure of small clauses.

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