More Doubts on V-stranding VP-ellipsis: Reply to Simpson

Idan Landau

Abstract

Advocating a V-stranding VP ellipsis analysis for object gap sentences, Simpson (2022) argues that under negation the "adjunct reading" is missing because it depends on focal stress, which cannot be realized on unpronounced material. No such condition holds, I maintain, and the absence of the adjunct reading reflects a syntactic absence – Argument Ellipsis sites contain no VP adjuncts. The adjunct reading emerges in some languages when the antecedent sentence is negative too, an inexplicable contingency for the V-stranding VP ellipsis; in fact, these constructions involve *Polarity Ellipsis* (of TP), in which VP-adjuncts *are* included. However, this derivation is not available to all languages, explaining some crosslinguistic differences in adjunct readings under negation. Finally, an optional adjunct reading may emerge in affirmative object gap sentences due to *pragmatic enrichment*, a process sensitive to context in ways that go beyond the predictions of the syntactic analysis advocated in Simpson 2022.

Keywords: argument ellipsis, VP ellipsis, polarity ellipsis, pragmatic enrichment

1. Introduction

In this reply article I address a number of recent arguments that have been put forward in the ongoing debate about the proper analysis of elliptical (i.e., not *pro*-drop) object gap constructions. The arguments center on the behavior of adjuncts in such environments – whether they can or cannot be recovered from an antecedent clause. An example of such sentences, found in Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Hindi, Bangla,

Russian, Persian, Hebrew and other languages, is given in (1), using English words for convenience.

(1) John read the sign loudly, but Mary didn't read ___.

The Verb Stranding VP-ellipsis (VSVPE) analysis advocates a *syntactic* answer to this question: Adjuncts are excluded from Argument Ellipsis (AE) sites but are potentially included in VSVPE sites (Simpson, Choudhury and Menon 2013, Funakoshi 2016, Manetta 2019). The alternative analysis, defended in Landau 2020a,b, holds that VSVPE is never available (for principled reasons). Adjuncts can only be included in larger ellipsis sites (e.g., TP ellipsis), but when construed in the context of V-stranding AE, they are merely pragmatically inferred.[1]

These recent arguments are crystalized in Simpson 2022, hence this reply will address them as they are presented in that article. In section 2 I show that contrary to Simpson's claim, focal stress is not a pre-requisite for the adjunct-negating reading, undermining his explanation for its absence in (1). In section 3 I discuss scenarios where this reading does emerge under V-stranding, reaching the conclusion that they all involve ellipsis of larger phrases (ΣP or TP). This conclusion is strengthened both by the sensitivity of adjunct-inclusion to the polarity of the antecedent clause, as well as by crosslinguistic comparisons. Section 4 shows that adjuncts can be inferred in AE clauses using pragmatic enrichment, but this process is subject to severe syntactic restrictions; Simpson's arguments against a pragmatic account, I argue, stem from failure to take into account these syntactic restrictions. Section 5 concludes the reply.

[1] The dispute ranges over other phenomena as well, such as the status of coordinated object under ellipsis; see Landau 2021 (unacknowledged in Simpson 2022:fn.4), which responds to Gribanova 2013.

2. Adjunct-negation does not depend on adjunct stress

Of central importance in the debate are examples like (2a), which may truthfully describe two distinct situations, (2b) or (2c).

(2) a. John didn't read the sign loudly.

b. → John didn't read the sign at all.

c. → John read the sign but not loudly.

Simpson calls reading (2c) "the narrow scope" reading of negation, and claims that in order for that reading to surface, “the adverbial needs to be overtly encoded as the focus of negation in some way”, which “may often be achieved via prosodic stress”. Otherwise, "it is very hard to construe the negation as taking narrow scope". Now, because the adjunct is elided together with the VP on the VSVPE analysis of the elliptical clause in (1), it cannot bear stress, reducing "the natural availability of any interpretation of narrow scope". This is the gist of the argument made by Merchant (2018:265) as well, to account for the missing adjunct readings under negation in parallel Greek and Hebrew examples.

I would first like to challenge the idea that reading (2c) depends on association with focus. In fact, manner adjuncts combine by predicate modification, giving rise to a conjunction in the semantic translation

(3) *Interpretation of (3c)*

$\neg\ \exists e\ [\mathbf{read(j,the\text{-}sign},e) \wedge \mathbf{loud}(e)]$

By De Morgan's Laws →

$\exists e\ [\neg\ \mathbf{read(j,the\text{-}sign},e) \vee \neg\ \mathbf{loud}(e)]$

Hence, the so-called "narrow scope" reading is an automatic consequence of negating a modified VP; quite simply, one of the ways in which an event of John reading the sign loudly might fail to occur corresponds to the scenario in (2c). Admittedly, there are many other ways in which that event may fail to occur. Maybe *Bill* read the sign loudly; maybe John *etched* the sign loudly; or maybe John read *the menu* loudly. Note that we apply prosodic stress here to disambiguate a multiply ambiguous sentence. However, this is quite different from saying that prosodic stress *enables* any one of these readings. They are all equally accessible as far as the grammar is concerned, and it is entirely up to the context of utterance to choose among them. Contrary to Simpson's assumption that readings like (2c) are "not at all easy and natural" compared to readings like (2b), the former are common and natural in many discourse situations.

(4) a. I'm afraid I didn't pronounce your name properly.

b. He didn't cook the soup long enough.

c. You didn't look for your lost keys under the dresser.

On their natural readings, these sentences do not imply that no events of pronouncing, cooking or searching took place. Rather, they all imply that they all did take place, but not in a specific manner/time/location. Importantly, no prosodic stress is needed to convey these readings. Once again, stress serves to disambiguate, not to license the "narrow scope" reading". If context (or world knowledge) can do so, stress is unnecessary.

Perhaps Simpson mistook VP-final or sentence-final stress as narrow focus on the adjunct in (2a). But this is an accidental property, owing to the Nuclear Stress Rule of English, which assigns stress to the rightmost unit in a prosodic domain even when that

unit does not bear any focus. We can easily separate the two effects by testing VP-initial adjuncts under the scope of negation.

(5) A: How did the police respond?

B: They [didn't fully investigate the accusátions]$_F$.

In (5), the entire predicate in B's response is in focus, answering A's question. Prosodic stress falls on the word *accusations*, while the adverb *fully* is unstressed. Nonetheless, it is perfectly natural to interpret B's response with what Simpson calls "narrow focus" negation (a misnomer here, since focus is placed on the predicate), meaning: The police investigated the accusations but not fully. Thus, the alleged link between prosodic stress and negated-adjunct readings is spurious. It follows that elided VPs should pose no special difficulty in retrieving that reading. Indeed, they do not in English.

(6) a. A: Did I pronounce your name properly?

B: You didn't.

b. A: Did Sam cook the soup long enough?

B: He didn't.

Therefore, the absence of an adjunct-negating reading in sentences like (1) in Hebrew, Japanese and Hindi, points to a clear difference with standard VPE, a difference that cannot be blamed on the detrimental effect of ellipsis on focus marking.

This point can be demonstrated most compellingly in languages where a minimal comparison between VPE and AE is available. Such is the case in Hebrew.[2]

[2]All the Hebrew examples reported in this study have been tested with a group of 18 native speakers. The judgments were strikingly consistent; in particular, a systematic, sharp contrast emerged between V-

(7) a. Rina hayta šo'efet avir bi-xvedut. Galit lo hayta ___.
Rina was inhale.PRT.F.SG air in-heaviness Galit not was
'Rina used to inhale air heavily. Galit didn't.'

b. Rina ša'afa avir bi-xvedut. Galit lo ša'afa ___.
Rina inhaled air in-heaviness Galit not inhaled
'Rina inhaled air heavily. Galit didn't inhale air.'

(7a) involves Aux-stranding VPE (used to express habituality or counterfactuality) while (7b) involves V-stranding ellipsis. On the VSVPE analysis, the latter is equivalent to the former in all relevant respects; in particular, both may include, in the ellipsis site, a silent copy of the adjunct *bi-xvedut* 'heavily'. On Simpson's view, the adjunct-negating reading is marginal to begin with, and doubly so when the adjunct is elided. It is therefore predicted that the two sentences would display identical preference to the event-negating reading.

But the facts are dramatically different. Genuine VPE (7a) allows the sensible adjunct-negating reading, no different from (6). (7b), in contrast, forces the absurd event-negating reading. This follows on the AE analysis, since a null adjunct occurs in (7a) but not in (7b). Yet given that both fail to provide an overt prosodic host for focus marking, as demanded by the "narrow scope" negation reading, the contrast is lost on Simpson's account.

Indeed, the point is more general. Whenever a relevant comparison is available between a V-stranding ellipsis and a bigger, V-including ellipsis, we find that the adjunct reading is missing from the former and present in the latter. This is true not only for V-stranding

stranding (=AE) examples on the one hand, and Aux-stranding (=VPE) or stripping examples on the other hand, as documented below.

vs. Aux-stranding, as in (7), but also for polarity ellipsis in Japanese (Sato and Maeda 2021), and for stripping in Hebrew (Landau 2018), both of which target TP, and both of which can be compared with V-stranding ellipsis in the respective languages. Landau (2018) showed that overt negation *can* associate with the silent adjunct inside the bigger ellipsis site but not with the "silent" (really, non-existing) adjunct in the V-stranding case. Curiously, Simpson (2022:fn. 1) recognizes this lacuna in his account (what allows negation to associate with a null VP-adjunct under TP ellipsis but not under VP ellipsis?), but leaves it unanswered. In a similar vein, Merchant's (2018:fn. 16) suggestion that the ban on eliding pitch-accented constituents is voided if the operator is also elided (for whatever reason) – is of no help. Both Aux-stranding VPE and stripping may spare negation while deleting the adjunct; nevertheless, the two may associate to generate the "narrow scope" reading.

Rather than solving this puzzle, Simpson challenges the relevance of the Hebrew V-stranding examples, repeated below.

(8) A: ata makir ota me-ha-tixon? *Hebrew*
you know her from-the-high.school
'Do you know her from high school?'

B: # lo makir ___. me-ha-cava.
not know from-the-army
'I don't know her. From the army.'

B': lo, me-ha-cava.
not from-the-army
'No, from the army' / 'I don't. From the army.'

Landau (2018, 2020a) argued that (8B) is infelicitous because the corrective continuation implies a negated-adjunct reading of the preceding V-stranding elliptical clauses (i.e., I know her but not from high school). Such a reading is impossible, however, as no adjunct is present in the AE site. In contrast, the null adjunct is present under stripping (8B'), hence negation can target it, and the corrective continuation is fully felicitous. In response, Simpson claims that (8B) would make a poor reply even in unquestionable VP-ellipsis contexts in English, so it cannot be used as evidence against VSVPE, which is just another instance of VP ellipsis.

(9) A: Did you see John in Paris?

B: # I did not. In London.

Note, first, that the PP in (9) is most likely a predicate inside a small clause, whereas the PP in (8) is a locative adjunct. The comparison is thus not minimal. More importantly, I believe that Simpson mistakes a superficial difference between Hebrew and English, related to the usage of fragments, for some deeper restriction the two languages allegedly share. Bare PPs make good fragments in Hebrew when correcting negated-adjunct readings in *genuine* VP ellipsis, as can be seen in Aux-stranding environments (10a), which is sharply better than the V-stranding example (10b).[3]

(10) a. Yosi haya markiv pazelim betox ša'a. *Hebrew*
Yosi was.3SG.M assembe.PRTC jigsaw.puzzles inside hour
(?) ani lo hayity ___. Ulay betox šavua.

[3] The locus of slight marginality in (10a) is in the elliptical clause itself, while the locus of incoherence in (10b) is in the corrective continuation. This is significant. Aux-stranding in (10a) already feels redundant, given the more natural option of stripping (without Aux), but still lets through the negated-adjunct reading. That reading disappears in (10b), where the corrective continuation is incoherent.

I not was.1SG maybe inside week

'Yosi used to assemble jigsaw puzzles in an hour.

I did not. It took me a week maybe.'

b. Yosi hirkiv et ha-pazel betox ša'a.

Yosi assembled.3SG.M ACC the-jigsaw.puzzle inside hour

ani lo hirkavti ___. # Ulay betox šavua.

I not assembled.1SG maybe inside week

'Yosi assembled the jigsaw puzzle in an hour.

I did not assemble it. # It took me a week maybe'

Thus, internally to Hebrew, the infelicity of (8B) cannot be attributed to any difficulty in responding to negated VP-ellipsis utterances with corrective PPs. Whatever lies behind the oddness of (9b) seems to be specific to English. For some reason, this particular kind of corrective focus following VP ellipsis cannot be expressed using simple fragments in English. Notice that the discourse in (9) becomes natural once the correction takes the form of a cleft (I changed the verb *see* to *meet*, in order to avoid the confound with a small clause construction).

(11) A: Did you meet John in Paris?

B: I didn't. It was in London (that I met him).

We may then ask whether *this* continuation is any more felicitous following a negated V-stranding sentence in Hebrew. The answer is 'no'; (12) displays the same profile as (8) does.

(12) A: pagašta et John be-Pariz? *Hebrew*

met.2SG.M ACC John in-Paris

'Did you meet John in Paris?'

B: # lo pagašti ___. ze haya be-London.

not met.1SG it was in-London

'I didn't meet him. It was in London.'

B': lo, ze haya be-London.

no it was in-London

'No, it was in London.'

On the AE analysis, a single feature explains the infelicity of (8B), (10b) and (12B): The gap in the V-stranding sentences is derived by AE, containing no silent adjunct. Hence, negation cannot associate with any adjunct to produce the "narrow scope" reading. By contrast, the VSVPE analysis, with the supplemental assumptions of Simpson 2022, offers an isolated explanation for (8B), which fails to extend to (12B), and is directly refuted by (10b).

Examples (8B) and (12B) undermine one further claim of Simpson 2022. The paradigms with negation and missing adjuncts, Simpson argues, involve another feature that "compounds" the alleged problem of associating the elided adjunct with prosodic stress: The subject of the elliptical clause is in itself contrastive, attracting narrow focus away from the adjunct. It is true that the standard examples in the literature establish contrast between the two sentences via the subjects. However, this is not necessary at all. In (8B) and (12B), the subject of the elliptical clauses is unfocused, identical to that of the antecedent clause; it is a 2nd person *pro*, which, by definition, cannot bear stress. Nonetheless, "narrow scope" negation is unavailable in the elliptical clause.

The same point can be shown when a 3rd person subject of the antecedent clause is coreferential with the subject of the elliptical clause, and the latter is clearly unstresssed.

(13) A: Gil katav et ha-teza šelo be-xodšayim, lo? *Hebrew*

Gil wrote ACC the-thesis his in-two.months no

'Gil wrote his thesis in two months, didn't he?'

B: # lo, hu lo katav ___.

no, he not wrote

'No, he didn't write it.'

C: lo, hu lo ___.

no, he not

'No, he didn't.'

(13B) excludes the adjunct reading, leading to a presupposition failure: Speaker B denies the existense of the thesis presupposed by speaker A. The natural reading, whereby Gil took more (or less) than two months to write his thesis, is absent – *even though* the subject of the elliptical clause is anaphoric to *Gil* and bears no focal stress. This reading is readily available in the verbless stripping construction (13C). Recall that the latter still requires, on Simpson's account, the "difficult" association of narrow scope negation with an unpronounced adjunct. The fact that no difficulty is detected in (13C), together with the fact it is indistinguishable from (13B) with respect to its nonfocused subject, proves that it is not any problem with assigning focal stress to an unpronounced adjunct that explains the fundamental observation in (1).

3. Negative sentences: The source of variation

The fact that V-stranding ellipsis in sentences like (1) cannot associate negation with the allegedly silent adjunct, but standard VPE in (6) can, is clear evidence that the former is *not* derived via VSVPE (and perforce, contains no null adjunct). To my knowledge, this conclusion holds with equal force of all the languages for which the

VSVPE analysis has been proposed. Taking it at face value, it suggests that VSVPE is not available in those languages (i.e., Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, Bangla, Hebrew, Portuguese).[4]

Nonetheless, a curious observation emerged in the literature. In a number of languages, special circumstances increase the accessibility of the silent adjunct reading in the elliptical clause: (i) when the antecedent clause is also negated; (ii) when the antecedent and elliptical clauses are contrasted with the coordinator *but*; (iii) when rich context highlights the contrast between the two clauses. These observations emerged in Japanese (Funakoshi 2016) and Hindi (Manetta 2018, 2019); importantly, both authors note considerable cross-speaker variation in this area (a point to which I return below).

The empirical picture, then, at least for Japanese and Hindi, seems as follows.

(14) *Availability of silent adjunct readings in Japanese and Hindi*

<u>Impossible</u>

(i) Antecedent clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj$_i$ [$_{VP}$ [$_{VP}$ V Obj] Adjunct]]

Elliptical clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj$_j$ *not* V __]

<u>Possible for some speakers</u>

(ii) Antecedent clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj$_i$ *not* [$_{VP}$ [$_{VP}$ V Obj] Adjunct]]

Elliptical clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj$_j$ *not* V __]

[4] Recently, Gribanova (2020, Appendix B) and Portelance (2020) documented cases where the adjunct-negating reading does not seem to survive under Aux-stranding VPE in Uzbek, Polish and Lithuanian. This puzzling behavior, unexpected on *every* existing account, should be further studied. Initial evidence suggests that (at least for Polish, Asia Pietraszko, p.c.) the adjunct-negating reading is more heavily dependent on pragmatic cues, and once such cues are provided, it does emerge in VPE, as expected.

(iii) Antecedent clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj$_i$ [$_{VP}$ [$_{VP}$ V Obj] Adjunct]]

Elliptical clause: *but* [$_{TP}$ Subj$_j$ *not* V __]

(iv) (Rich contrastive context)

Antecedent clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj$_i$ [$_{VP}$ [$_{VP}$ V Obj] Adjunct]]

Elliptical clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj$_j$ *not* V __]

Funakoshi (2016) and Simpson (2022) take (14ii-iv) to be the decisive facts, drawing the conclusion that VSVPE is a viable option in these languages. However, the contrast in (14) is a puzzle and any full account should address both parts of it. Funakoshi and Simpson do not provide any explanation for why the allegedly silent adjunct in (14i) *cannot* associate with negation. Note that Simpson's prosody-based account cannot work here, since the relevant distinction is located in the antecedent clause or in the surrounding context; the elliptical clauses of (14i-iv) are all identical. Even so, that account was shown above to be empirically problematic for independent reasons.

An equally valid tack, then, would be to take (14i) as the decisive fact, pointing to the absence of VSVPE, and explain (14ii-iv) by other means – crucially *not* involving VSVPE. This will be my strategy below. To the extent that it succeeds in accounting for both parts of the puzzle in (14), it should be favored over the VSVPE alternative.

3.1 Polarity ellipsis and agglutinative verb raising

If a silent adjunct is recoverable in (14ii-iv) but *not* through VSVPE, the logical conclusion is that these sentences involve yet a bigger ellipsis. Indeed, this is precisely the analysis that Manetta (2018) offers for the Hindi data.[5] It is also offered in Landau

[5] Simpson (2022) cites Manetta 2019 but not Manetta 2018, where the adjunct data are given a fuller analysis.

2020a:355 to explain parallel variations in Portuguese data, following Martins 1994, 2016 and Costa, Martins and Pratas 2012. I will take these works as my starting point and expand on them as we proceed.

Consider first (14iii-iv). In such strongly contrastive contexts, these authors suggest, the elliptical clause involves *polarity ellipsis*. In polarity ellipsis, the inflected verb raises to a PolP projection above TP, followed by TP ellipsis. Pol is where the polarity of the clause is determined. This head may host either the raised verb or a polarity particle (*yes/no*). On this view, overt clause-internal negation is merely an agreement reflex with Pol, an analysis for which there is much syntactic and semantic evidence (Zeijlstra 2008, 2013, Holmberg 2016). Polarity ellipsis, in turn, may be accompanied by contrastive topic (CT) or not. When it is not, the remnant consists of either the polarity particle, or the raised verb, or both, and nothing else. When a CT is added, some constituent is extracted from the TP prior to its elision, landing in [Spec,PolP] (Martins 2016, Gribanova 2017).[6] Note that Pol^0 may be spelled out as a particle or remain null (shading represents ellipsis).

(15) *Polarity ellipsis*

a. No CT: $[_{PolP}\ V_{[T/Neg/Asp]}\ Pol^0_{[Pos/Neg]}\ [_{TP}\ \ldots\ t_V\ \ldots]]$

b. With CT: $[_{PolP}\ XP_i\ [_{Pol'}\ [V_{[T/Neg/Asp]}\ Pol^0_{[Pos/Neg]}]\ [_{TP}\ \ldots\ t_i\ \ldots\ t_V\ \ldots]]]$

[6] In fact, [XP *not*] and [*not* XP] track different information structures: The former is the "unmarked" variant, indicating contrastive topic. The latter is "corrective", indicating contrastive focus (see Vicente 2006 for discussion). The distinction is not important in the present context.

Three points are worth highlighting. First, the raised verb carries with it any inflectional material it picks up en route to Pol. This includes aspect/tense morphology, agreement, and in languages like Japanese and Hindi, also affixal negation if such occurs; see Sato & Maeda 2021 for compelling arguments that the movement of Neg to C in Japanese polarity ellipsis affects scope relations (hence, occurs in the syntax).

Second, the contrastive XP reaches its surface position via *movement*. This is evident from connectivity effects (scope, binding and case marking) obtaining between that XP and material internal to the elided TP (Merchant 2004, Vicente 2006, Temmerman 2013, Martins 2016, Gribanova 2017, Lipták 2019), as well as island-sensitivity of CT-fragment answers (Griffiths and Lipták 2014).

Third, the raised XP could be any constituent of the elliptical clause, including its subject. In fact, a very common context for ellipsis involves contrastive subjects (e.g. (1)). If the subject is contrastive and is moved to [Spec.PolP], the resulting sentence has the form *Subj-(Neg)-V*, which is (confusingly) string-identical to the output of either AE or VSVPE. This surface ambiguity, I suggest, is the source of the adjunct-including readings that Funakoshi (2016) and Simpson (2022) focus on, although they fail to take it into account as Manetta (2018) does.

What about case (14ii)? Here it is not contrast with some antecedent constituent that licenses ellipsis, but rather identity of (negative) polarity. Intuitively, a match in polarity between the antecedent and the elliptical clauses licenses a bigger ellipsis than a mismatch does. Case (14i) fails, then, due to a violation of parallelism, which agreement cannot repair.

Consider how this works out formally. Following much work on negation, I assume that the clause-internal head on which polarity is expressed under agreement with Pol

is Σ (Laka 1994). Pol, the semantically interpretable head, determines whether Σ, the uninterpretable head, is affirmative (the default, unmarked value, unless emphatic) or negative, the latter realized as clausal negation. I will make the further assumption that Σ can either be inserted unvalued, $\Sigma_{[Pol:]}$, acquiring its [Neg] value under Agree with $Pol_{[Neg]}$; or be inserted valued, $\Sigma_{[Pol:Neg]}$, in which case Pol simply matches it (for coherence) but does not value it.

Following Ranero 2021, I assume that parallelism for ellipsis licensing requires *nondistinctness*; thus, [F:α] and [F:] count as parallel, but [F:α] and [F:β] do not. I further assume the version of [E]-licensing developed in Landau 2020b: A licensor Z c-commands a target X and Agrees with it; consequently, XP is elided (thus, the ellipsis instruction is *projected* from a head and not imparted on a complement). I also reserve the term "Polarity Ellipsis" to situations in which the complement of Pol (=TP) is entirely deleted, reflecting Agree ($Pol_{[E]}$,$T_{[E]}$), as in (15) above and (20) below. The smaller ΣP-ellipsis results from Agree ($T_{[E]}$,$\Sigma_{E]}$), as in (16) and (19) below. Finally, the interaction of agreement and ellipsis is subject to some natural conditions, which will be discussed shortly.

Consider case (14i) first. Because the elliptical clause does not introduce a contrastive topic, nothing is moved to [Spec,Pol]. A *Subj-V* string can only emerge, then, within TP. I assume throughout that VSVPE is not available. Bigger V-stranding ellipsis, however, is not blocked in principle; indeed, Landau (2020b) explicitly invokes such derivations for polarity ellipsis and Aux-stranding ellipsis. The question, then, is what blocks ΣP-ellipsis in (16).

(16) *Polarity mismatch without contrast: *ΣP ellipsis*

Antecedent clause:

[$_{PolP}$ Pol$_{[Pos]}$ [$_{TP}$ Subj$_i$ [[V-Σ$_{[Pos]}$]T] [$_{ΣP}$ ~~Σ~~$_{[Pol:]}$ [$_{VP}$ [$_{VP}$ ~~V~~ Obj] Adjunct]]]]]]

Agree **Move**

Elliptical clause:

* [$_{PolP}$ Pol$_{[Neg]}$ [$_{TP}$ Subj$_j$ [[V-Σ$_{[Neg]}$]T] [$_{ΣP}$ ~~Σ~~$_{[Pol:Neg]}$ [$_{VP}$ [$_{VP}$ ~~V~~ Obj] Adjunct]]]]]

Agree **Move**

Two derivations are possible: Either a valued Σ$_{[Pol:Neg]}$ is inserted or an unvalued Σ$_{[Pol:]}$ is. The former case violates parallelism, since the antecedent Σ$_{[Pol:Pol]}$ and the elided Σ$_{[Pol:Neg]}$ are distinct. Notice that this case is crucially different from familiar "polarity mismatches" between indefinite DPs under ellipsis (Merchant 2013).

(17) a. John [saw someone], but Mary didn't [~~see anyone~~].

b. John [saw D$_{[Indef,Pol:]}$], but Mary didn't [~~see D$_{[Indef,Pol:]}$~~].

Following Merchant's treatment, both *someone* and *anyone* are surface realizations of an identical indefinite DP, whose uninterpretable [Pol] feature is valued [Pos] by default or valued [Neg] under agreement with Σ$_{[Pol:Neg]}$. The antecedent and the elided VPs, then, are nondistinct, and in fact, identical. But do they not become distinct *after* Agree? On the standard assumption, VPE is triggered by T; by the time this happens, Σ should have already valued the indefinite DP in the (to-be-elided) VP as [Pol:Neg], seemingly violating parallelism with the antecedent D$_{[Indef,Pol:Pos]}$.

This presupposition here is that unvalued features inside an ellipsis site must be valued during the derivation. This is dubious, however, especially when purely morphological agreement is concerned. In this regard (17) is no different from (18).

(18) a. I didn't [steal the cake], although I could have [~~stolen the cake~~].

b. I didn't [steal the cake], although I could have$_{[Perf]}$ [~~steal$_{[uInfl:]}$ the cake~~].

Normally, a lexical verb is turned into a past participle under agreement with a c-commanding perfect auxiliary, which values its [uInfl] feature as [Perf]. Yet this is required purely for spellout reasons – the *-en* suffix must be pronounced on the verb. Elided constituents abort spellout, making this agreement relation superfluous.[7] Indeed, economy considrations would rule it out; we may adopt the weaker conclusion that it is at least not required. By parity of reasoning, the elided D$_{[Indef,Pol:]}$ in (17b) may well remain unvalued throughout the syntactic derivation (thus, the notation ~~*anyone*~~ is somewhat misleading). At LF, it contributes its existential force, while PF is indifferent to its shape.

Returning to the question whether (17) violates parallelism *after* Agree, the answer is negative: The considerations above suggest that the elided indefinite DP need not enter an Agree relation with its licensor at all (*semantic* licensing is obviously still needed and still obtains). Being unvalued for [Pol], it is nondistinct from its positive correlate, satisfying parallelism. In contrast, an inherently valued $\Sigma_{[Pol:Neg]}$ in (16) is different in nature, flouting parallelism with a positive correlate.

[7] See Merchant 2015 for compelling evidence from code-switching for this view: Ineffable combinations of Aux-V sequences are rendered grammatical on account of VP ellipsis.

The other option of deriving (16), then, is to use an unvalued $\Sigma_{[Pol:]}$ in the elliptical clause and let it be valued by $Pol_{[Neg]}$. This would guarantee parallelism, assuming that the elided $\Sigma_{[Pol:]}$ is nondistinct from the antecedent $\Sigma_{[Pol:Pos]}$. Still, $\Sigma_{[Pol:]}$ would have to be valued in order to be pronounced inside the inflectional complex to which it moved; Agree cannot spare it. I assume that valuation of affixal negation must take place *before* it adjoins to T; plausibly, its very character as a syntactic affix head is not determined prior to valuation, since its affixal property is non-accidentally linked to its being a negative marker. This means that $\Sigma_{[Pol:]}$ must be valued by $Pol_{[Neg]}$ in its base position, inside ΣP.

Here we run into derivational bleeding. (16) is not polarity ellipsis (which deletes TP); rather, it is ΣP-ellipsis licensed by T, parallel to the licensing of VP ellipsis by T. Thus, ΣP-ellipsis is triggered *before* Pol, which must value the [Pol] feature on ΣP's head, is introduced into the structure. This leaves $\Sigma_{[Pol:]}$ unvalued, causing a PF-crash, as the clausal negation is unpronounceable. While it is known that certain agreement mismatches between the antecedent and target clauses are tolerated by ellipsis, they all must be resolved at the derivational point in which ellipsis occurs, and no later. Aelbrecht (2010), Johnson (2015) and Sailor (2022) document a range of bleeding effects that ellipsis has over movement and agreement dependencies that cross its boundaries. Crucially, in all of them, the higher dependent is located *above* the head that triggers ellipsis.

To sum up case (14i)/(16): Without a contrastive topic, an object gap clause may either involve AE or ΣP-ellipsis, VSVPE being unavailable. An adjunct-including reading can only arise from ΣP-ellipsis, since AE has no effect on adjuncts. Yet ΣP-ellipsis is not licensed when the antecedent and the ellipsis clauses do not match in polarity. An

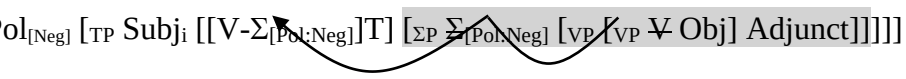
inherently valued $\Sigma_{[Pl:Neg]}$ in the ellipsis site violates parallelism;[8] an unvalued one would fail to Agree with Pol due to the opacity imposed by ellipsis, causing a PF-crash. Thus, no derivational path is available leading to ellipsis big enough to include the adjunct.

Consider next case (14ii), which is similar to (14i) in the absence of a contrastive topic but different in displaying polarity match (both the antecedent and ellipsis clause are negative). Here, reportedly, some speakers of Japanese and Hindi access the adjunct-including reading. Given the preceding discussion, this implies that ΣP-ellipsis *is* licensed under such circumstances.

(19) *Polarity match without contrast: ✓ΣP ellipsis*

Antecedent clause:

Elliptical clause:



[8] Recent work on sluicing revealed that under special circumstances, ellipsis does tolerate polarity mismatches (Kroll 2019, Anand, Hardt and McCloskey 2021). It is conceivable that sufficiently controlled examples will allow similar polarity mismatches in ΣP-ellipsis, leading to grammatical instances of (14i)/(16). I leave this possibility to be explored in future work.

Move

While it makes no difference how the antecedent Σ comes to bear [Pol:Neg] – inherently of via Agree (the latter is illustrated above) – the elided Σ must be inherently negative; Agree with Pol would be bleeded by ellipsis, as in (16). Precisely because the two Σ heads match in polarity, parallelism is respected. In this way, ΣP-ellipsis may give rise to adjunct-including readings. We thus explain why this reading is sensitive to the polarity of the antecedent. The explanation is principled insofar as it directly links the possibility of eliding an adjunct-including constituent to polarity (mis)match with the antecedent. On Funakoshi's (2016) and Simpson's (2021) accounts, which appeal to VSVPE in all these scenarios, this link is accidental.

Things are interestingly different with the contrastive topic cases (14iii)-(14iv). Here, the elided constituent is TP and the triggering head is Pol – the *same* head that values Σ. It is perfectly possible for Pol to value Σ before it elides ΣP, generating a polarity mismatch with the antecedent. This is analogous to agreement mismatches under ellipsis elsewhere, e.g. *His parents have given up and he has too*, where T agrees with the external argument before triggering VP-ellipsis. We now understand the causal relation between the presence of a CT, polarity mismatch and adjunct-inclusion in ellipsis. The CT activates [Spec,Pol], to which it moves. If it is the subject, the sequence *Sub-V* is formed outside TP. Subsequent TP-ellipsis not only allows adjuncts to be included (accounting for the judgments in (14iii-iv)), but is consistent with polarity reversal, which may occur just before ellipsis does.[9]

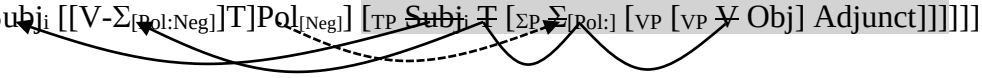
[9] Polarity reversal is of course not required in the presence of a CT. Recall, though, that the adjunct-inclusion test is truly informative only in *negative* elliptical clauses (Landau 2020a).

(20) *Polarity mismatch with contrastive subject: ✓TP ellipsis*

Antecedent clause:

Move Move Agree Move

Elliptical clause:



Move Move Agree Move

Recall that there is considerable variability in the extent to which speakers accept the adjunct-including readings in (14ii-iv). The present analysis points to the syntax-pragmatics interface as the natural locus for this variation, at least for cases (14iii-iv). Contrastivity is presumably a gradient notion; how contrastive two referents are in a given discourse situation depends on levels of familiarity, background assumptions and so forth. Plausibly, minute levels of contrast are not reflected in the grammar. It is only when the contrast exceeds a certain threshold that the grammar "chooses" to encode it with a dedicated device – a syntactic position for the CT ([Spec,PolP]). What that threshold is may well differ from one speaker to the other, and individual responsiveness to pragmatic contrastivity – even prior to grammatical encoding – may differ as well. Thus, we expect to find variation in the willingness of speakers to entertain the more complex structure (20) over the simpler one (16) for identical *Subj-*

V strings. Correspondingly, we will observe variation in adjunct-including interpretations.[10]

3.2 Crosslinguistic differences

While Manetta (2018) develops a CT-analysis similar to (20) for (14iii-iv) in Hindi and Japanese, for the polarity match case (14ii) she adheres to the VSVPE analysis (see her fn. 8). The present alternative in (19) invokes instead ΣP-ellipsis, stranding the V-Neg complex in T. Is there a way to distinguish the two proposals? More broadly, what independent evidence is there for the fundamental point under dispute, namely whether VSVPE is even an option in the grammar?

Two ingredients seem to be necessary in languages displaying derivations of the types described in the preceding section, one obvious and the other one less so. The obvious ingredient is V-movement of the agglutinative type, where inflectional morphemes accrue on the verbal complex as it climbs up the tree. The other ingredient, without which (20) cannot be generated, is the availability of polarity ellipsis in the grammar; that is, a Pol head endowed with the [E]-feature triggering ellipsis of its TP complement. A language without either one of them is expected to show a different profile of adjunct-inclusion in elliptical clauses.In fact, Hebrew is such a language. Unlike Japanese, Korean, Hindi, Bangla, Malayalam and Persian, negation in Hebrew is not affixal and can freely be separated from the verb. More interestingly, Hebrew does not seem to license genuine V-stranding polarity ellipsis. In Holmberg's (2016:65,66) survey of 130 languages, Japanese, Korean, Hindi, Malayalam and Persian are listed as employing verb-echo answers and Hebrew as not. Verb-echo

[10] Panitz (2018:85) observes similar variation in adjunct-including readings in Brazilian Portuguese, where the contrastive topic is not the subject but rather an argumental PP.

answers are precisely the residue of V-to-T-to-Pol movement followed by TP-ellipsis (see (15a)).[11] I assume that TP ellipsis as such is always possible under polarity particles (i.e., yes/no replies). What Hebrew lacks is V-raising to Pol.

The Hebrew examples below are modeled on the Japanese examples in Funakoshi 2016:118,119, and are nearly their accurate translations (I have replaced the adverb *carefully* with *thoroughly*, which sounds more natural in these contexts). Despite the presence of the ameliorating factors, the null adjunct reading is consistently absent. Note that the continuing sentence in (21c) is completely incoherent, as it contradicts the elliptical sentence, which can only be understood as negating the car-washing event.

(21) a. *Polarity match without contrast: *null adjunct reading*

Gil lo šataf et ha-oto be-yesodiyut.

[11] Establishing this analytic claim is not trivial since languages may mimic big ellipsis with a combination of smaller ones and/or employment of null pronouns. Holmberg carefully shows that the crucial test involves indefinite existential subjects, which cannot be *pro*-dropped. Indeed, in such contexts, verb-echo responses are excluded in Hebrew.

(i) A: mišehu lakax mi-po et ha-sal?
somebody took from-here ACC the-basket?
'Did anyone take the basket from here?'
B: * ken, lakax / *lo, lo lakax.
yes took.3SG.M no not took.3SG.M
('Yes, somebody did.' / 'No, nobody did.')

The implication is that verb-echo replies in Hebrew (e.g. (12B)) are not derived by TP-ellipsis; rather, the verb is flanked by a null subject *pro* and an elided object, the latter produced by AE.

Gil not washed.3SG.M ACC the-car in-thoroughness

'Gil didn't wash the car thoroughly.'

Gam Yosi lo šataf ___.

also Yosi not washed.3SG.M

'Yosi also didn't wash the car.'

b. *Polarity mismatch with contrastive subject: *null adjunct reading*

Gil šataf et ha-oto be-yesodiyut,

Gil washed.3SG.M ACC the-car in-thoroughness

aval Yosi lo šataf ___.

but Yosi not washed.3SG.M

'Gil washed the car thorougly, but Yosi didn't wash the car.'

c. *Polarity mismatch with rich context: *null adjunct reading*

Context: Gil and Yosi washed their parents' cars to get allowance.

Gil was thorough in his work while Yosi was not.

Gil šataf et ha-oto be-yesodiyut.

Gil washed.3SG.M ACC the-car in-thoroughness

'Gil washed the car thorougly.'

Yosi lo šataf ___. # Ha-oto še-Yosi šataf haya meluxlax.

Yosi not washed.3SG.M the-car that-Yosi washed was dirty

'Yosi didn't wash the car. # The car that Yosi washed was dirty.'

Given the independently known differences between Hebrew on the one hand and Hindi/Japanese on the other hand, these judgments are perfectly expected on the present approach. An adjunct-including reading in (21a) depends on V-to-Neg-to-T raising followed by ΣP-ellipsis, parallel to (19). But Hebrew negation *lo* is not affixal and does not accompany verb raising. This implies that the surface string *Subj-Neg-V* in (21a)

can only be derived, in theory, by VSVPE or by AE. By assumption, VSVPE is unavailable. AE being the only option left, the adjunct reading is absent.

Both (21b,c), in turn, invoke agglutinative V-raising to Pol, movement of the contrastive subject to [Spec,Pol] and finally TP-ellipsis, parallel to (20). The first step in this derivation is not available in Hebrew, which lacks the means to carry Neg to Pol. Once again, only the AE derivation can generate such surface strings, explaining the lack of the adjunct reading.

In sum: The interaction of V-stranding ellipsis and null adjuncts is considerably more complex than the simplified picture assumed in the earlier works on AE and VSVPE. Most importantly, the presence of a third player in the game, *polarity ellipsis*, should not be ignored. While Funakoshi 2016 and Simpson 2022 contribute to a fuller description of the empirical landscape, they fall short in two respects: (i) they fail to recognize the effect of polarity ellipsis, and (ii) they disregard languages with different profiles from Hindi and Japanese. Manetta's (2018) account remedies (i) but is still unable to extend to Hebrew. The common fault in all these works, I claim, is the assumption that VSVPE is a viable analysis, alongside polarity ellipsis and AE. Yet a system preserving the latter two while dispensing with the first one provides a superior fit for the entire range of data.

4. Adjunct readings in AE sentences: Pragmatic enrichment

An additional, recent argument for VSVPE (Simpson et al. 2013, Manetta 2019, Simpson 2022) involves the following paradigm.

(22) Antecedent clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj [$_{VP}$ [$_{VP}$ V Obj] Adjunct]]]

(i) Elliptical clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj V __] → ✓ adjunct reading

(ii) Elliptical clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj V Obj __] → ?* adjunct reading

(iii) Elliptical clause: [$_{TP}$ Subj __ Adjunct] → object reading *necessary*

Relevant examples from Hindi and Bangla appear in the cited sources, including Simpson (2022), so I do not reproduce them here. Oku 2016 contains similar judgments in Japanese.

Let us first focus on (22i) vs. (22ii). Note that the nature of the judgments places the contrast in pragmatics and not in syntax. Merely *possible* adjunct interpretations, as in (22i), cannot establish the actual syntactic presence of a silent adjunct in the ellipsis site. This is because adjuncts restrict events without contradicting them. Hence, an event of *reading the article* can be construed in the right context as an event of *reading the article carefully*, even if no adverb occurs, especially if a particle like *also* indicates parallelism with an antecedent event in which the adverb *is* included. For this reason, and differently from Simpson, I do not take the possible adjunct reading in (22i) as conclusive evidence bearing on the AE-VSVPE (syntactic!) debate; this argument is elaborated in Landau 2020a, where I propose that only negated VPs with adjuncts can provide such conclusive evidence.

In fact, evidence from Hindi and Japanese demonstrates that the contrast between (22i)-(22ii) must be pragmatic in nature. Once the object in the target clause is contrasted with the object in the antecedent clause, the adjunct reading is readily available (Simpson et al. 2013:113, Oku 2016:61). Thus, the judgment in (22ii) changes in (23).

(23) a. *Hindi*

Ram-ko uske daftar me ek bomb mila.

Ram-DAT his office in a bomb find-PST.M.SG

‘Ram found a bomb in his office.’

Raj-ko ___ ek dhamki-bhara-khat mila.

Raj-DAT a threatening-letter find-PST.M.SG

‘Raj found a threatening letter (in his office).’

b. *Japanese*

Ziroo-wa zibun-no burasi-de sono-kuruma-o aratta ga

Jiro-TOP self-GEN brush-with the-car-ACC washed but

Taroo-wa zibun-no **kono**-kuruma-o aratta.

Taro-TOP self-GEN **this**-car-ACC washed

‘Jiro$_i$ washed the car with his$_i$ brush, but Taro$_j$ washed **this** car with his$_j$ brush.

Furthermore, even when the objects are identical, not all Japanese speakers detect a significant contrast between (22i)-(22ii), and some can construe the missing adjunct in (22ii) too (Y. Sakamoto, p.c.). In fact, precisely parallel examples in Korean are reported to allow the adjunct reading (Ahn and Cho 2021:122; translation as given by the authors)2.

(24) Chelswu-nun caki-uy pang-eyse Hamlet-ul ilkess-ko

Chelswu-TOP self-GEN room-at Hamlet-ACC read-and

Tongswu-to Hamlet-ul ilkessta.

Tongswu-also Hamlet-ACC read

'Chelswu$_i$ read Hamlet in his$_i$ room and Tongswu$_j$ also read Hamlet [e].' ([e] can be 'in his$_j$ room')

In Hungarian too, context can easily facilitate an adjunct reading in the presence of an object referentially identical to the antecedent object (Lipták 2013:83n10).

(25) János nem nézte meg tegnap a fotókat. Mari meg nézte őket.
János not viewed VM yesterday the photos Mari VM viewed them
'János did not view the photos yesterday. Mari viewed them (yesterday / on a non-specified day).'

Therefore, I take it that the contrast between (22i)-(22ii) is at most a weak, speaker-sensitive pragmatic effect. We may still ask what the source of the effect is, even if the syntactic account of Manetta and Simpson is not the right one.

Landau (2020a) adopts the account of Oku (2016), based on Kuno 1982, to explain this contrast. Simpson (2022) challenges this account, pointing to a purported empirical gap in it. But Simpson's challenge, I submit, is based on an incomplete rendering of Kuno's proposal. That proposal already anticipated Simpson's "counterexamples" and handled them in a principled way. Let us review the logic of the argument.

Kuno's original constraint is formulated as follows.

(26) *Ban Against Partial Discourse Deletion*

If discourse deletion of recoverable constituents is to apply, apply it across the board to nonfocus constituents. Nonfocus constituents which are left behind by

> partial discourse deletion will be reinterpreted, if possible, as representing contrastive foci. (Kuno 1982, 84-85)

Applied to (22i-ii), (26) predicts the contrast. Because both the object and the adjunct are recoverable from the antecedent, discourse deletion should spare neither one. Hence, in (22i) both the object and the adjunct meanings are recovered. In (22ii), however, repetition of the object signifies one of two things: Either no discourse deletion applied, or it did, but the object was construed as a contrastive focus, which should not be deleted. The latter possibility, however, is not supported in situations of complete identity between the antecedent object and the repeated one, since no relevant contrast is conveyed. The hearer – at least, *some* hearers – are thus forced to assume that no discourse deletion has applied in (22ii); perforce, no null adjunct is interpreted there. This account of the contrast between (22i)-(22ii) crucially does not invoke VSVPE. (22i) involves AE, and the adjunct interpretation is licensed pragmatically, by (26).[12]

Simpson's (2021) objection is based on the contrast between (22ii)-(22iii). If discourse deletion is maximal, Simpson reasons, why can it recover the object and spare the adjunct (22iii), but not vice versa (22ii)? This is "an important asymmetry in the non-pronunciation of objects and adverbials which is not anticipated in a broad pragmatic principle such as (26), which dictates that deletion/non-repetition should apply across-the-board to all informationally old elements which can be left unpronounced." Instead, Simpson suggests, we should understand this contrast in structural terms. (22iii)

[12] Thus, Kuno's notion of "discourse deletion" is broader than ellipsis as narrowly understood in the syntactic literature and does not invoke null structure (although it *is* constrained by syntax – see below).

involves AE, affecting the object alone. (22i) involves VSVPE, affecting the adjunct as well. And (22ii) involves no ellipsis at all, there being no dedicated operation of "adjunct deletion".

Note, first, that Simpson's analysis is unable to explain why the adjunct reading surfaces in (23)-(25). If "adjunct ellipsis" does not exist, these examples should support the adjunct reading no more than (22ii) does. Simpson is correct, though, to point out that "a broad pragmatic principle such as (26)" cannot draw the necessary distinction between (22ii)-(22iii). What he fails to note, however, is that Kuno (1982) never intended (26) to stand unencumbered. Much of Kuno's discussion is devoted to sorting out the interaction between the pragmatic principle (26) and *syntactic* constraints. In particular, Kuno (1982:65) proposed the following principle alongside (26).

(27) *Active and Passive Discourse-Rule Violations*

Sentences that involve active avoidable (or intentional) violation of discourse principles are unacceptable. On the other hand, sentences that involve passive unavoidable (or unintentional) violation of discourse principles go unpenalized and are acceptable.

What Kuno had in mind with "unavoidable"/"unintentional" violations are cases where discourse principles must yield to rigid syntactic constraints. As an illustration he discusses how the EPP constrains deletion.

(28) A: Did you buy this watch in Switzerland?

B: Yes, *(I) did.

Although fully recoverable in B's answer, and clearly "less important" (in Kuno's terms) than the locative PP, the pronoun "I" is undeletable, in apparent violation of (26). The reason is that (26) is not so broad, after all, and its application is subject to

inviolable syntactic constraints. Kuno further demonstrated this point with Japanese data, where recoverable verbs can be elided when occurring sentence-medially but not sentence-finally, due to a surface constraint that requires Japanese clauses to end with a verb.

A moment's reflection reveals that unconstrained by syntax, (26) makes grossly inadequate predictions in other elliptical environments.

(29) a. John read three articles.

b. Bill too [$_{TP}$ e].

c. Bill did [$_{VP}$ e], too.

d. Bill read three [$_{NP}$ e], too.

Each one of (29b-d) is a possible continuation of (29a). The fact that deletion is "nonmaximal" in (29c-d), sparing the redundant past tense or the string *read three,* in no way blocks these options. As syntacticians, we have no trouble understanding what is going on here. Stripping deletes TP (29b), VP-ellipsis deletes VP (29c) and NP-ellipsis deletes NP (29d). Insofar as syntax targets different categories in these three constructions, they do not enter the pragmatic competition which principle (26) is called upon to adjudicate. That is, only if deletion were partial *within* each of these domains would (26) be violated. Ellipsis is maximal only within its domain.[13]

What is left unclear in Kuno's conception of "discourse deletion" is the division of labor between syntax and pragmatics. We can recast his intuition somewhat more rigorously as follows. "Discourse deletion" is really two distinct process. One is syntactic ellipsis

[13] These observations militate against MaxElide (Takahashi and Fox 2005, Merchant 2008); for further critique of this principle, see Messick and Thoms 2016 and Griffiths 2019.

(or surface anaphora), whose content is recovered by the standard semantic machinery associated with "The Parallelism Requirement" on ellipsis. VPE and AE are instances of this process. In general, predicates and obligatory arguments can only go missing by virtue of syntactic ellipsis (nominal arguments, of course, can also resort to *pro*-drop strategies).

Second, we allow for optional material, like adjuncts, to be recovered under specific discourse situations. This process is purely pragmatic; it involves neither "ellipsis" nor "deletion" in any formal sense. A better term is *pragmatic enrichment* (Recanati 2010, Ahn & Cho 2021). Thus, a given VP may be pragmatically enriched with an adjunct meaning recoverable from its immediate linguistic context. We now seek to identify the conditions under which this process may apply. Following Kuno's (26)-(27), I propose this condition.

(30) *Condition on pragmatic enrichment*

XP can be construed as [$_{XP}$ XP [Adjunct$_C$]] iff:

a. Uniform: Adjunct$_C$ is recoverable from the immediate context, AND

b. Variable: Any nonfocused material in XP is syntactically required.

Returning to Simpson's argument based on the contrast between (22ii)-(22iii), we sharply distinguish syntactic ellipsis from pragmatic enrichment. Deletion in (22iii) appears to be "nonmaximal" because it targets the object alone; this is a case of AE. The fact that the adjunct is "spared" is no more surprising than the fact that the numeral is spared in (29d), although both are fully recoverable and redundant. Within the domain of AE, ellipsis is actually maximal.

The contrast between (22i) and (22ii), however, is due to the restricted power of pragmatic enrichment. Following AE in (22i), the remnant verb cannot be omitted. The

reason is that there is no dedicated operation of "verb deletion"; gapping is quite a different operation, which crucially requires some overt nonverbal remnant in the VP. Of course, the entire TP could have undergone ellipsis in stripping or polarity ellipsis, but again, these derivations do not target V by itself. Because no syntactic deletion may target V alone, it is syntactically required. Hence, pragmatic enrichment may recover an adjunct meaning without violating (30b). In contrast, the object in (22ii) is "dispensible" – AE could have deleted it, as it is identical to its antecedent. Since it is not syntactically required, (30b) blocks pragmatic enrichment with the adjunct meaning.

Furthermore, this analysis is sensitive to the variations observed. A focused object, as in (23), is exempt from (30b), which only applies to nonfocused material; hence, the adjunct reading can be recovered. Finally, because (30b) is not a hard-wired principle, but holds to different degrees across speakers, pragmatic enrichment can sometimes ignore it even in the presence of nonfocused objects, as in (24)-(25), at least for some speakers.

We thus see that (22i)-(22ii) do *not* fall together with (22iii) and that a purely syntactic approach to all these cases, as advocated in Simpson 2022, misses important distinctions among them. While the availability of the adjunct reading in (22i)-(22ii) displays hallmarks of pragmatic processes – sensitivity to information structure and considerable variability across speakers – the object reading in (22iii) is stable, inflexible and emerges regardless of the pragmatic context (up to the standard conditions on ellipsis).

Simpson's final argument against the pragmatic enrichment account draws on Chinese, where V-stranding examples supposedly lack even the optional adjunct-reading (Aoun

and Li 2008). Simpson suggests that unlike Hindi, Bangla and Japanese, Chinese truly lacks VSVPE, and for this *syntactic* reason the adjunct-readings are missing. However, I believe that this extreme interpretation is not warranted by the Chinese data. V-stranding examples in that language do not depart from pattern (22i), and contextual information may indeed "add" the adjunct-reading to them (Audrey Li, p.c.). What Aoun & Li (2008) meant was simply that the V-stranding examples *by themselves* provide no indication as to the manner, frequency, duration etc. of the event. In that respect, indeed, the *object* gap reading is sharply different, being mandatory, as required by the syntax-semantics of AE. I therefore conclude that Chinese provides no solid grounds to the claim that VSVPE is needed in the grammar in addition to AE; all its purported effects are covered by pragmatic enrichment (or, as discussed in section 3, by ΣP/TP-ellipsis).

5. Conclusion

The answer emerging from this discussion to Simpson's (2021) concluding question "How does this leave the status of VSVPE?" is – "still in bad shape".

First, a theory with VSVPE has no simple account of Oku's (1998) fundamental generalization: Adjuncts are not recovered under the scope of negation in AE clauses. In recent years important "exceptions" were documented, but they all involve special circumstances (polarity match or strong contrast with the antecedent clause). The VSVPE camp has not provided any principled reason *why* such special circumstances are called upon only in VSVPE and not in standard, non-V-stranding VP-ellipsis. By contrast, the AE account recognizes (and has always recognized) that larger ellipsis derivations may mimic the surface outcome of AE; these do require special circumstances and indeed, do include a silent adjunct.

Second, The AE account recognizes (and has always recognized) that adjuncts, being optional, can be pragmatically inferred if supported by context. What was missing was a principled understanding of the division of labor between syntactic ellipsis and pragmatic enrichment. Adapting ideas of Kuno 1982, I have proposed principle (30) to achieve that goal. (30) may well be revised in future work, but some such principle seems indispensable in the domain of ellipsis, where syntax and pragmatics are so tightly intertwined. Importantly, a theory only based on VSVPE undergenerates adjunct readings that persist even when no ellipsis (AE or VPE) has taken place. Nor can it explain why such readings display such cross-speaker variability, a familiar hallmark of pragmatic reasoning. Therefore, the conclusions of Landau (2020a,b, 2021) receive additional support – languages do not employ VSVPE derivations.

DATA-AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All original data generated by this study are given explicitly in the text.

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