

Diagnosing VP-Ellipsis in Javanese: Evidence for a non-movement account

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The central issue of this paper is to investigate VP-Ellipsis (VPE)—a rare cross-linguistic phenomenon—in Javanese (Western Malayo-Polynesian). Using Goldberg’s (2005) diagnostics, I show that VPE in Javanese is attested: VPE (i) displays strict and sloppy identity readings; (ii) does not impose restrictions on the type of vP it can elide; (iii) occurs in most environments as other auxiliary-stranding VPE languages; and (iv) cannot be analyzed as a different kind of ellipsis. However, different from closely related Indonesian (Fortin 2007), I show that not all tests (cf. iii) uniformly diagnose VPE in Javanese, revealing a systematic distribution where some environments where VPE might be expected behave instead as parallel to VP-topicalization (VPT). Since VPT involves overt syntactic movement to the left-periphery, I argue that Javanese VPE must involve a non-movement analysis. The data presented here are based on fieldwork on the dialects spoken in Semarang, Central Java; and Paciran, East Java, Indonesia.

Diagnostic (i): VPE in Javanese allows both strict and sloppy identity readings. For example, the elided vP *motret wong tuwone* following the stranded auxiliary *wes* ‘already’ in (1) can be interpreted as having strict identity with its antecedent as ‘...and Joko already took a picture of *Tomo’s* parents’ or as sloppy identity as ‘...and Joko already took a picture of *Joko’s* parents’.

- (1) Mas Tomo wes motret wong tuwo-ne, terus Mas Joko yo wes.
Mr. Tomo already AV.photograph person old-POSS then Mr. Joko PRT already
‘Tomo already took a picture of his parents, and Joko already did too.’ (*Coordinated CPs*)

Diagnostic (ii): In Javanese, VPE does not impose any restrictions on the type of vP that may be elided. That is, VPE can occur with events (e.g. *tuku* ‘buy’), states (e.g. *ngerti* ‘know’), vPs that select a CP complement (e.g. *ngerti* ‘know’), or ditransitive/applicative vPs (e.g. *ngeke’i* ‘give’). This diagnostic distinguishes VPE from VPT in Javanese, as VPT is possible with events, but not states (Vander Klok & Déchaine 2014). Examples will be presented, but omitted for space here.

Diagnostic (iii): Goldberg (2005) identifies the following environments where VPE may be attested in a given language: (a) coordinated CPs; (b) non-coordinated CPs (uttered by the same speaker); (c) non-coordinated CPs (uttered by different speakers; e.g. question-answer pairs); (d) embedded clauses; and (e) syntactic islands (where the antecedent lies outside the island). In Javanese, VPE is attested in only a subset of these environments: in (a), (b), and (e). Coordinated CPs are attested with *tapi* ‘but’ and *terus* ‘(and) then’ in both dialects, and with *lan* ‘and’ only in Semarang Javanese. An example of (a) is (1) above; (b) is exemplified in (2):

- (2) Mas Adi lagek lulus SMA. Mbak Dayu yo **lagek**.
Mr. Adi just succeed high.school Miss Dayu PRT just
‘Adi just graduated high school. Dayu also just did.’ (*Non-coordinated CPs; same speaker*)

VPE in environments (a), (b), and (e) is compatible with a wide variety of markers in Javanese including auxiliaries *wis* ‘already’, *ape* ‘FUT’, *lagek* ‘PROG, just’, *kudu* ‘CIRC.NEC’, *tau* ‘EXP.PERF’, *oleh* ‘DEON.POS’, *iso* ‘CIRC.POS’, *gelem* ‘willing’; verbs *moh* ‘don’t.want’, *kepingin* ‘want’, *perlu* ‘need’; adverbs *mesti* ‘EPIS.NEC’; *gak mungkin* ‘impossible’, *podho* ‘same’; *isek* ‘still’; and negation *gak/ora* ‘NEG’, *durung* ‘not.yet’.

Environments (c) question-answer pairs (both yes-no and wh-subject questions) and (d) embedded clauses, however, are only compatible with a subset of these markers. That is, (c) and (d) are only possible with a class of syntactically low auxiliaries in Javanese (*tau* ‘EXP.PERF’, *oleh* ‘DEON.POS’, *iso* ‘CIRC.POS’, *gelem* ‘willing’), but not a class of high auxiliaries (*wis* ‘already’, *ape* ‘FUT’, *lagek* ‘PROG, just’, *kudu* ‘CIRC.NEC’), as in (3) (vs. 2) for (d). This restriction for (c) and (d) is parallel to the restriction observed for VPT; shown in (4) (Vander Klok 2012).

- (3) a. Tak pikir mbak Lisa lagek mepe klambi nek dhuwur,
 1SG.CL think Miss Lisa PROG AV.hang clothes at above
 *terus adik-ku mikir mbak Lisa yo **lagek**. (*HIGH AUX)
 then yg.sibling-my AV.think Miss Lisa PRT PROG (*embedded clause*)
- b. Tak pikir Pak Abbas iso ngomong boso Sunda,
 1SG.CL think Mr. Abbas CIRC.POS AV.speak language Sunda
 tapi Pak Agus mikir nek de'e gak **iso**. (LOW AUX)
 but Mr. Agus AV.think COMPL 3SG NEG CIRC.POS
 'I think that Mr. Abbas can speak Sundanese, but Mr. Agus thinks that he cannot.'
- (4) a.*tuku beras, pak Suwanan **lagek** (*HIGH AUX)
 buy uncooked.rice Mr. Suwanan PROG
- b. gotong watu-ne, cak Kholiq **iso** (LOW AUX)
 lift rock-DEF Mr. Kholiq CIRC.POS (*VP-topicalization*)
 'Lift the stone, Kholiq can.'

Diagnostic (iv): Alternative analyses of VPE as different kinds of ellipsis are ruled out. Javanese VPE cannot be analyzed as Stripping (TP-ellipsis preceded by remnant movement of the subject (and negation) to a focus position, e.g. *Pat saw herself in the mirror, and Dana too*). Like in English and Indonesian (Fortin 2007), Javanese stripping has an additional 'object' reading (e.g. *Pat also saw Dana in the mirror*); this reading is not available in VPE. Javanese VPE also cannot be analysed as Null Complement Anaphora (NCA), which elides a CP complement. This can be shown in that the markers compatible with VPE in Javanese cannot select for a CP complement: overt complementizers and clausal complements including a wh-subject are banned. Finally, Javanese VPE cannot be analysed as the ellipsis/absence of more than one element, such as the sum of gapping (verb ellipsis) plus pro-drop of the object. Evidence that gapping is different than VPE is illustrated by the fact that VPE is compatible in syntactic islands, while gapping is not.

Implications: I focus on two main conclusions of these diagnostics: one, that Javanese indeed has VPE and two, that Javanese VPE must be analyzed differently than VP-topicalization (VPT). Diagnostics (ii) and (iii) reveal that Javanese VPE does not have the same properties as VPT. VPT is analyzed as movement to a topic position in the left-periphery. It follows that in the analysis of Javanese VPE, VPT does not feed VPE, as argued for VPE in English (Johnson 2001) or Polish and Russian (Szczegielniak 2006). Therefore, Javanese VPE must be accounted for by a non-movement analysis in the narrow syntax. It is left open whether an LF-copying (Fortin 2007 for Indonesian) or ellipsis-by-phase (Sato 2013 for modal complement ellipsis in Javanese) is most appropriate. In sum, since VPE is a rare phenomenon cross-linguistically (Goldberg 2005), this paper provides insight into what diagnostics may be stable across languages and offers new language-specific diagnostics that may be useful for within the Austronesian family.

References: Fortin, C. 2007. Indonesian sluicing and verb phrase ellipsis: Description and explanation in a minimalist framework. Univ. of Michigan: Ph.D. Goldberg, L. 2005. Verb-Stranding VP-Ellipsis: A cross-linguistic survey. McGill Univ.: Ph.D. Johnson, K. 2001. What VP Ellipsis can do, what it can't, but not why. *The handbook of contemporary syntactic theory*, 439-479. Oxford: Blackwell. Sato, Y. 2013. Cyclic spell-out and modal complement ellipsis in Javanese. *Linguistic Analysis* 38: 183-206. Szczegielniak, A. 2006. VP-ellipsis and VP-topicalization. *NELS 35 Proceedings*, 603-615: GLSA. Vander Klok, J. 2012. Tense, aspect, and modality in Paciran Javanese, McGill Univ.: Ph.D. Vander Klok, J. & R-M. Déchaine. 2014. 'Stative versus eventive predicates and vP-internal structure.' *Proceedings of BLS 40*.