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Intro: This work discusses VP ellipsis in Terek Kumyk (TK < Kipchak < Turkic). First, I aim to show that TK verb stranding construction constitutes argument ellipsis (AE; Landau 2020b), not VP ellipsis with head movement (VVPE; Goldberg 2005; Gribanova 2013). Secondly, I aim to show that non-finite verbal phrases undergo VP ellipsis (Aux-stranding VPE). The availability of VPE in Terek Kumyk raises the question of unavailability of VPE parse for verb stranding constructions. I argue that Landau's argument for general impossibility of verb-stranding VP ellipsis (Landau 2020b) is the best available account for such data.

Source: The data comes from authors' field trip to Predgonroye village (North Ossetia; Russian Federation) during August 2023. All acceptability judgements were elicited from >4 speakers.

Background: The crucial diagnostic for the type of ellipsis underlying the verb stranding string is the adjunct test (Landau 2020b). The idea is that VPE analysis of verb-stranding predicts that the elided part includes manner adverbials present in the antecedent clause.

(1) Argument ellipsis vs. Verb-stranding VP ellipsis (assuming V-to-v-to-Asp head movement).
  a. VVPE: $_{AspP}[Asp+v+V \ _{vP}[v \ [Adv \ [V \ DP]]]]$ b. AE: $_{AspP}[Asp+v+V \ _{vP}[v \ [V \ DP]]]$

Presence of manner adverbials is diagnosed by their interaction with negation and creation verbs. Under negation, creation verbs do not introduce a novel discourse referent. However, with negation, a wide-scope negation reading is possible (with negation taking scope over the manner adverbial), retaining the discourse referent.

(2) a. John baked a cake$_1$. It$_1$ is tasty.   b. John did not bake a cake$_1$. #It$_1$ is tasty.
  c. John did not bake a cake$_1$ quickly. But it$_1$ is still very tasty.

We then predict that a VVPE analysis of the verb stranding construction allows a creation verb in the scope of negation participating in a verb stranding construction to introduce a discourse referent. An AE analysis disallows that.

TK Verb stranding as AE: The verb stranding construction of Terek Kumyk is exemplified in (3). Example (4) shows that it does not pass the adjunct test — discourse referent is inaccessible. We conclude therefore that no VVPE parse for TK verb stranding is possible, supporting the AE analysis.

(3) *Kerim=č   et-ken   xodïr,   Alim=č   et-me-gen*
  Kerim=CT make-PF.3SG porridge Alim=CT make-NEG-PF.3SG

  'Kerim made porridge. Alim did not.'

(4) *Kerim šorpa tes   qajnat-xan. Ol   tatul bol-ʁan.   Fatina qajnat-ma-ʁan. #Ol tatul*
  Kerim soup quick cook-PF.3SG 3SG tasty COP-PF.3SG Fatima cook-NEG-PF.3SG 3SG tasty

  bol-ma-ʁan
  COP-NEG-PF.3SG

  Int.: 'Kerim cooked the soup$_1$ quickly. It$_2$ was tasty. Fatima didn't cook the soup quickly. Her soup was not tasty.'

Aux-stranding VPE in TK: The Aux-stranding VP ellipsis of Terek Kumyk is exemplified in (6). Crucially, it allows parses with the adverbial adjoined to the antecedent VP present in the elided part. I should note that due to aspectual properties of the auxiliary verb construction, direct application of the creation verb diagnostic is impossible (hence, I do not employ a pure minimal pair).

(5)   Context: Alim and Kerim participate in a running match.

    Alim   tes   čavɨ-p   tur-a,   Kerim tur-mɨ-j
    Alim   quick run-CVB AUX-IPFV.3SG, Kerim AUX-NEG-IPFV.3SG

    'Alim runs quickly, Kerim does not.'

Conclusion: This work presents evidence in favor of an argument ellipsis analysis of verb-stranding constructions in Terek Kumyk. Combined with the availability of Aux-stranding VP ellipsis in Terek Kumyk, the data seems to support the general ban on verb-stranding VP ellipsis, suggested by Landau (2020b) on the basis of Hebrew and other languages, for which VVPE has been proposed.

References: • Goldberg, L. M. (2005). *Verb-stranding VP ellipsis: A cross-linguistic study*. PhD thesis, McGill University. • Gribanova, V. (2013). Verb-stranding verb phrase ellipsis and the structure of the russian verbal complex. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory*, 31:91–136. • Landau, I. (2020a). Constraining head-stranding ellipsis. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 51(2):281–318. • Landau, I. (2020b). On the nonexistence of verb-stranding VP-ellipsis. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 51(2):341–365.