VP ellipsis in European and Brazilian Portuguese – a comparative analysis

SONIA M. L. CYRINO (Universidade Estadual de Londrina, Brasil/CNPq)
GABRIELA MATOS (Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal)

Abstract

European and Brazilian Portuguese present VP ellipsis licensed by auxiliary and main verbs. However, these varieties of Portuguese show up some differences concerning the licensing and identification of the elliptical constituent whenever sequences of verbs are involved. We will claim that these differences are mainly due to the properties of the functional projections involved.

0. Introduction

In contrast with other Romance languages, European and Brazilian Portuguese (EP and BP) present VP ellipsis. In both varieties of Portuguese, this construction displays the same general pattern of behaviour: it may occur both with auxiliary and main verbs and it requires that the verb which licenses the elliptical constituent also appears in the antecedent VP.

Yet, whenever sequences of verbs are involved, specially when they include the main verb, standard EP and BP exhibit differences concerning the identification of the elliptical constituent as VP ellipsis or not. This contrast correlates with the distribution of *também* 'too' within these verb sequences: in BP this adverb may asymmetrically c-command the whole sequence of verbs, or just the last verb, and still keep the VP ellipsis interpretation, usually lost in EP in the latter case. We will try to show that these differences are mainly due to the intrinsic properties of the functional categories that license the elliptical constituent and constitute a clue for its recovering.

This work is organised as follows: in the first section we present empirical evidence for VP ellipsis in European and Brazilian Portuguese, as an elliptical

Cyrino, Sonia & Gabriela Matos (2002). "VP ellipsis in European and Brazilian Portuguese — a comparative analysis". *Journal of Portuguese Linguistics*, 1(2): 177-195. Lisboa: Edições Colibri, AEJPL.ISSN 164-4537.

construction distinct from Stripping and Null Object; in section two we will try to characterise the configuration minimally required for the licensing of the elliptical VP; in the third section we will deal with the differences in both varieties of Portuguese; finally, in the final remarks, we will summarise the main points of this study.

1.VP ellipsis in Portuguese an autonomous elliptical construction

In many Romance languages, VP Ellipsis is not an available option. So, some studies on predicate ellipsis tend to relate it across Romance to other elliptical constructions. In this section we will provide some empirical arguments to distinguish VP ellipsis in European and Brazilian Portuguese from Stripping and Null Object.[1]

1.1. VP ellipsis vs. Stripping

In contrast with other Romance languages, European and Brazilian Portuguese present VP ellipsis, as shown by the examples in (1) and (2):

(1) a. A Ana já tinha lido esse livro à irmã mas a Paula não tinha [-].
The Ana already had read that book to-the sister but the Paula not had [-]
'Ana had already read that book to her sister but Paula had not.'
b. O João é simpático para todas as pessoas e a Ana também é [-].
The João is nice for all the people and the Ana too is [-]
'João is nice to everybody and Ana is, too'
c. Ela só vai visitar os amigos se a Ana também for [-]
She go.Indicative.3sg visit the friends if the Ana too go.Subjonctive.
'She will visit her friends if Ana will, too.'

(2) a. *Susana había leído Guerra y Paz pero María no había [-].[2]
Susana had read War and Peace but Maria not have
b. *On a demandé si ils ont déjà mangé et ils ont [-].[3]
One has asked if they have already eaten and they have [-]
c. *Claudine est une bonne étudiante, et Marie est aussi.
Claudine is a good student and Marie is too

In Spanish and French the usual strategy of predicate ellipsis is Stripping, illustrated in (3) and (4).

---

[1] We will leave the distinction between VP ellipsis and Null Complement Anaphora, for lake of space.

[2] López 1999:265

[3] Lobeck 1999:101

(3) a. Luis no habla inglés, pero yo sí [-].[4]
Luis not speaks English, but I yes [-]
'Luis does not speak English but I do'
b. Susana leyó Guerra y Paz pero María *no* [-].[5]
Susana read War and Peace but Maria not
'Susana reads War and Peace but Maria does not'

(4) a. John était critiqué, mais Mary non.[6]
John was criticised but Mary not
b. Marion boit du rhum, et Raquel aussi.[7]
Marion drinks rum, and Raquel too.'

In European and Brazilian Portuguese the Stripping examples in (5) correlate with the VP ellipsis cases in (1a) and (1b):

(5) a. A Ana já tinha lido esse livro à irmã mas a Paula não [-].
The Ana already had read that book to-the sister but the Paula not [-]
'Ana had already read that book to her sister but not Paula.'
b. O João é simpático para todas as pessoas e a Ana também [-].
The João is nice for all the people and the Ana too [-]
'João is nice to everybody and Ana too'

At first glance, VP ellipsis differs from Stripping only by the occurrence vs. absence of the verb adjacent to the ellipsis site. However, this distinction correlates with a different distribution of the two constructions. In particular, VP ellipsis always implies the presence of a DP subject, overt or covert, while Stripping admits other constituents as the remnant of ellipsis, as shown in (1a) and (1b) vs. (6):

(6) a. A Ana já tinha lido esse livro à irmã mas essa revista não [-].
The Ana already had read that book to-the sister but that magazine not [-]
'Ana had already read that book to her sister but Paula had not.'
b. Por la mañana podría ir de compras, pero por la tarde no [-].[8]
By the morning I-could go of shopping, but by the afternoon not [-]
'I could go shopping in the afternoon not.'

---

4 Brucart 1987: 134.

5 López 1999:275.

6 Zribi-Hertz 1986:466.

7 Chao 1987:180.

8 López 1999:266.

Additionally, VP ellipsis contrasts with Stripping in being able to appear in island domains (see (1c) vs. (7)):

(7) a. *Ela só vai visitar os amigos se a Ana também [-].
She just will.Indicative visit the friends if the Ana too [-]
b. *O João não vai ao cinema hoje mas perguntou quem sim [-]
The João not goes to the movies but (he) asked who yes [-].
c. *Tendré que hacerlo yo porque Susana no [-].[9]
Will_have that to do it I because Susana not [-]

Thus, the data from European and Brazilian Portuguese show that in this language VP ellipsis and Stripping are two different constructions.

1.2. VP Ellipsis vs. Null Object

One of the most significant differences between VP ellipsis in English and Portuguese is that, in the latter, in addition to the canonical cases where the elliptical category is licensed by an auxiliary (cf. (8a)=(1a)) or a copulative verb (cf. (8b)=(1b)), there are instances of VP ellipsis locally identified by a main verb (see (9)).

(8) a. A Ana já tinha lido esse livro à irmã mas a Paula não tinha [-].
The Ana already had read that book to-the sister but the Paula not had [-]
'Ana had already read that book to her sister but Paula had not.'
b. O João é simpático para todas as pessoas e a Ana também é [-].
The João is nice for all the people and the Ana too is [-]
'João is nice to everybody and Ana is, too'

(9) A Ana não leva o computador para as aulas, porque os amigos também não levam [-].
The Ana not brings the computer to the classes, because the friends too not bring [-]
'Ana does not bring her computer to the classes because her friends do not either.'

In fact, assuming, as usual, that Portuguese is a language with generalised Verb Movement to Inflection, the movement of the main verb will leave a copy inside the VP to be deleted in Phonetic Form. In the cases where the

[9] López 1999:268

complements (and the adjuncts) are overtly missing, a VP ellipsis construction arises. This is illustrated in (10), for the subordinate clause in (9):

(10) porque os amigos também não levam$_i$[$_{VP}$ [$_V$ ~~*levam$_i$*] *the computer to the classes*~~]

The existence of these cases in both varieties of Portuguese, raises the problem of distinguishing VP ellipsis licensed by main verbs from Null Object.[10]

A classical distinction between these constructions relies on the fact that typical cases of Null Object only involve the direct object of the verb, while VP ellipsis recovers all the complements of the verb and sometimes the VP adjuncts (cf. Raposo 1986).[11] Accordingly, while the example in (11) is ambiguous between a VP ellipsis or a Null Object interpretation due to the fact that the main verb selects only the direct object, the one in (12) is clearly interpreted as a case of Null Object.

(11) O João leu esse livro e a Ana também leu [-].
0.The João read that book and the Ana too read [-].
'João read that book and Ana did too / João read that book and Ana read it too.'

(12) Ela trouxe o computador para a Universidade e ele trouxe [-] para o escritório.
She brought the computer to the University and he brought [-] to the office
'She brought the computer to the University and he brought it to the office.'

Another property distinguishes VP ellipsis from Null Object in Portuguese: as shown in the following examples, VP ellipsis in Portuguese requires strict identity between the verb licensing the elliptical constituent and one of the verbs in the antecedent VP. This requirement applies with auxiliary verbs (see (13)) as well as with main verbs (cf. (14)).[12]

---

[10] As far as Portuguese is concerned, see, among other, the studies of Raposo 1986, 1998, Costa & Duarte 2001, for EP and Farrel 1990, Kato 1993, Cyrino 1997, for BP.

[11] But see Costa e Duarte 2001, for an alternative analysis.

[12] The apparent exception to this requirement occurs with modal verbs, as in (i). However, this cases are usually related in the litterature to instances of Null Complement Anaphora (see, for instance Brucart 1999):
(i) Ela comprou esse dicionário, mas não devia/queria
She bought that dictionary, but not ought/wanted/need
'She bought that dictionary, but she shoudn't / did not want to.'

(13) a. Ontem ele não tinha ainda lido esse artigo, mas hoje, quando telefonei, já tinha [$_{VP}$-]
Yesterday he not have yet read that paper, but today, when phoned, already had [$_{VP}$-].
'Yesterday he had not read that paper yet, but today, when I phoned, he already had.'
b. *Ontem ele não tinha ainda lido esse artigo, mas hoje vai [$_{VP}$-].
Yesterday he not had yet read that paper, but today goes [$_{VP}$-]
'Yesterday he had not read that paper, but he will today.'
c. *Ele vai ler o jornal agora, porque quando lhe telefonei não tinha [$_{VP}$-]
He goes read the newspaper now, because when him phoned not had [$_{VP}$-]
' He will read the newspaper now, because when I phoned him he had not.'

(14) a. Quando a Ana pôs os óculos na mesa, a Maria também pôs [$_{VP}$-].
When the Ana put the glaces on the table, the Maria too put [$_{VP}$-]
' When Ana put the glaces on the table, Maria did too.'
b. *Quando a Ana colocou os óculos na mesa, a Maria também pôs [$_{VP}$-].
When the Ana placed the glaces on the table, the Maria too put [$_{VP}$-]

No such requirement constrains Null Object, as shown in (15):

(15) a. Ela tirou o anel do dedo e guardou [-] no cofre.
She took off the ring from the finger and put [-] in the safe
´She took off the ring from her finger and put it in the safe.'
b. Olhou para a fotografia daquele homem. Reconheceu [-] imediatamente: era o João.
Looked at the picture of that man. Recognised [-] immediately: was the João
'He/she looked at the picture of that man. He/she recognised him immediately: it was João.'

Moreover, in contrast with the canonical cases of Null Object (cf. (16), VP ellipsis cannot alternate with an overt pronominal, as shown in (17):[13]

13 The only cases where the pronoun apparentely alternates with VP ellipsis are those where the VP is licensed by a main verb, which independently accepts as its complement a pronoun.
(i) O Pedro disse isso, mas a Maria não disse [-]/ mas a Maria não o disse.

(16) a. Ela tirou o anel do dedo e guardou-o no cofre.
She took off the ring from the finger and put it in the safe
´She took off the ring from her finger and put it in the safe.'
b. Olhou para a fotografia daquele homem. Reconheceu-o imediatamente: era o João.
Looked at the picture of that man. Recognised him immediately: was the João
'He/she looked at the picture of that man. He/she recognised him immediately: it was João.'

(17) a. Nenhum de nós tinha votado nesse candidato nem admitiamos que alguém (*o) tivesse
None of us had voted in that candidate nor admitted that someone (*it) had
'None of us had voted for that candidate or admitted that someone had it'.
b. A Ana pensa muito nos amigos, enquanto o Pedro não (*o) pensa.
The Ana thinks very much about the friends, while the Pedro not (*it) thinks
' Ana cares very much about her friends, but Pedro does not (*it)'.

Summarising the properties presented in this section, the following descriptive pattern emerges for VP ellipsis in European and Brazilian Portuguese: VP ellipsis in EP and BP is an elliptical category, selected by a sentence functional projection, headed by an overt verbal element, which must be identical to (one of) the verb(s) of the antecedent VP.

2. The licensing of VP ellipsis

Chomsky & Lasnik 1993, Chomsky 1995, and Lasnik 1999a, 1999b consider that ellipsis must be analysed as a Deletion process operating at PF. A Parallelism Requirement (PR) applying at LF would ensure that the phrase to be deleted receive an interpretation similar to its antecedent. At the level of PF, the constituents to be deleted present a low-flat intonation (Chomsky & Lasnik 1993, Chomsky 1995) and are deaccented (Tancredi 1992), which constitutes an indication for Deletion to apply .
Despite the relevance of the Parallelism Requirement for setting which linguistic expression may be deleted, it is not a sufficient condition as shown in (19a) vs. (19b). In these examples there are lexical expressions that could act as the antecedent of the elliptical phrase and deletion should be unrestrictedly permitted, assuming that it operates over a structure as (19c). However only in (19a) is well formed.

(19) a. John is reading that book and Mary is [-], too
b.* John starts reading that book and Mary starts [-], too
c. John is/stars reading that book and Mary is/starts [*reading that book too*]

These contrasts show that some licensing condition must be met, whatever analysis we assume for ellipsis either Deletion at PF or Interpretation at LF. We can view these licensing conditions as structural clues for the identification of the constituent to be deleted or recovered.
Within the Minimalist Program, some proposals have been advanced to account for the licensing and identification of VP ellipsis, both in English and in Portuguese (Lobeck 1999, López 1999, Martins 1994, Matos & Cyrino 2001). We will concentrate on the analyses which focus Portuguese.

Martins (1994) and López (1999) argue that VP ellipsis is licensed by the functional category Sigma, proposed in Laka 1990, and the elliptical VP is characterised as a base generated null category. Yet, they differ in the configuration proposed: while Martins assumes that ∑P heads the whole IP, as in (20a), López considers that ∑P is dominated by IP and selects VP, as in (20b). In both analyses :

(20) a. $[_{\Sigma P}\ [_{AgrsP}\ [_{TP}\ [_{AgroP}\ [_{VP}\ ]]]]$ (Martins 1994)
b. $[_{IP}$ SU [$I^o\ [_{\Sigma P}\ \Sigma\ [_{AuxP}$ Aux^o VP]]] (López 1999)

In both accounts, the licensing and identification of the null VP is achieved by checking of the features of the null VP in the domain of Σ with strong-V features. According to Martins (1994: 191), this licensing is obtained in a configuration akin to Spec-Head Agreement, by adjunction of the Null VP either to Spec, ΣP or to ΣP. The motivation for that movement would be the truth-value of the elided VP, which should be checked in the domain of Sigma.
López (1999), proposes a different implementation of the licensing of the null VP. Accepting that the null VP is a pro-v, i.e., a category with no internal structure, presenting Σ-features, López assumes that it overtly moves like a head and adjoins to Σ^o to check its strong Σ-features. In English, this process is mediated by Aux — pro-v adjoins to Aux, which inherits its Σ-features; then the complex head moves and adjoins to Σ^o to check its strong features, as illustrated in (21):

(21) $[_{\Sigma P}$ not $[_{\Sigma}\ \Sigma\ [_{AuxP}$ Aux^o VP]]].

The proposals of Martins 1994 and Lopez 1999 present a major problem: in opposition to the central hypothesis of these analyses, there is empirical evidence against a correlation between ΣP and the licensing of VP ellipsis.
In fact, as López 1999 remarks, the polarity items cannot by themselves license the elliptical VP. Thus, (22a) contrasts with (22b), due to the absence of a verb heading the licensing head.
Similar contrasts occur in Portuguese, as shown in (23) — the polarity item in isolation is not able to license predicate ellipsis in island domains, while VP ellipsis is allowed to do it.

(22) a. *Peter likes cauliflower, but John not
b. Peter likes cauliflower, but John does not (López 1999: 293)

(23) a. *Ele perguntou quem tinha comido o bolo e ela perguntou quem não.
He asked who had eaten the cake and she asked who not
b. Ele perguntou quem tinha comido o bolo e ela perguntou quem não tinha.
He asked who had eaten the cake and she asked who not had
'He asked who had eaten the cake and she asked who had not'

López claims that the contrasts in (22) are due to the fact that in English the polarity item is a specifier of ΣP; therefore, in (22a) Σº is lexically unfilled and cannot host the elliptical category, since elliptical constituents, like clitics, require phonetically realised hosts.
Yet, taking into account the data of European Portuguese, this cannot be the correct explanation for the unacceptability of (22a): the sentence negative marker is a head, which may incorporate with the inflected verb in the sentence, as in (24b).

(24) a. [$_{IP}$ Essas crianças {não têm] estudado desde as últimas férias]. (EP)
These children not have studied since the last vacation
'These children have not studied since the last vacation'
b. [$_{CP}$ Que [não têm] [$_{IP}$ essas crianças feito]]?
What [not have] [these children ~~not have~~ drunk ...]
'What have these children not drunk?'

Thus, these data strongly suggest that ΣP is not involved in the licensing of VP ellipsis.[14]

[14] Notice that the relevance of ΣP in the licensing of VP ellipsis in Portuguese is not systematically assumed in Martins 1994, since she claims that in embedded affirmative sentences and in negative sentences, the verb remains in AgrSº as illustrated in (i) and (ii). However, VP ellipsis is possible in these contexts:

Moreover, López 1999 faces an additional problem in assuming that the elliptical VP must be a category with no internal structure This analyisi fails to account for Portuguese, accepting the usual claim that in this language, all the verbs, be they main or auxiliary, are originally merged in VP and then moved to Tense.[15]

An alternative analysis has been presented in Matos & Cyrino 2002, which, with minor alterations will be adopted in this study.

Developing previous work (Matos 1992, Cyrino 1997, 1999 and Matos & Cyrino 2002), we will assume that the licensing of VP ellipsis is achieved in the configuration presented in (25).

(25) VP ellipsis is licensed under the local c-command, by the lexically filled functional head with V-features that merges with the elliptical constituent.[16]

In Matos & Cyrino 2002 we admitted that this functional category was Tº. However, as we will see in the next section this may not be the case for Brazilian Portuguese.

According to this proposal the availability of VP ellipsis with auxiliary and main verbs is a consequence of verb raising to the relevant functional projection — while English has restricted Verb raising, Portuguese has generalised verb raising , perhaps due to the alternation between the week vs. strong features, as suggested for Agrº in Chomsky 1995.

(i) a. Eu vi-o ontem, mas ele não viu [$_{VP}$-].
I saw him yesterday, but he not saw [$_{VP}$-]
'I saw him yesterday, but he did not.'
b. [$_{\Sigma P}$ [$_{\Sigma}$ não] [$_{AgrsP}$ viu [-]]]

(ii) a. Eu não o vi ontem, mas acho que ele viu [$_{VP}$-]
I not him saw yesterday, butthink that he saw [$_{VP}$-]
'I did not see him yesterday but I think he did.'
b. [$_{CP}$ [$_{\Sigma^o}$ [$_{C^o}$ que]] [viu [-]]]

In fact she admits that in negative sentences the polarity head remains isolated in Σ^o (Martins 1994:184), ignoring the evidence for Neg-incorporation onto the tensed verb , and assumes that in embedded sentences Σ^o raises to Cº leaving the verb in Agrsº (Martins 1994:200). For Martins these configurations are crucial since she grounds on them her analysis of proclisis. For the author, enclisis (as VP ellipsis), arises from V movement to Σ^o, whenever this movement is precluded, proclisis occurs.

15 Although the work by Lobeck 1999 does not deal with Portuguese, the same problem will arise if one tries to extended her proposal to this language.

16 In a framework that admits split Inflection the condition on the licensing of the VP ellipsis should be more accurately formulated as in (i):
(i) VP ellipsis is licensed, under the local c-command, *by the chain* of the functional head with V-features that merges with elliptical constituent, when this head is lexically filled.

The condition proposed in (25) does not resort to Checking Theory. Instead, it assumes that the crucial licensing factor is local c-command. In fact, in the present framework only uninterpretable features have to be checked, and, as far as verbal elements are concerned, these features are restricted to the inflectional morphology associated to the verb, namely its φ-features. We admit, therefore, that in VP ellipsis just the verb moves to check uninterpretable features of the sentence functional projections, for reasons which are independent of the licensing of the elided category.
On the contrary, the local c-command by a lexicalised V-functional head is required for the identification of the elliptical category. In particular, whenever the local c-commanding verbal head arises from Movement, it is enough to fully identify the elliptical category, as expect, according to the Bare Phrase hypothesis, which does not radically distinguish a Maximal Projection from its Head.

3. VP ellipsis with verbal sequences in European vs. Brazilian Portuguese

Though obeying to the same licensing condition, VP ellipsis in EP and in BP often behave differently when verbal sequences occur in the elliptical sentence.
So, in sequences of *Progressive Auxiliary + main verb*, the following contrasts obtain: while in BP, both (26) and (27) are interpreted as cases of VP ellipsis, in EP (28) is preferably interpreted as a sentence with a null indefinite object (i.e., *he is not reading anything*) and no indirect object, as illustrated in the partial representations of the VP. For a sake of visibility we will use a trace for the moved verb instead of a copy:

(26) Ela está a ler[17] / lendo[18] livros às crianças mas ele não está [$_{VP}$-]
She is to read / reading books to the children but he not is [$_{VP}$-]
'She is reading books to the children but he is not.'
EP=BP: [$_{VP}$-] = [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *reading*] [*books*] [*to the children*]]

(27) Ela está lendo livros às crianças mas ele não está lendo [$_{VP}$-]
She is reading books to the children but he not is reading [$_{VP}$-]
'She is reading books to the children but he is not.'
BP: [$_{VP}$-] = [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *reading*] [*books*] [*to the children*]]

(28) #Ela está a ler livros às crianças mas ele não está a ler [-]
She is to read books to the children but he not is to read [-]
'She is reading books to the children but he is not reading.'

[17] PE
[18] PB/PE

EP: [-] = a. ??/*[$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *reading*] [*books*] [*to the children*]]
b. √ ... [$_{V}$ *reading*] ([$_{DP}$-]]

The same behaviour may be seen in sequences of *Passive Auxiliary + main verb*, as shown by the interpretations (i) and (ii) of the example in (30):

(29) O carro foi atribuído à Maria, mas os outros prémios não foram [$_{VP}$
The car was given to the Maria, but the other prizes not were [$_{VP}$-]
'The car was given to Maria, but the other prizes were not.'
EP= BP: [$_{VP}$-] = [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *given*] [*t*] [*to Maria*]]

(30) O carro foi atribuído à Maria, mas os outros prémios não foram atribuídos [-]
The car was given to the Maria,but the other prizes not were given[-]
(i) EP: [-] = a. ?? [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *given*] [*t*] [*to Maria*]]
b. ok: [... [$_{V}$ *given*] [*t*]]
(ii) BP: [-] = [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *given*] [*t*] [*to Maria*]]

There is an exception to these contrasts: the sequence of *Perfect Tense Auxiliary + main verb* is able to identify the whole elliptical VP in both varieties:

(31) a. Ela tem lido livros às crianças mas ele também tem [$_{VP}$-].
She has read books to the children but he too has[$_{VP}$-]
'She has read some books to the children but he also has.'
[$_{VP}$-] = [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *read*] [*books*] [*to the children*]]
b. Ela tem lido livros às crianças mas ele também tem lido [$_{VP}$
She has read books to the children but he too has read [$_{VP}$-]
'She has read some books to the children but he also has.'
[$_{VP}$-] = [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *read*] [*books*] [*to the children*]]

(31b) shows that the inclusion of the main verb in the verbal sequences is not a compelling factor for obtaining a Null Object reading, or it would not receive a VP ellipsis interpretation. Thus, we hypothesise that what really allows or precludes the interpretations of VP ellipsis is the functional projections where the verbal elements faces up at Spell-Out. The contrasts between European and Brazilian Portuguese also indicate that the functional projections that license VP ellipsis in these varieties may be not the same, possibly due to the idiosyncratic properties of the verbs involved in the verbal sequences.

Current studies on the syntax of verbal sequences in European Portuguese (Matos 1992, Gonçalves 1996) have emphasised that there is a scale of

gradation among auxiliaries in this language:[19] while the auxiliary verb of the Perfect Tense is a prototypical auxiliary, most of the other auxiliaries are best characterised as defective verbs which, in certain respects, behave like main verbs, selecting non-finite sentential projections as complement.

Taking the presence of pronominal clitics and sentence negation in European Portuguese as an evidence for the projection of Tense (see, for instance, Rouveret 1995, Ambar 1999, Duarte et alii 200, Gonçalves 1996, Matos 2001), the behaviour of the different auxiliaries show that they are in different stages of defectivity.

The most defective is the Perfect Auxiliary. It selects a Past Participle complement, which must be analysed as Verbal Projection distinct from TP. Thus, the Auxiliary and the main verb belong to the same tense domain, and the Past Participle may not be negated nor act as a host for clitic pronouns:

(31) a. * Ele tem contado-lhes$_{CL}$ histórias.
'He has told themCL stories'
b. * Ele tem não contado histórias aos miúdos.
He has not told stories to the kids
'He has not told stories to the kids.'

The same does not happen with the complement of the Progressive Auxiliary in (32): the infinitival verb may host the clitics, and the infinitival domain may accept negation.

(32) a. Ele (não) está a contar-lhes$_{CL}$ histórias
He (not)is to tell them stories
'He is not telling them stories.'
b. (?)Ele está a não lhes contar a história toda.
He is to not them tell the story whole
'He is not telling them the whole story.'

In fact, as argued in Raposo 1989, the Progressive aspectual verb occurs in a Prepositional Infinitival Construction, i.e., it selects a small clause headed by a Preposition which takes as its complement a TP projection, as shown in (33b):

(33) a. Ele está a contar-lhes histórias EP
He is to tell them stories
'He is telling them stories.?
b. Ele [$_{TP}$ está [$_{VPaux}$ t [$_{PP/AspP}$ [$_{P/AspP}$ a] [$_{TP}$ contar-lhes histórias]]]

[19] Most of the criteria used for the classification have been analogous to the ones proposed in Pontes (1973) and Lobato (1975) for PB.

However, there is a competing construction in EP, in which the progressive aspectual and the main verb restructure, forming a verbal complex and a single Tense domain occurs (cf. Matos 1992, Gonçalves 1996). In this case, the preposition is interpreted as an aspectual particle and the auxiliary subcategorize for an Aspectual Phrase (cf. Duarte 1993). In this construction, as expected, Clitic Climbing is possible and the sentence negation defines as its scope domain the tensed domain of the whole verbal complex

(34) a. Ele não lhes está a contar histórias.
He not them is to tell stories
'He is not telling them stories.'
b. Ele [$_{TP}$ está [$_{VPaux}$ t [$_{AspP}$ [$_{Asp}$ a] [$_{vP}$ ...contar histórias]]]

It is this latter construction that canonically faces up in VP ellipsis in European Portuguese (Matos 1992). As shown in (35), whenever VP ellipsis occurs, the splitting up of the verbal complex produces marginal results .

(35) Q: Alguém está a ler livros às crianças?
Someone is to read books to the children?
'Is anybody reading some books to the children?'
a. Está a Maria [-].
Is the Maria.
'Maria is.'
b. Está a ler a Maria [-].
Is to read the Maria
'Maria is reading.'
c. ?? Está a Maria a ler [-].
Is the Maria to read

Thus, we conclude that in European Portuguese it is T^{o} that licenses VP ellipsis in verbal sequences.

Considering now Brazilian Portuguese, the examples in (36) vs. (37), which are grammatical in BP (and unacceptable in EP) suggest that the Verbal Complex formation is not at work in verbal sequences, or otherwise Clitic Climbing would be available:

(36) a. Ele tem, creio, te lido essas histórias.
He has, guess, you.CL read those stories
'He has, I guess, read you those stories.'
b. Ele está, creio, te lendo essas histórias.
He is, guess, you.CL reading those stories
'He is, I guess, reading you those stories.'

c.Esses presentes foram, creio, te dados em criança.
These gifts were, guess, you.CL given in child
'Those gifts, I guess, have been given to you during your childhood.'

(37) a. *Ele te tem lido essas histórias .
He you.CL has read those stories
b. *Ele te está lendo essas histórias
He you.CL is reading those stories
c. * Esses presentes te foram dados em criança.
These gifts you.CL were given in child
'Those gifts, I guess, have been given to you during your childhood.'

Assuming that in Brazilian Portuguese, as well as in European Portuguese, sentence negation correlates with the presence of Tº, the following examples suggest that the functional projections selected by the Auxilary verbs in BP are systematically distinct from TP:[20]

(38) a.*Ele tem não visto os filmes da semana.
He has not seen the movies of the week
b. *Ele está não vendo os filmes da semana.
He is not seeing the movies of the week
c. *Esses filmes foram não vistos por Maria.
These movies were not seen by Maria

So, we will adopt the view that the Perfect tense, Progressive and Passive auxiliaries in PB select functional projections different from TP (Aspectual and Passive voice projections, respectively). As a consequence we have to assume that in Brazilian Portuguese both clitics and VP ellipsis may be licensed functional heads distinct from Tº (cf. (36) and (39)-(40)):

(39) Ela está lendo livros às crianças mas ele não está lendo [$_{VP}$-]
She is reading books to the children but he not is reading [$_{VP}$-]
'She is reading books to the children but he is not.'
BP: [$_{VP}$-] = [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *reading*] [*books*] [*to the children*]]

(40) O carro foi atribuído à Maria, mas os outros prémios não foram atribuídos [-]
The car was given to the Maria,but the other prizes not were given[-]
BP: [-] = [$_{VP}$ t [$_{V}$ *given*] [*t*] [*to Maria*]]

In sum, while in EP the licenser of VP ellipsis is always Tº, in BP it may be other functional sentence categories, bellow Tº

[20] These data show that the approach of Matos and Cyrino 2002 was not adequate.

This hypothesis seems to be corroborated by another contrast: the distribution of *também* 'too' within these verbal sequences is less restricted in BP than in EP. In EP, for the VP ellipsis interpretation obtain, this adverb must asymmetrically c-command the whole sequence of verbs, as in (41); in BP, the VP ellipsis interpretation occurs in (41), but also in (42) and in (43) where *também* c-commands just the main verb. In EP (42) as well as (44) the VP ellipsis reading is lost.

(41) Ela tem lido livros às crianças e ele também tem lido [$_{VP}$-].
She has read books to the children and he too has read
'She has read books to the children and he has, too.'

(42) Ela tem lido livros às crianças e ele tem também lido[-]
She has read books to the children and he has too read
BP: [-] = [$_{VP}$ [$_{V}$ t] the books to the children]
PE: [-] = a. ??[$_{VP}$ [$_{V}$ t] the books to the children]
b. √ [$_{V}$ t] [-]

(43) Ele está mandando as cartas aos clientes e ela está também mandando [-]
He is sending the letters to the costumers and she is too sending
'He is sending the letters to the costumers and she is too.'
BP: [-] = [$_{VP}$ [$_{V}$ t] the letters to the costumers]

(44) #Ele está a mandar as cartas aos clientes e ela está também a mandar [-]
He is to send the letters to the costumers and she is too to send
PE: [-] = a. ??[$_{VP}$ [$_{V}$ t] the letters to the costumers]
b. ? [$_{V}$ t] [-]

Assuming that *também* 'too' is a focussing adverb, and that focussing adverbs are heads which select as complements different projections, as claimed in Cinque 1999, we can explain the contrasts in acceptability between EP and BP for the sentence in (42) and (43)-(44) — though in EP the auxiliary *ter* 'have' or *estar* 'be' and the main verb may form a verbal complex headed by the verb in T^{o}, the interposition of the adverb *também* 'too' breaks this complex and the VP ellipsis interpretation is lost, as illustrated in (45)

(45) ... ele [$_{TP}$ tem [$_{AdvP}$ [$_{Adv^{o}}$ também] [$_{VPaux}$ t [$_{Asp\text{-}perfP}$ lido [$_{vP}$ -]]

In contrast, the grammaticality of these sentences in PB, with the intended VP ellipsis reading, corroborates that in this variety of Portuguese the licenser of elliptical VP may be any sentence functional projection below TP.

We hypothesise that this change in the licenser of VP ellipsis in European vs. Brazilian — i.e. form Tº to any functional head that merges with the elliptical VP — correlates with another one: the loss of unrestricted Generalised Verb Movement in this variety of Portuguese. In fact, it has been often claimed that although Verb Raising to Inflection is available in BP, it is kept to a minimum.

Summarising

European and Brazilian Portuguese, differ from other Romance languages in presenting two distinct predicate ellipsis constructions: VP ellipsis and Stripping. In both varieties of Portuguese, the elliptical VP may be identified either by an auxiliary or a main verb. Nevertheless, in the latter case, there is empirical evidence to assume that the elliptical construction is not reducible to Null Object.

Some analyses of VP ellipsis in Portuguese within the Minimalist Program have tried to explain its licensing in terms of the properties of Σ, conceived as the functional category which is headed by the positive and negative polarity items in the sentence. However, the presence of these items is not enough to license the elliptical predicate in some contexts where the canonical configuration of VP ellipsis may occur.

Alternatively we admitted that VP ellipsis is licensed under local c-command of the overt sentence functional head that merges with the elliptical VP. In EP this head must be Tº, or otherwise the VP ellipsis interpretation is lost; in BP it may be any functional head bellow Tº.

We assumed that this difference of behaviour between EP and BP may be correlated with the loss of unrestricted generalized V-movement in the latter variety of Portuguese.

References

Ambar, M. (1999) Infinitives versus Participles. In *Portuguese Syntax - New Comparative Studies* (J. Costa, editor). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brucart, J. (1987). *La Elisión Sintáctica en Español*. Bellaterra: Publicacions de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

_____ (1999) La elipsis. In *Gramática Descriptiva de la Lengua Española*. Vol. 2. (I. Bosque & V. Demonte, editors). Madrid: Espasa.

Chomsky, N. (1995) *The Minimalist Program*. Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press.

_____, (2000). Minimalist Inquiries: The Framework. In *Step by Step - Essays in Minimalist Syntax in Honor of Howard Lasnik*. (R. Martin, D. Michaels & J. Uriagereka, editors). Cambridge, Mass: the MIT Press.

_____ & Lasnik, H. (1993) The Theory of Principles and Parameters. In *Syntax: An International Handbook of Contemporary Research*. (S. Jacobs, Sternfeld and Vennemann, editors). Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter.

Cinque, G. (1999) *Adverbs and Functional Heads - A Cross-Linguistic Perspective*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press

Costa, J. & Duarte, I. (in press) Objectos Nulos em Debate. In *Razões e Emoção. Miscelânia de estudos em homenagem a Maria Helena Mateus*. (I. Castro, & I. Duarte, editors)

Cyrino, S. (1997) *O Objecto Nulo no Português do Brasil - Um Estudo Sintáctico-Diacrônico*. Londrina : Editora UEL.

_____, (2001) Elementos Nulos pós-verbais e a categoria "INFL (flexão)" no português do século XVI. In *Para a História do Português Brasileiro*. Vol.II, Tomo I. (R. V. Mattos e Silva, editor). São Paulo: Humanitas/FFLCH/USP.

Depiante, M. (2000) *The Syntax of Deep and Surface Anaphora: A Study of Null Complement Anaphora and Stripping/Bare Argument Ellipsis*. PhD Dissertation. University of Connecticut.

Duarte, I. (1993) Complementos Infinitivos Preposicionados e outras construções temporalmente defectivas em Português Europeu, *Actas do VIII Encontro da Associação Portuguesa de linguística*. Lisboa: APL/Colibri.

Farrel, P. (1990) Null Objects in Brazilian Portuguese. *The Linguistic Review* 8, 325-346.

Gonçalves, A. (1996) Aspectos da Sintaxe dos verbos Auxiliares do Português Europeu. In *Quatro Estudos em Sintaxe do Português* (A. Gonçalves, M. Colaço, M. Miguel & T. Móia, editors). Lisboa: Colibri.

Kato, M. (1993) The Distribution of Null and Pronominal Objects in Brazilian portuguese. In *Linguistic perspectives on Romance languages: Selected Papers from the XXI Linguistic Simposium on Romance languages*. (W. Ashby, M. Mithum, G. Perissinoto & E. Paposo, editors). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

_____, (2001) Null Objects, Null Resumptives and VP Ellipsis in European and Brazilian Portuguese. Ms.

Lobato, L. (1975)

Lobeck, A. (1999) VP-Ellipsis and the Minimalist Program: Some Speculations and Proposals. In *Fragments - Studies in Ellipsis and Gapping*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press.

López, L.(1999) VP-Ellipsis in Spanish and English and the features of Aux. *Probus* 11:2.

Martins, A-M. (1994) Enclisis, VP-deletion and the nature of Sigma. *Probus* 6,173-205.

Matos, M. G. (1992) *Construções de Elipse do predicado em Português - SV Nulo e Despojamento*. PhD Dissertation. Lisboa: Universidade de Lisboa.

_____, (2001) Negative Concord and the minimalist approach. In *Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 1999*. (Y. d'Hulst, J. Rooryck & J. Schroten, editors) Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Matos, G. & Cyrino, S. (2002) Elipse do VP no Português Europeu e no Português Brasileiro. *Actas do II Encontro Internacional da ABRALIN*, Fortaleza: Universidade Federal do Ceará.

Pontes, E. (1973)

Raposo, E. (1986) On the Null Object in European Portuguese. In *Studies in Romance Linguistics* (O. Jaeggli, & C. Silva-Corvalán, editors). Dordrecht: Foris Publications.

_____, (1989) Prepositional Infinitival Construction in European Portuguese. In *The Null Subject Parameter* (O. Jaeggli & K. Safir, editors). Dordrecht: Kluwer.

_____, (1998) Definite/Zero Alternations in Portuguese. In *Romance Linguistics: Theorethical Perspectives*. (A. Schwegler, B. Tranel & M. Uribe-Etxebarria, editors). Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Rouveret, A. (1995) Clitics, subject and tense in European Portuguese. Ms.

Tancredi, C. (1992) *Deletion, deaccenting and presupposition*. PhD dissertation. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT.