

# ELLIPSIS IN PERSIAN COMPLEX PREDICATES: VVPE OR SOMETHING ELSE?\*

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Persian has two main verb forms, Simplex Predicates and Complex Predicates (CPr), which consist of a Non-Verbal element (NV) and a Light Verb (LV) (Vahedi-Langarudi 1996). Folli et al. (2005) believe the NV takes the object as its complement and projects its own phrase, which then merges with the LV. Adopting this view, Toosarvandani (2009) proposes that during ellipsis, the NV phrase undergoes elision stranding the LV. Rasekhi (2014), on the other hand, by providing evidence from ellipsis inside islands, proposes that it is not any V-type element that is elided, rather it is the NP or PP object which undergoes ellipsis. However, the data show that these proposals are unable to capture all the facts. Therefore, in this study, by presenting evidence from different structures in Persian and adopting Şener and Takahashi (2010) (Ş and T), and Sato's (2014) diagnostic tests, I firstly propose that argument ellipsis in Persian is in line with V-stranding VP-Ellipsis (VVPE) languages. Secondly, I reassess the Persian CPr structure and building on Megerdooian's (2001, 2012) proposal, I suggest that the NV and the LV project a phrase, which I name the Complex-Verb Phrase (CVP).

## 1. Introduction

Ellipsis has been defined as “omission of a syntactic constituent under identity with an antecedent in the preceding [or surrounding] discourse” (Lobeck 1995:20). According to Goldberg (2005), for verb-raising languages, the V is stranded by moving out of the VP which undergoes elision. These languages are called VVPE languages. In English, there is no V-stranding since the verb does not raise to T. However, there is VP-Ellipsis which can only happen when the T is filled with either an auxiliary verb or dummy *do* (Lobeck 1995). The sentences in (1) from English, support this fact as the whole VP is elided.

- (1) a. Arthur brought a present to Hal.  
b. and Julia did [<sub>VP</sub> ~~bring a present to Hal~~] too.  
c. \* and Julia brought, too; \*and Julia will bring, too. (Goldberg 2005, ex.1)

Whereas, in other languages, such as French, Hebrew, Irish, and German (to name some), VP cannot be elided. The examples in (2) and (3) illustrate this point for French and German, respectively:

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- (2) \*On a demandé si ils ont déjà mangé, et ils ont [<sub>VP</sub> déjà mangé].  
 ‘We asked if they had already eaten, and they had [<sub>VP</sub> already-eaten].’  
 (Lobeck 1995:158)
- (3) \*Hans wird heimfahren und Maria wird [<sub>VP</sub> heimfahren] auch.  
 ‘Hans will drive home, and Maria will [<sub>VP</sub> drive home] too.’  
 (Lobeck 1995:142)

These sentences would be grammatical if the verbs were pronounced. Persian is similar to French and German in this respect in that it does not allow the V to go missing when there is elision in the sentence. Example (4) illustrates this fact<sup>1</sup>.

- (4) \*Mâdar-am ketâb-râ xând-e ast, barâdar-am ham  
 mother-GEN.1SG book-ACC read-PAST.3SG PERF, brother-GEN.1SG also  
 [<sub>VP</sub>ketâb-râ-xânde] ast.  
 [<sub>VP</sub>book-ACC-read-PAST.3SG-] PERF  
 ‘My mother has read the book, and my brother has [<sub>VP</sub> read-the-book], too.’

Consequently, one might think that Persian is a language which allows for verb raising as does French. However, Karimi (2005) suggests that in Persian there is neither V to T movement unless for topicalization or focus, nor anything resembling do-support. On the other hand, it is also possible to think that it is only the object that undergoes elision (Argument Ellipsis, Rasekhi 2014); however, there are facts that prove it is not always only the object that can be deleted. For instance, in sentence (5b), in addition to the internal arguments *dâneshju* and *be mehmuni*, the NV element of the CPr *davat* is also deleted.

- (5) a. Nilufar be mehmuni dâneshtu [<sub>CPr</sub>davat ne-mi-kone].  
 Nilufar to party student [<sub>CPr</sub>invitation NEG-SUBJ-do.3SG]  
 ‘Nilufar doesn’t invite students to the party.’
- b. vali man [be mehmuni dâneshtu davat] mi-kon-am.  
 but I [to party-student invitation] SUBJ-do-1SG  
 ‘But, I do [invite students to the party].’ (Toosarvandani 2009, ex.33)

These contradictory facts resulted in different claims in regards to what is elided in a Persian sentence. Toosarvandani (2009, 2014) claims that Persian is a *v*-stranding VPE language; while Rasekhi (2014) believes that it is an argument ellipsis language.

In this paper, I provide an overview of what has been done in this field in other languages, including the works of Şener and Takahashi (2010) and Sato (2014), and introduce a novel approach to ellipsis in Persian as well as modify the structure of Persian CPrs

<sup>1</sup>The following abbreviations are used in example glosses in this paper: INF= Infinitive;DUR= durative; 1, 2, 3= first, second, third person; ACC= accusative; GEN= genitive; TOP= topic; NEG negation; NOM= nominative; PAST= past tense; PRES= present tense; PERF= perfective; SG= singular; COMP= complementizer; SUBJ= subjunctive; PART= particle

proposed by Folli et al. (2005). In section 2 of the paper, I provide the reader with the literature on this topic. Section 2.1 deals with the proposed structure of Folli, Harley and Karimi (2005) for Persian CPRs. In section 2.2, the reader is given a summary of Toosarvandani's (2009) account for ellipsis in Persian while section 2.3 introduces Rasekhi's (2014) analysis of the same phenomenon. Section 3 includes Ş and T (2010) and Sato's (2014) diagnostics to ellipsis where I give data from Persian and analyze them referring to distinction between Sloppy/Strict and E-type/Quantificational readings. Section 4 provides more support for  $v$ VPE in Persian, and section 5 concludes the paper.

## 2. Previous Work

Persian or Modern Farsi is a verb-final language as it follows the SOV word order with adverbs preceding the main verbs (Mahootian and Gebhardt 1997, Frazier and Foreman 2003, Karimi 2003, Folli et al. 2005). Persian includes either simple or complex verbs. Complex verbs/predicates (CPr) include a Light Verb (LV) which is preceded by a Non-Verbal element (NV) (Vahedi-Langrudi 1996), or what Megerdoonian (2001) calls a pre-verbal element. This NV can be of different categories, Noun, Adverb and Particle, Adjective and Past Participle, and a Preposition or a Prepositional Phrase (Vahedi-Langrudi 1996, Karimi 2005, Folli et al. 2005, Toosarvandani 2009). Examples of each category are in (6) to (9), respectively:

(6) jâru kardan  
broom do.INF  
'to sweep'

(7) birun kardan  
out do.INF  
'to dismiss'

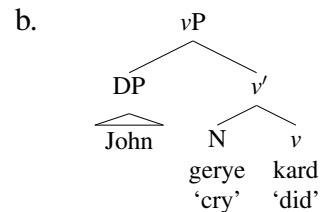
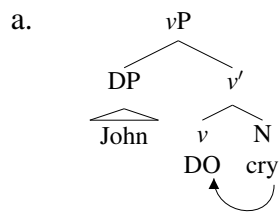
(8) bâlâ bordan  
up take.INF  
'to raise'

(9) az dast dâdan  
from hand give.INF  
'to lose'

### 2.1 Folli, Harley and Karimi's Proposal on Persian CPr Structure

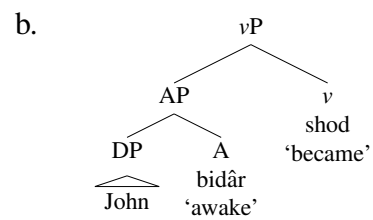
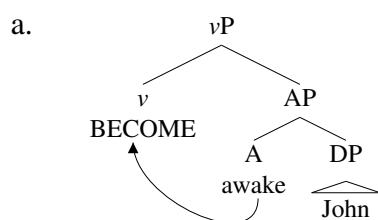
Adapting Hale and Keyser's structures, Folli, Harley and Karimi have come up with three basic structures for Persian Complex Predicates as the following trees in (10), (11), and (12) show. In each of these structures, the tree in (a) models an English sentence; while the tree in (b) models an example of Persian which maps onto the English sentence in (a), respecting the fact that Persian is a verb-final language as well as the structure of CPRs which consist of an LV and an NV (Folli et al. 2005, ex.15-17). The  $v$ ' constituents in (b), consist of the NV element, Noun in (10), Adj in (11) and (12), and the LV. The tree in (12) is the causative form of the tree in (11), where there is agentive reading of the sentence, which is satisfied by another form of LV, namely *kard* 'made'.

## (10) Unergatives



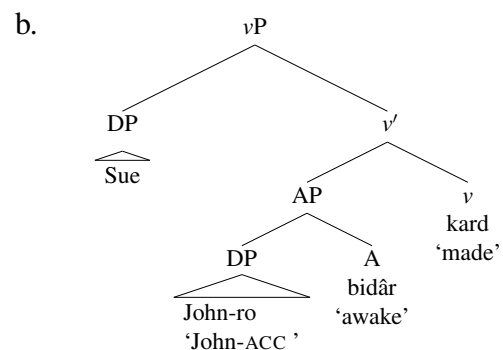
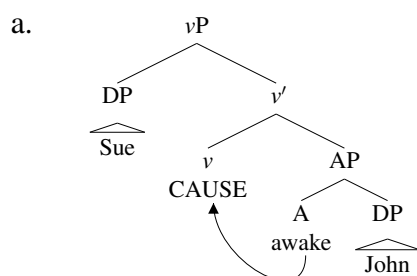
'John cried'

## (11) Unaccusative



'John woke up'

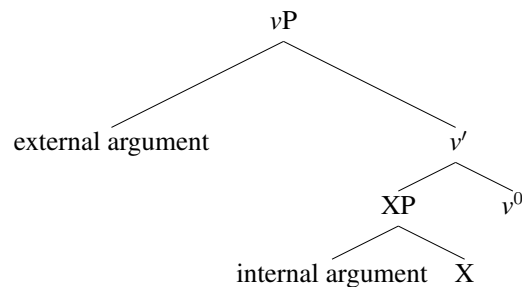
## (12) Causative



'Sue woke John up'

So, these trees suggest that CPrs in Persian consist of an NV element, which projects its own phrase taking the object as its complement. The underlying structure is illustrated in (13), in which the XP is the NV element that combines with the LV and constitutes a CPr (Hornstein et al. 2005:104; Toosarvandani 2009:61, ex.37).

## (13)



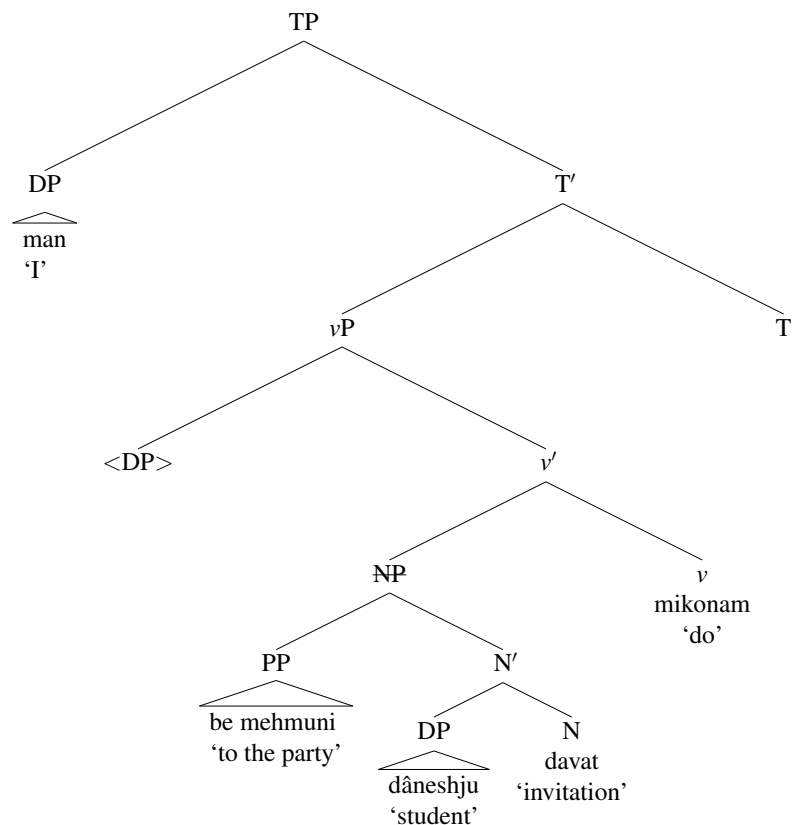
## 2.2 Toosarvandani's Approach towards Argument Ellipsis in Persian

Toosarvandani (2009) adopts the aforementioned structure in (13) for CPr in Persian and claims that during the process of ellipsis, this is the complement to  $v$ , namely XP, which is elided and that is how  $v$  is stranded and does not undergo elision. Since  $v$  is stranded, Toosarvandani claims that Persian is a  $v$ -stranding VPE language. To elaborate, an example from Toosarvandani is repeated in (14):

- (14) a. Nilufar be mehmuni dânesshju [<sub>CPr</sub> davat ne-mi-kone].  
 Nilufar to party student [<sub>CPr</sub> invitation NEG-SUBJ-do.3SG]  
 'Nilufar doesn't invite students to the party.'
- b. vali man [~~be mehmuni dânesshju davat~~] mi-kon-am.  
 but I [~~to party-student invitation~~] SUBJ-do-1SG  
 'But, I do [~~invite students to the party~~].' (Toosarvandani 2009, ex.33)

The structure for the sentence (b) in (14) would look like the one in (15) (Toosarvandani 2009:73), which shows that the NV element, which is an NP here, is elided.

(15)



'I do [~~invite students to the party~~].

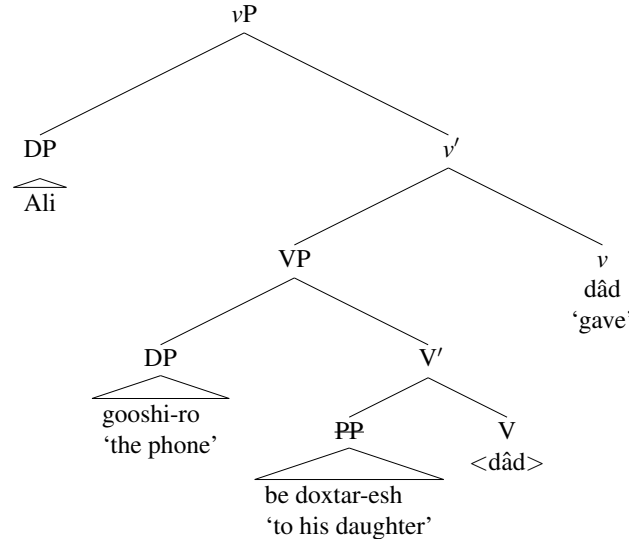
### 2.3 Rasekhi's Approach towards Argument Ellipsis in Persian

Rasekhi (2014), on the other hand rejects that there is any kind of VVPE in Persian. She rather believes that Persian missing arguments are definite NPs or PPs. For instance, in the following examples in (16), there is only the indirect object NP which is elided:

- (16) a. Ali bâ deghat ketâb-ro be doxtar-esh dâd.  
 Ali with care book-ACC to daughter-GEN.3SG give.3SG.PAST  
 'Ali carefully gave the book to his daughter.'
- b. az in-ke bâ deghat gooshi-ro [~~be doxtar-esh~~]  
 from this-that with care phone-ACC [~~to daughter-GEN.3SG~~]  
 na-dâd tajjob kard-am.  
 NEG-give.3SG.PAST surprise do.PAST-1SG  
 'the fact that he didn't give the phone [~~to his daughter~~] carefully surprised me.  
 (Rasekhi 2014, ex.33)

So, the structure for the sentences in (16) is as illustrated in (17), taken from Rasekhi (2014:12), in which only the verb's argument, the PP, is elided.

(17)



'Ali gave the phone [~~to his daughter~~].'

### 2.4 Some Issues with Toosarvandani and Rasekhi's Proposals

Both of the proposals seem appealing and plausible; however, they do not cover all the possibilities. To begin with, they do not account for variable binding or anaphors, which actually tend to reveal the behavior of predicates having missing arguments. An example

like the one in (18b) with a missing anaphor would have a different reading than the one in (19b) with a missing object. (18b) can either mean that ‘Arman loves Shahla’s mother.’, which is the Strict Reading; or it can mean that ‘Arman loves his own mother.’, which is called the Sloppy Reading<sup>2</sup>. Sentence (19b) however, can only refer to specific/same shirts and can only have one reading, namely the Strict identity reading.

- (18) a. Shahla mâdar-esh-ro doost dare.  
 Shahla mother-GEN.3SG-ACC love have.3SG  
 ‘Shahla loves her mother.’
- b. Arman ham [mâdar-esh-ro] doost dare.  
 Arman also [mother-GEN.3SG-ACC] love have.3SG  
 ‘Arman also loves [self’s mother].’
- (19) a. Sohrab piran-â-ro otu na-zad.  
 Sohrab shirt-PL-ACC iron NEG-hit.PAST.3SG  
 ‘Sohrab didn’t iron the shirts.’
- b. vali Rostam [piran-â-ro-otu] zad.  
 but Rostam [shirt-PL-ACC iron] hit.PAST.3SG  
 ‘But, Rostam did [iron the shirts].’ (Toosarvandani 2009, ex.15)

That is why I have tested the judgment of eleven native speakers on twenty-one different sentences including the ellipsis of various arguments; namely object and embedded subject, NV element, variable and anaphor to have a more solid idea of what really happens when an argument is not pronounced.

The second issue with the proposed analyses is that one does not discuss the cases when the NV is pronounced; and the second does not address the fact that in ditransitive sentences more than one argument can be elided for which Argument Ellipsis fails to account. More explicitly, none of these analyses can account for a sentence like (20), where we have elision of both direct and indirect object, and presence of NV element of the CPr *neshun dâdan* ‘to show’:

- (20) Ali ham [mashin-esh-ro be Sohrab] [<sub>NV</sub> neshun] dâd.  
 Ali also [ear-GEN.3SG-ACC to Sohrab] [<sub>NV</sub> show] give.PAST.3SG  
 (lit.) ‘Ali also showed [his ear to Sohrab].’

In the following sections, I deal with these missing parts of this puzzle.

### 3. Argument Ellipsis

In this section, I attend to ellipsis in Persian from a different viewpoint. I adopt the works of Ş and T (2010) and Sato (2014), and introduce the data in support of LV to *v* movement,

<sup>2</sup>Section 3.1 explains these terms.

which was slightly and indirectly touched upon by Rasekhi (2014), as well as  $\nu$ -stranding VPE, originally proposed by Toosarvandani (2009).

To begin with, I would like to familiarize the reader with the terminology I will be using through the paper, which are taken from Ş and T and Sato.

### 3.1 Strict versus Sloppy Identity Readings

Johnson (2001), Şener and Takahashi (2010) and Sato (2014) clarify the fact that if a missing element allows for more than one reading, the sentence contains ellipsis rather than phonologically null argument. In other words, if the missing argument, copied at LF, can take an argument as its binder from within the ellipsis site, the sentence would have what is called a Sloppy reading, which is associated with ellipsis. To clarify, let's take a look at example (21), from Sato (2014, ex.2) in Colloquial Singapore English (CSE).

- |      |    |                           |  |
|------|----|---------------------------|--|
| (21) | a. | David like his school.    | CSE                                    |
|      | b. | John also like <i>e</i> . | (Strict <b>OK</b> , Sloppy <b>OK</b> ) |
|      | c. | John also like it.        | (Strict <b>OK</b> , Sloppy <b>NO</b> ) |

Sato supports the argument by referring to (21), explaining that the sentence in (b) can have two possible meanings, one being 'John also likes David's school.', which is the strict reading; and the second being 'John likes his own school.', which is the sloppy reading. However, the main issue is to decide whether the empty slot is a phonologically null argument or an elided argument. Sato draws the reader's attention to (21c) in which there is an overt pronoun replacing the object *his school* and yet, we only get the strict reading. Consequently, he concludes that if the empty slot is a null pronoun, only the strict reading would be available to the reader; however, when there is also a sloppy reading, ellipsis is responsible.

This fact has also received support from Ş and T (2010, ex.1) in the following sentence, for instance. The sentence in (22) in Japanese<sup>3</sup>, can have two possible readings, one being 'Hanako hates Taro's mother' (Strict) and the other being 'Hanako hates her own mother' (Sloppy).

- |      |    |   |  |
|------|----|---|--|
| (22) | a. | Taro-wa zibun-no hahaoya-o aisiteiru.<br>Taro-NOM self-GEN mother-ACC loves.<br>'Taro loves self's mother.' |  |
|      | b. | Hanako-wa <i>e</i> nikundeiru.<br>Hanako-TOP <i>e</i> hates.<br>'Hanako hates <i>e</i> .'                   | (Strict <b>OK</b> , Sloppy <b>OK</b> ) |

Up to now, we have seen at least two languages that allow for ellipsis, namely CSE and Japanese; however, this is not true of every single language, Spanish is one such language (Ş and T). The sentence in (23), from Ş and T (2010, ex.5), can only have one strict

<sup>3</sup>Japanese example is glossed as its original.



reading, which is ‘Juan believes that Maria’s proposal will be accepted.’, and cannot mean that ‘Juan believes that Juan’s proposal will be accepted.’, which is the sloppy reading.

- (23) a. Mara cree que su propuesta ser aceptada.  
 Maria believes that her proposal will be accepted.  
 ‘Maria believes that her proposal will be accepted.’
- b. Juan tambin cree que *e* ser aceptada.  
 Juan also believes that it will be accepted.  
 ‘Juan also believes that it will be accepted.’ (Strict **OK**, Sloppy **NO**)

Ş and T discuss this contradiction by referring to Oku (1998), who considers a connection between ellipsis and scrambling in the languages which allow for it. However, Ş and T conclude that the fact that Spanish does not allow for ellipsis in subject position is because this language shows subject-verb agreement. We will refer back to this fact in section 3.3.

### 3.2 E-Type/Quantificational Identity Readings

Another type of interpretation contrast that is observable in sentences with ellipsis, is E-type versus Quantificational reading (Sato 2014). For instance, consider the set of sentences in (24) and (25), from Sato (2014, ex.5) and Ş and T (2010, ex.8), respectively:

- (24) a. David like three students in the class.  
 b. John also like *e*. (E-type **OK**, Quantificational **OK**)  
 c. John also like them. (E-type **OK**, Quantificational **NO**)
- (25) a. John respects three students.  
 b. Mary does, too. (E-type **OK**, Quantificational **OK**)  
 c. Mary respects them, too. (E-type **OK**, Quantificational **NO**)

The sentences in (b) can have both E-type and Quantificational readings. They can either mean that the three students/teachers are the same (E-type) or that they are different (Quantificational). However, the sentences in (c) can only mean that the students/teachers being liked and respected are the same. Similar to that of Sloppy/Strict readings, Sato reasons here that if the empty slot is null *e*, the only available reading would be the E-type reading as in the sentences in (c). Therefore, for a single sentence with a missing argument, when there is both E-type and Quantificational readings, ellipsis is present.

### 3.3 Asymmetries in Argument Ellipsis in Subject and Object Positions

Besides what was covered in sections 3.1 and 3.2, Ş and T and Sato investigate the ellipsis phenomenon in subject and object positions, concluding that in languages with subject-verb agreement, such as Turkish, only Strict and E-type readings are possible when subject

is elided. In other words, Sloppy and Quantificational readings are not available in these languages in such a situation. For object elision, on the other hand, all types of readings are available iff the language does not exhibit object-verb agreement. Let's have a look at this contrast in Turkish examples below, (26) (Ş and T 2010, ex.22) and (27) (Ş and T 2010, ex.33), to see this contrast. It is worth mentioning that Turkish displays subject-verb agreement, but not object-verb agreement.

- (26) a. Can anne-si-ni eleştir-di.  
John mother-GEN.3SG-ACC criticize-PAST  
'John criticized his mother.'
- b. Mete-yse [anne-si-ni] öv-dü.  
Mete-however [mother-GEN.3SG-ACC] praise-PAST  
'Mete, however, praised [his-mother].' (Strict **OK**, Sloppy **OK**)
- (27) a. Can oğl-u İngilizce öğren-iyor diye bil-iyor.  
John son-GEN.3SG English learn-DUR.3SG COMP know-DUR.3SG  
'John knows that his son learns English.'
- b. Filiz-se e Fransızca öğren-iyor diye bil-iyor.  
Phylis-however e French learn-DUR.3SG COMP know-DUR.3SG  
'Phylis, however, knows that e learns French.' (Strict **OK**, Sloppy **NO**)

(26) is an example of ellipsis in object position; when we can have Strict/Sloppy<sup>4</sup>. Sentence (27), on the other hand, is an example of elision in subject position, and as obvious, neither Sloppy (nor Quantificational) reading is available. As a result, the LF copy is blocked in Turkish subject position (Sato 2014); or in other words, there is no subject ellipsis in Turkish, rather the missing subjects are null pronominals (Ş and T 2010). Given the facts above, one could predict that Persian, which is also a subject-verb agreement language (Mahootian and Gebhardt 1997), would show the same behavior. This is the issue that the remaining of this paper deals with.

### 3.4 Missing Arguments in Persian Sentences

In this section, I will provide the data in support of ellipsis in object position, examples (28) to (30), and null argument in subject position, example (31), as was predicted. The data have been collected from eleven native speakers using twenty-one different sentences.

- (28) a. Shahla se tâ ketâb xarid.  
Shahla three PART book buy.PAST.3SG  
'Shahla bought three books.'

<sup>4</sup>E-type/ Quantificational readings are also available in object positions in Turkish. For space reasons, I did not include any examples for this contrast.

- b. Arman ama [~~se-tâ-ketâb~~] na-xarid.  
Arman but [~~three-PART-book~~] NEG-buy.PAST.3SG  
'But, Arman didn't buy.' (E-type **OK**, Quantificational **OK**)
- (29) a. Rostam mâshin-esh-ro be Sohrab [<sub>CPr</sub> neshun dâd].  
Rostam car-GEN.3SG-ACC to Sohrab [<sub>CPr</sub> show give.PAST.3SG ]  
'Rostam showed his car to Sohrab.'
- b. Vali Ramin [~~mâshin-esh-ro-be-Sohrab-neshun/neshun~~] na-dâd.  
But, Ramin [~~car-GEN.3SG-ACC-to-Sohrab-show/show~~] NEG-give.PAST.3SG  
'But, Ramin didn't [~~show/show his car to Sohrab~~].' (Strict **NO**, Sloppy **OK**)
- (30) a. Navid xod-esh-o [<sub>CPr</sub> tashvigh kard].  
Navid self-GEN.3SG-ACC [<sub>CPr</sub> encouragement do.PAST.3SG ]  
'Navid encouraged himself.'
- b. Amir ham [~~xod-esh-o-tashvigh/tashvigh~~]  
Amir also [~~self-GEN.3SG-ACC-encouragement/encouragement~~]  
kard.  
do.PAST.3SG  
'Amir did/encouraged, too.' (Strict **OK**, Sloppy **OK**)
- (31) a. Shahla fekr mi-kone pesar-esh ingilisi mi-xune.  
Shahla thought SUBJ-do.3SG son-GEN .3SG English SUBJ-study.3SG  
'Shahla thinks her son studies English.'
- b. Arman fekr mi-kone e farânse mi-xune.  
Arman thought SUBJ-do.3SG e French SUBJ-study.3SG  
'Arman thinks e studies French.' (Strict **OK**, Sloppy **NO**)

What is important to notice in the sentences (29) and (30) is the fact that absence or presence of the NV does not hinder the existence of sloppy reading. Consequently, the NV does not necessarily have to be deleted for ellipsis to be licensed and it can remain untouched. This is the fact that has not been accounted for in the previous studies. The next section addresses this issue along with the proposed analysis.

#### 4. CPr Structure

As mentioned earlier, the problems with the previous analyses can be captured by the example in (20), repeated here in (32).

- (32) Ali ham [~~mâshin-esh-ro-be-Sohrab~~] [<sub>NV</sub> neshun] dâd.  
Ali also [~~car-GEN.3SG-ACC-to-Sohrab~~] [<sub>NV</sub> show] give.PAST.3SG  
(lit.) 'Ali also showed [~~his car to Sohrab~~].'

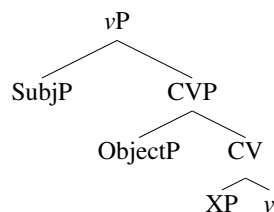
This example shows that when we have ellipsis, we can delete both the direct and indirect object, *his car* and *to Sohrab* in the above example. This contradicts with what Rasekhi’s proposal predicts, which only allows for one argument to be elided. Furthermore, we can keep the NV element and not delete it and this is in contrast with Toosarvandani’s proposal which predicts the NV element to be elided. The grammaticality of the sentence in (32) is the evidence against the two proposals.

Based on the examples above, we conclude that neither Rasekhi’s argument ellipsis nor Toosarvandani’s vVPE analysis is able to capture all the data. This leads us to conclude that firstly, it is not argument ellipsis that happens in Persian sentences and therefore, it is more like VPE that takes place in these sentences. Secondly, there needs to be a structure which allows for the NV to escape the ellipsis site because the proposed CPr structure cannot explain this phenomenon.

#### 4.1 What I Propose for Persian CPr

I propose that the NV and LV make a CPr which acts like a head, which I name Complex-Verb (CV). This head, CV, can take arguments as a normal verb does and project its own CV Phrase (CVP). This is further supported by Megerdooimian (2001, 2012), who proposes that the NV, or what she also calls ‘pre-verbal’ element combines with a verb and together, they form a single syntactic predicate and “...the NV contributes the encyclopedically contentful part of the predicate (Megerdooimian 2012:181)”. The tree in (33) captures this idea, in which XP stands for any type of phrase that can combine with an LV, namely NP, AdjP, AdvP and PP.

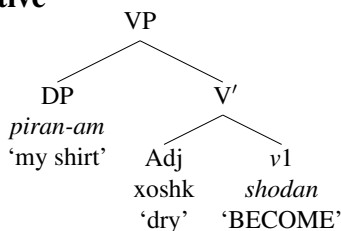
(33)



As mentioned above, this proposal is in line with, or one might say a simplified form of, what Megerdooimian proposes for Persian CPrs as the structures in (35) and (37) for sentences in (34) and (36) show, respectively (Megerdooimian 2012, ex.61-63).

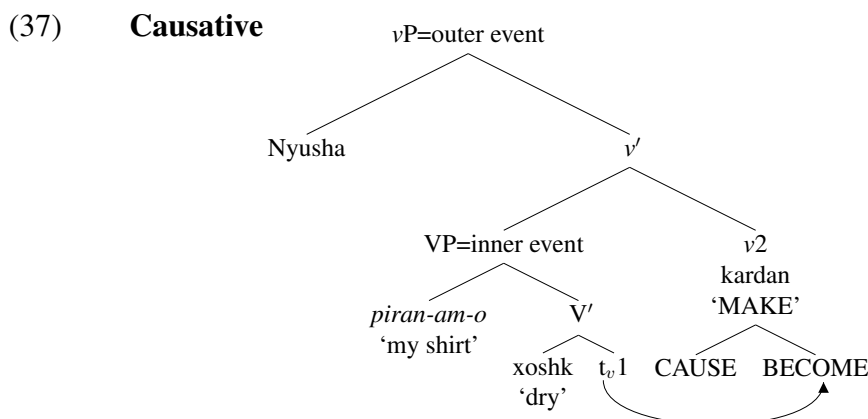
- (34) Piran-am xoshk shod.  
 shirt-GEN.1SG dry become.PAST.3SG  
 “My shirt dried.”

(35) **Inchoative/Intransitive**



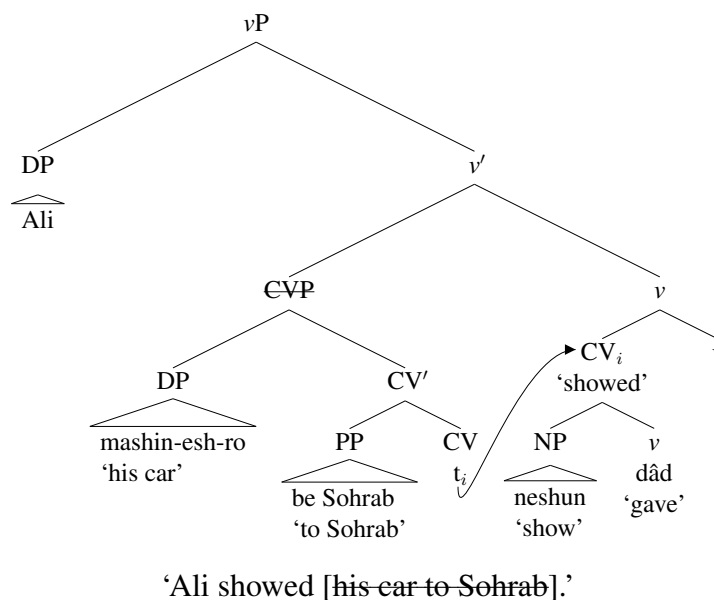
As the structures show, she believes that there are  $v$  layers or shells, the lower one denoting the BECOME event which is associated with inchoative or intransitive verbs, (34) and (35), while the outer shell denotes the CAUSE event associated with causative verbs and projects the external arguments, (36) and (37).

- (36) Nyusha piran-am-o xoshk kard.  
 Nyusha shirt-GEN.1SG-ACC dry make.PAST.3SG  
 ‘Nyusha dried my shirt.’



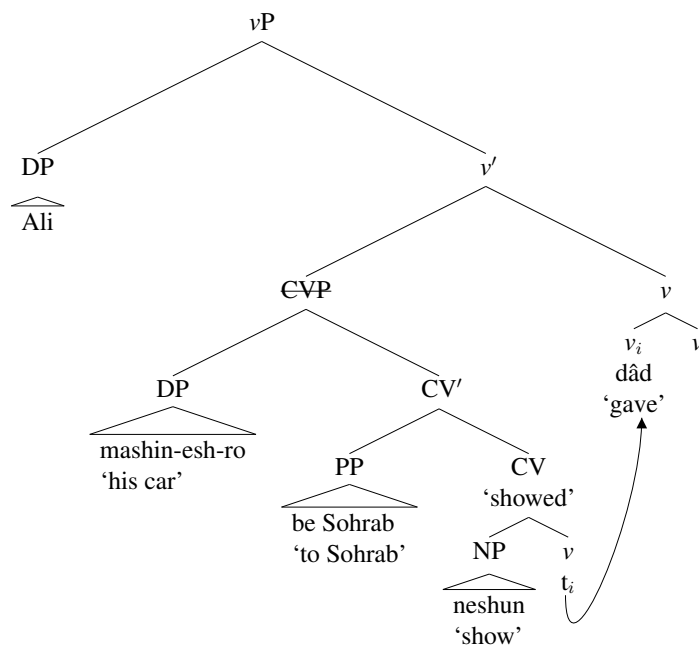
These structures support the fact that the NV element and the LV merge together before taking the internal argument, which is what I exactly propose in this paper. Moreover, they illustrate that the LV moves to get an aspectual reading. I want to add that the LV can move for another reason; and that is to escape elision. The trees in (38) and (39) would clarify my point.

- (38) **NV is Present/Pronounced**



I suggest that in case of elision, the  $v$  moves and is stranded when the CVP undergoes elision. The tree in (38) illustrates the occasions when the NV element is pronounced, which is more natural and common. However, there are cases in which the NV element is also eliminated, as (39) shows. I propose that in such occasions, only the LV is attracted by  $v$ .

(39) **NV is Elided**



‘Ali did [show his car to Sohrab].’

The reason why the  $v$  attracts different arguments is mainly discourse driven. In other words, it is the speaker who decides which parts are necessary to be uttered. An example of which could be *lâk zadan* ‘to polish the nails’. A sentence like (40) is perfectly fine if the speaker shows her nails to her mother. But, if the mother is not attentive, the speaker might prefer to use the whole CPr in order to avoid miscommunication because the LV on its own has a different meaning; here it means ‘hit’ rather than ‘polish nails’.

- (40) a. Mahsa nâxon-â-sh-o            lâk        zad.  
 Mahsa nail-PL-GEN.3.SG-ACC nailpolish hit.PAST.3SG  
 ‘Mahsa polished her nails.’
- b. Bebin mâmân, man-am [nâxon-â-m-o-lâk]                            zad-am.  
 look mom, I-also [nail-PL-GEN.1.SG-ACC nailpolish] hit.PAST-1SG  
 ‘Look mom, I also did [polish my nails].’

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, using Strict/E-type versus Sloppy/Quantificational identity readings, I gave evidence that Persian missing arguments are examples of ellipsis. Moreover, I provided examples which show that the NV element can either be present or deleted. I also showed that both direct object and indirect object can be elided. These facts led me to propose a new structure for Persian CPrs which allows for the NV element to sit beside the LV which it modifies. This in turn, allows for the NV element to move to a VP-external position together with the LV and in other words, to be stranded while the CVP undergoes elision. This V to *v* movement has been suggested by Rasekhi and Megerdoomian; however, more studies need to be done on how high the verb can go. To put it in other words, in Persian, the VP that undergoes elision can strand either the whole CPr (CV) or only the LV. Consequently, Persian shows similar behavior to VVPE languages, with only difference in the structure of its verbs.

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