Brazilian Portuguese does not have verb-stranding *v*P-ellipsis

Within the literature on Brazilian Portuguese (BP), a fair amount of attention has been devoted to sentences such as (1a), in which the entire content of the *v*P goes missing, minus the lexical verb (Cyrino & Matos 2002, 2005; Tescari Neto 2013). Such sentences are standardly assumed to involve verb-stranding *v*P-ellipsis (hereafter, VVPE), a variant of *v*P-ellipsis in which the lexical verb escapes the ellipsis site by raising to some *v*P-external functional head (see (1b)). In this presentation, I argue that BP does not have VVPE, contrary to previous thinking. The argument proceeds in two steps. First, I argue that VVPE overgenerates in a number of different cases. Then, I reconsider existing arguments in support of VVPE and show that these arguments are unconvincing. Specifically, I show that apparent cases of VVPE can be independently accounted for without VVPE.

Sentences with VP-idioms illustrate a context in which VVPE overgenerates. Consider (2a) and (2b), both of which contain the VP-idiom *abotoar o paletó* (lit. to button the jacket) 'to die'. (2a) involves an uncontroversial case of *v*P-ellipsis. Notably, the right-hand sentence can be construed idiomatically, which shows that *v*P-ellipsis does not bleed the idiomatic interpretation. This being so, (2b) is expected to permit the idiomatic interpretation as well, under the assumption that BP has VVPE (see (3)). However, the right-hand sentence in (2b) cannot be construed idiomatically. VVPE thus overgenerates non-existent idiomatic readings in sentences involving VP-idioms.

The sentences in (4) and (5) demonstrate a further context in which VVPE overgenerates. Contrary to the predictions of VVPE (see (6a-b)), the secondary predicate is not recovered in the right-hand sentence in (4), and the adverb is not recovered in the right-hand sentence in (5). Again, VVPE overgenerates non-existent readings.

Uncontroversial cases of *v*P-ellipsis can target *v*Ps headed by a subject-raising verb (see (7)). As such, the null hypothesis is that VVPE should behave in the same fashion. However, the resulting sentences are ungrammatical (see (8))---a further instance in which VVPE overgenerates.

The preceding discussion has demonstrated a number of cases in which VVPE overgenerates. At this point, I turn to existing arguments in support of VVPE. Cyrino & Matos (2002, 2005) put forward sentences like (1a) as evidence for the existence of VVPE in BP. The implicit assumption is that BP does not have PP-ellipsis, and hence that sentences like (1a) cannot be generated as in (9), with PP-ellipsis (and DP-ellipsis, as well). This being so, such sentences are said to motivate the postulation of VVPE (see (1b)). However, BP <u>does</u> have PP-ellipsis (see (10a-b); note that the PP-arguments are recovered in the right-hand sentences in (10a-b)). BP also has DP-ellipsis of direct objects (Cyrino 1997; Cyrino & Lopes 2016). Thus, sentences like (1) can be generated as in (9), and they do not provide any motivation for positing VVPE.

The presentation will discuss additional arguments in support of VVPE and argue, in a similar fashion, that the relevant data fail to sufficiently motivate VVPE. Thus, evidence in support of VVPE is lacking, and evidence against VVPE (in the form of overgeneration) is abundant. Conclusion: BP does not have VVPE.

(1) a. Quando a Ana pôs os óculos na mesa, a Maria também pôs.   (Cyrino & Matos 2002)
       'When Ana put her glasses on the table, Maria did too'
   b. Quando a Ana pôs os óculos na mesa, a Maria$_i$ também [pôs+v]+ T [~~$_{vP}$ t$_i$ t$_v$ [$_{VP}$ t$_V$ os óculos na mesa]~~]

(2) a. O João vai abotoar o paletó. O Pedro também vai.
       'João will die. Pedro will too.'
   b. O João abotoou o paletó. #O Pedro também abotoou.
       'João died. #Pedro buttoned too.'

(3) O Pedro$_i$ também [abotoou+v]+T [~~$_{vP}$ t$_i$ t$_v$ [$_{VP}$ t$_V$ o paletó]~~]

(4) O Tiago morreu surdo, mas o Bruno não morreu.
   = 'Tiago died deaf, but Bruno didn't die.'
   ≠ 'Tiago died deaf, but Bruno didn't die deaf.'

(5) A Maria nada bem, mas a Clara não nada.
   = 'Maria swims well, but Clara doesn't swim.'
   ≠ 'Maria swims well, but Clara doesn't swim well.'

(6) a. Bruno$_i$ não [morreu+v]+T [~~$_{vP}$ t$_i$ t$_v$ [$_{VP}$ t$_V$ surdo]~~]
   b. Clara$_i$ não [nada+v]+T [~~$_{vP}$ bem [$_{vP}$ t$_i$ t$_v$ [$_{VP}$ t$_V$]]~~]

(7) O clima político na frança vai parar de piorar, mas o clima político no brasil não vai.
   'The political climate in France will stop getting worse, but the political climate in Brazil won't.'

(8) a. *O clima político na frança parou de piorar, mas o clima político no brasil não parou.
       (intended) 'The political climate in France stopped getting worse, but the political climate in Brazil didn't.'
   c. *Os meninos parecem ter perdido o ônibus, mas as meninas não parecem.
       (intended) 'The boys seem to have missed the bus, but the girls don't.'

(9) Quando a Ana pôs os óculos na mesa, a Maria também pôs [~~os óculos~~] [~~na mesa~~]

(10) a. A Maria guardou um anel naquele cofre. Já a Ana guardou um colar.
         'Maria put a ring in that safe. But Ana put a necklace in that safe.'
     b. A Maria pôs uma televisão no meu escritório. Já a Ana pôs um rádio.
         'Maria put a television in my study. But Ana put a radio in my study.'

References
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