Distinguishing types of ellipsis in polar answers: The view from Javanese
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Introduction. A 'repetition' affirmative answer to a polar question that includes a TAM auxiliary in Javanese (Austronesian) descriptively consists of the corresponding TAM auxiliary alone, as in (1)-A1. An alternative answer is with the subject plus the auxiliary, as in (1)-A2. (Other possibilities are a clause with basic word order S-Aux-V-O, or with a yes/no particle.)

(1) Q: Kuna'ah **iso**   ngelangi   toh?   ⬚A1⬚: **Iso.**   ⬚A2⬚: Kuna'ah **iso**.
         Kuna'ah CIRC.POS AV.swim   FOC   CIRC.POS   Kuna'ah CIRC.POS
         'Can Kuna'ah swim?'   'Yes.' (Lit. 'Can.')   'Kuna'ah can.'

Puzzle. Taking that polar answers have a full syntactic clause structure (e.g., Kramer & Rawlins 2008), Holmberg (2016:Ch.3) presents two main strategies for A1-type answers for languages that can answer with a verb alone: V-stranding-VPE with subject pro-drop or clausal ellipsis (which can be derived various ways). Applied to languages that can answer with a TAM auxiliary alone like Javanese, example derivations are in (2a) for VPE, and (2b) for clausal ellipsis, wherein the auxiliary moves to Foc^0 in the left-periphery to lexically support and spell out the polarity feature [+Pol], and PolP, the highest XP in the IP-domain, is elided. Since Javanese independently has VPE (Vander Klok 2016) and argument ellipsis (Sato 2015), A1 and A2 could be derived by either strategy in (2), provided that for clausal ellipsis with A2, the subject first moves out of constituent to be elided (e.g., to a topic position in the left-periphery).

(2) Two types of derivation strategies (in principle possible for both A1 and A2 in Javanese)

   a. **VP-ELLIPSIS**: vP is not assigned overt form at PF in situ (not incl. subject-ellipsis for A1)
      [$_{PolP}$ $Pol^0_{[+Pol]}$ [$_{TP}$ *Kuna'ah* [$_{AuxP}$ *iso* [$_{vP}$ *ngelangi*]]]]

   b. **CLAUSAL ELLIPSIS**: PolP is not assigned overt form at PF (not incl. subj.-movement for A2)
      [$_{Foc[+Pol]}$ Foc^0 *iso* [$_{PolP}$ $Pol^\theta_{[+Pol]}$ *iso* [$_{TP}$ *Kuna'ah* [$_{AuxP}$ *iso* [$_{vP}$ *ngelangi*]]]]]

How are these strategies distinguished? Holmberg (2016) proposes a diagnostic for A1-answers based on the inability of existential indefinite subjects (*someone*) to pro-drop. If the existential indefinite subject must be overt in a polar answer, then (V-stranding-)VPE plus pro-drop is the strategy used in that language. However, this test is not available in Javanese: indefinite subjects must be embedded in a small clause under an existential predicate (Cole et al. 2002). The **goal of this talk** is to provide an account of Javanese polar answers in (1), thereby distinguishing types of ellipsis towards building a typology of derivation strategies of 'repetition' polar answers.

Proposal. I propose there are at least three cross-linguistic strategies as to how polar answers in (1) are derived: Clausal ellipsis, VPE, and VP-topic-drop. Following Holmberg (2016), some details of these strategies will depend on language-internal properties. For Javanese, a language without verb-movement, I argue that the answer types in (1) are derived from two distinct strategies, but VPE is not one of them—despite its independent availability. I argue that A1 'auxiliary' answers employ CLAUSAL ELLIPSIS, exactly as in (2b). In contrast, I argue that A2 'subject+aux' answers are derived by VP-TOPIC-DROP as in (3), where the auxiliary remains in situ while the *v*P undergoes movement to a topic position and is elided in the left periphery.

(3) **VP-TOPIC-DROP:** vP is not assigned overt form at PF in topicalized position

   [$_{TopP}$ *ngelangi* [$_{Foc[+Pol]}$ Foc^0 [$_{PolP}$ $Pol^0_{[+Pol]}$ [$_{TP}$ *Kuna'ah* [$_{AuxP}$ *iso* [$_{vP}$ *ngelangi*]]]]]]

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Evidence that A1 and A2 answers are structurally different. ▶ <u>For A1 answers with the derivation in (2b), support for the movement of the auxiliary to a focus position</u> comes from optional overt head-movement of any TAM auxiliary to above an epistemic/evidential adverb to license [+Pol] in FocP, as in (4) as an answer to the question in (1). This derives an unexpected word order in an otherwise strict relative ordering of TAM markers. Crucially, I show that such word orders are only possible in the discourse context of answers.

(4)　A3:　[$_{Foc[+Pol]}$ Foc^0 **Iso**　[$_{MoodP}$ **koyoke** [$_{PolP}$ Pol$^0_{[+Pol]}$ ~~iso~~ [$_{TP}$ <u>Kuna'ah</u>　~~iso~~ ngelangi]]]].
　　　　　　　CIRC.POS　　DIR.EVID　　　　　　　　　　Kuna'ah　　　AV.swim
　　　　　　'Kuna'ah can likely swim.'

▶ <u>Evidence against VPE plus subject ellipsis to derive A1 answers</u>. Despite the availability of subject ellipsis across sentences by the same speaker (Sato 2015), in polar questions *without* a TAM auxiliary (e.g. (1) without *iso* 'can'), it is not possible to answer with the verb alone. That is, subject ellipsis is impossible in this environment; providing a new diagnostic. It follows that polar questions *with* TAM auxiliaries are also not derived by subject ellipsis (and VPE).

▶ <u>While A1 'auxiliary' answers can occur with all TAM auxiliaries, A2 'subject+aux' answers are restricted to a subset, Table 1</u>. In A1 in (1) and (5), both *iso* 'can' and *lagek* 'PROG' can appear alone, but the 'subject+aux' answer is only possible with *iso* 'can' (A2 in (1) vs. (5)).

Table 1. East Javanese auxiliaries	A1-ans.	A2-ans.	VPT
tau 'EXIST.PST'	✓	✓	✓
iso 'CIRC.POS'	✓	✓	✓
oleh 'DEON.POS'	✓	✓	✓
kudu 'ROOT.NEC'	✓	✗	✗
lagek 'PROG'	✓	✗	✗
wes 'already'	✓	✗	✗

(5)　Q:　Bu　Nana　lagek　masak　toh?
　　　　　Mrs. Nana　PROG　AV.cook　FOC
　　　　　'Is Nana cooking/starting to cook?'

　　A1: Lagek.　　A2: * Bu　Nana　lagek.
　　　　PROG　　　　　　Mrs. Nana　PROG
　　　　'Yes.'　　　　　　('Nana is./N. just started.')

<u>The exact same distribution of auxiliaries in A2-answer types is found for licensors for overt VPT</u> (Vander Klok 2015), which can also be licensed in answers, suggesting A2 answers have VPT as its input prior to ellipsis: Compare (6)-(7) (questions not shown), where only *iso* 'can' is a possible licensor. If A1-type answers were derived by VP-Topic-drop, we would expect to find the same restrictions.

(6) nggotong watu-ne,　cak Kholiq　**iso**
　　AV.lift　　rock-DEF　Mr. Kholiq　CIRC.POS
　　'Lift the stone, Kholiq can.'

(7) * tuku beras,　　pak Suwanan　**lagek**
　　buy　raw.rice　Mr.Suwanan　PROG
　　('Buying rice, Pak Suwanan is just.')

▶ For A2 answers derived by VP-topic drop (3), <u>support that the auxiliary is not in a focus position above PolP is suggested by the same auxiliary split found in *wh*-subject answers</u>, shown in (8). In these answers, the element in focus is the subject, and the auxiliary remains in situ. Given the same pattern as with VPT and A2 answers to polar questions, I take this as evidence that the auxiliary remains in situ across the three constructions.

(8) a.   Q: Sopo sing lagek   njahit   rok   iku?   A: * Aku   **lagek**.
           who REL   PROG   AV.sew   skirt DEM   1SG   PROG
           'Who is sewing that skirt?

     b.   Q: Sopo sing iso   nyopir   sepeda montor?   A: Aku   **iso**.
           who REL   CIRC.POS AV.drive   bike   motor   1SG CIRC.POS
           'Who can drive a motorbike?'   'I can.'

▶ While VPE is licensed in coordinated and non-coordinated declaratives in Javanese (Vander Klok 2016), the generalization is that VP-topic-drop is employed in the environment of A2-type answers (however the auxiliary split is accounted for, cf. Cole et al. 2008, Vander Klok 2015). This finding provides further support that the syntactic environment matters for which type of ellipsis structures are possible (cf. Lipták 2012; Sailor 2014).

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