Response particles and verbal identity

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This paper revisits the *Verbal Identity Requirement* on V-stranding ellipsis in Hungarian, and argues that verb movement out of an ellipsis site does not require the verb to be lexically identical to its antecedent in contexts where emphasis is on the polarity. By showing that lexical identity need not be satisfied in case V-stranding is accompanied by a response particle, we argue that whenever the response particle is missing the preference for identity is not triggered by ellipsis in this language, but is due to a pragmatic inference.

Keywords: ellipsis, ellipsis identity, head movement, response particles, verb-echo answers

1. Introduction

Verb-stranding ellipsis is the name of a phenomenon in which ellipsis applies to a constituent out of which verb movement has taken place. The phenomenon has been attested in many (genetically related and unrelated) languages, such as Irish (McCloskey 1991; 2011), Chinese or Japanese (Otani & Whitman 1991, but see Hoji 1998), Swahili (Ngonyani 1996), Finnish (Holmberg 2001; 2016), Hungarian (Lipták 2012; 2013), Portuguese (Martins 1994; Cyrino & Matos 2002; Santos 2009; Peruch Mezari 2016) and Russian (Gribanova 2013; 2017; 2018), to name a few.

In this type of elliptical construction, movement lifts the verb into a functional position above some domain (YP in (1)), with consequent ellipsis of this domain.

(1) *V-stranding ellipsis, general structure*
$[_{XP}\, V_i\, [_{YP}\, \not{t}_i]]]$

The syntactic category of YP as well as the XP whose head is targeted by verb movement varies across languages and constructions; XP can for example stand for AspP, TP, PolP or CP. (2) illustrates the last type (movement to C°) from

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Finnish (Holmberg 2001, Example (1)). This elliptical pattern is called a *verb-echo answer* in Holmberg (2016): the verb serves as the affirmative answer to a polar question and 'echos' the verb in the antecedent question.[1]

(2) A: *On-ko Liisa kotona?* Finnish
is-Q Liisa at.home
'Is Liisa at home?'
B: *On.*
is
'Yes.'
B′: [$_{CP}$ On [$_{TP}$ ~~Liisa~~ ~~*t*~~ ~~kotona~~]]

Landau (2020) has called into question whether the verb can raise to any functional category and across any syntactic domain in an unconstrained manner in V-stranding constructions, at the same time reaffirming that verb-echo answers like (2) or comparable expressions of polarity emphasis are instances of V-stranding ellipsis, which are derived by verb movement to a polarity-related position, such as Pol^{o} or C^{o}.

Verb-standing ellipsis phenomena have received attention for two reasons. The first is the empirical difficulty one faces when trying to distinguish this type of single constituent ellipsis from the application(s) of individual argument omission (pro-drop or argument ellipsis), as both processes can deliver identical surface output (cf. Holmberg 2016; Landau 2018). The second reason pertains to the topic of this paper, a puzzling identity requirement on the moving verb, which goes by the name of the *Verbal Identity Requirement* (VIR) (also called *lexical identity condition*), originally stated in Goldberg (2005):

(3) *Verbal Identity Requirement* (VIR) (Goldberg 2005: 171, (26))
The antecedent and target-clause main verbs of VP ellipsis must be identical, minimally, in their root and derivational morphology.

This requirement dictates that the stranded verb in V-stranding ellipsis be *lexically identical*, i.e. correspond to the same lexical or encyclopedic item as its correlate in the antecedent, at least when it comes to the verbal root and possible derivational morphology associated with that root. This rules out the realization of the verb via any other verb, including synonymous verbs, consider the situation in the Finnish Example (4).

1. Present tense and definiteness agreement are not glossed. For convenience, preverbs are glossed indicating their lexical meaning when possible. Hungarian verb-echo answers are given literal translations, and not proper English ones, in order to reflect their structure better.

(4) A: *Hajotti-ko Marja ruukun?* Finnish (Holmberg 2016: 58, (12))
broke$_1$-Q Marja the.pot.GEN
'Did Marja break the pot?'
B: *Hajotti. / *Rikkoi.*
broke$_1$ broke$_2$
'Yes.'

While lexical content must be the same, inflectional morphology, i.e. tense, mood, finiteness, agreement can freely vary between the stranded verb and its correlate, cf. (5).

(5) A: *Osta-isi-t-ko sen kirjan?* (Holmberg 2016: 73, (35))
buy-COND-2SG-Q that book.GEN
'Would you buy that book?'
B: *Osta-isi-n.*
buy-COND-1SG
'Yes.' (lit. 'I would buy.')

Earlier proposals about the VIR (reviewed in Section 3) derive this effect from the special nature of head movement among the movement processes, for example its late timing (Schoorlemmer & Temmerman 2012).

The purpose of this paper is to bring new data into the discussion on the VIR from Hungarian, and to show that verb-stranding ellipsis expressing polarity emphasis, the so-called *verb-echo*, does not comply with this identity requirement in case a verbal answer is accompanied by a response particle. This in turn shows that (3) is not a condition on head-stranding ellipsis in this language, instead, lexical identity is a preference most likely due to the echoic nature of the response. If correct, this has the welcome consequence that head movement should not be held responsible for triggering an identity requirement unattested elsewhere in the grammar.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 introduces V-stranding ellipsis as attested in verb-echo answers in Hungarian. Section 3 details what is currently known about the puzzling *Verbal Identity Requirement*. Section 4 provides the novel data pertaining to the lack of the VIR in verbal answers associated with a response particle. Section 5 argues that the preference for identity in verb-echo answers is pragmatic in nature, and Section 6 concludes.

2. Verb-stranding ellipsis in verb-echos in Hungarian

2.1 Arguments for V-stranding ellipsis

Hungarian has verb-stranding ellipsis in contexts in which the polarity of a clause is emphatically asserted, contrasted or questioned. As I argued in Lipták (2013), this is the case in polar question-answer pairs (cf. (6)) as well as echo assertions (in the terminology of Farkas 2009; Farkas & Bruce 2010) confirming or reversing the polarity of a question or an assertion. As these examples show, in all such contexts, it is possible to elide a predicate to the exclusion of the verb both in affirmative and in negative clauses, illustrated in the following examples. Since the verb in the answer echos the verb in the antecedent in all these cases, I will use the term 'verb-echo' for responses of all these sorts.

(6) A: *János találkozott a szomszédokkal?*
János meet.PST.3SG the neighbor.PL.INST
'Did János meet the neighbors?'
B1: *(Igen,) találkozott ~~velük~~.*
yes meet.PST.3SG they.INST
'(Yes,) (he) met.'
B2: *Nem, nem találkozott ~~velük~~.*
no not meet.PST.3SG they.INST
'No, (he) didn't meet.'

(7) A: *János találkozott a szomszédokkal.*
János meet.PST.3SG the neighbor.PL.INST
'János met the neighbors.'
B1: *Igen, találkozott ~~velük~~.*
yes meet.PST.3SG they.INST
'Yes, (he) met.'
B2: *Nem, nem találkozott ~~velük~~.*
no not meet.PST.3SG they.INST
'No, (he) didn't meet.'

(8) A: *János nem találkozott a szomszédokkal.*
János not meet.PST.3SG the neighbor.PL.INST
'János didn't meet the neighbors.'
B1: *Nem, nem találkozott ~~velük~~.*
no not meet.PST.3SG they.INST
'No, (he) didn't meet.'

B2: *De, találkozott* ~~*velük*~~.
but meet.PST.3SG they.INST
'But (he) met.'

Verb-echos are elliptical utterances, featuring V-stranding ellipsis. A priori, there are two types of analysis that the data could receive: the missing material can be due to individual application(s) of argument omission (pro-drop or argument ellipsis); alternatively, it can be due to the ellipsis of a single constituent containing arguments as well as adjuncts when present, a constituent vacated by the verb. In Lipták (2013), I have provided arguments for the latter option, by pointing out the following:

(9) *Arguments for V-stranding VP ellipsis in polarity contexts*
i. The omission of arguments and adjuncts cannot be due to subject or object pro-drop, as phrases that cannot undergo pro-drop can be missing (e.g. instrumental pronouns as in (6)–(8), or plural objects (to which we return in Section 4.2)
ii. The attested omission allows for sloppy interpretation, while pro-drop does not.
iii. It is not possible to omit some arguments or adjuncts but leave others realized (Kenesei et al 1998). This is difficult to explain if ellipsis applies to individual arguments or adjuncts separately.

Instead of repeating these arguments, in the present paper I provide novel arguments for the same claim, namely that the data should receive an account in terms of V-stranding ellipsis.

Reinforcing the conclusion that the data are not derived via individual pro-drop or some other anaphoric process of argument omission, we can observe that arguments that are not anaphorizable can be missing in this type of ellipsis. One such case is non-specific indefinite phrases like *valaki* 'someone', *valami* 'something' and their ilk, which cannot be referred to by way of a null pronoun (see Holmberg 2016: 80);[2] nevertheless, they can be missing in polarity contexts.

(10) A: *Érkezett* *ma* *már* *valaki?*
arrive.PST.3SG today already someone
'Has anyone arrived today?'

2. Holmberg (2016) states this as follows:

(i) *The indefinite-pro-drop restriction*
An existential indefinite singular subject pronoun cannot be *pro*-dropped.

B: *Érkezett.*
arrive.PST.3SG
'Arrived.'

(11) A: *Készítesz valamit a gyerekeknek?*
prepare.2SG something.ACC the children.PL.DAT
'Will you prepare something for the kids?'
B: *Készítek.*
prepare.1SG
'(I) prepare.'

The same kind of incompatibility with pronominal reference is present when the clause contains an idiomatic combination of a verb plus an internal argument (Merchant 2018). In these contexts, the object lacks any kind of individual reference or meaning on its own, consequently the meaning of the object cannot be targeted by anaphoric reference. Nevertheless, verb-echo answers can be formed responding to verb plus object idioms of this sort:[3]

(12) A: *(Mit csinál?) Húzza a lóbőrt?*
what.ACC do.3SG pull.3SG the horse.skin.ACC
'What is he doing? Is he sleeping?' Lit. 'Does he pull the skin of the horse?'
B: *Húzza.*
pull.3SG
Lit. '(He) pulls (it).'

3. The fact that it is possible to delete one part of the idiom can also be construed as an argument against a specific type of argument ellipsis analysis of the missing material, following Sato (2020). This work argues that it is impossible to elide a part of a figurative idiom in Japanese, which he traces back to the LF-copying nature of argument ellipsis in this language, the phenomenon that underlies this kind of omission in his view.

(i) *Sato-kun-wa ukkari koosyooaite-ni tenouti-o misetesimatta.*
Sato-TIT-TOP inadvertently negotiating.partner-TO palm.of.hand-ACC show.PST.3SG
*Suzuki-kun-wa raibarutasya-ni *(tenouti-o) misetesimatta.*
Suzuki-TIT-TOP competitor.company-TO palm.of.hand-ACC show.PST.3SG
(Sato 2020: (19))
'Mr. Sato inadvertently showed his secret plan to his negotiating partner. Mr. Suzuki showed his secret plan to his competitor company.'

If Sato's account of the Japanese facts is correct, we expect that the deletion attested in (12)–(13) is not argument ellipsis with an LF-copying mechanism.

(13) A: *Ez a bajuszkirály eszi-e már a kefét?*[4]
this the mustache.king eat.3SG-Q already the brush.ACC
'Is this mustache man raving?' Lit. 'Does he eat the brush?'
B: *Ette.*
eat.PST.3SG
Lit. '(He) ate (it).'

In addition, we can also construct examples in which one of the elided constituents is a nominal or adjectival predicate, which are phrases that cannot undergo ellipsis not only in the manner of pro-drop (as they are not referential), but also not in the manner of argument ellipsis (Gribanova 2020).

(14) A: *A kollégák közül látszott már valaki optimistának ebben az ügyben?*
the colleague.PL among seem.PST.3SG already someone optimist.DAT this.INE the matter.INE
'Among your colleagues, has anyone seemed optimistic in this matter?'
B: *(Igen,) látszott ~~már valaki optimistának~~. Az Irén.*
yes seem.PST.3SG already someone optimist.DAT the Irén
'(Yes), seemed. Irén.'

Facts like (14) therefore can provide an argument for establishing that argument ellipsis is not what gives rise to verb-echos in Hungarian.

Summing up, the data presented above in (10)–(14) would be difficult to explain in terms of pro-drop or individual argument omission, but these patterns are predicted without further ado if we assume that the missing material in verbal responses corresponds to the ellipsis of a single constituent. This confirms the result of my earlier considerations, listed in (9). The fact that Hungarian has V-to-T movement in neutral clauses (Kenesei 2001; Surányi 2009a) is in line with this finding, too: V-stranding ellipsis should be possible if the verb moves to a position outside the *v*P/VP.

2.2 The configuration of V-stranding ellipsis

As for the syntactic configuration of V-stranding ellipsis in polarity contexts, I follow my earlier work (Lipták 2013) in taking the elided constituent in verb-echos to be a *v*P, a constituent that is vacated by the movement of the verb to a higher position, namely T° in affirmative clauses. Preverbs (aka verbal particles), when

4. This example is from Lukács (1997), available at: http://mek.niif.hu/02900/02915/html/01.htm, accessed on 6 February 2020.

present, move from a VP-internal position to Spec,TP, to precede the verb as well (Surányi 2009a; b) and can form a morphosyntactic word with the verb (Surányi 2009b; Lipták & Saab 2019).

Since ellipsis is inherently tied to polarity emphasis, I also assume that the structure of verb-echo answers involves the polarity projection PolP (ΣP in Farkas 2009; Piñón 1992) on top of TP, and the head of this polarity phrase is the licensor of ellipsis. PolP is always projected in clauses with negation (Pol in this case has a negative [Neg] feature and triggers verb movement, stranding the preverb). In clauses with positive polarity, PolP is only projected if positive polarity is emphatic (i.e., the polarity of the clause is contrastive or new information), in all other syntactic contexts positive polarity is unmarked (Farkas 2009). Emphatic positive polarity is realized as emphasis on the verb or the preverb, when present, indicated by the ‖ sign:

(15) A: *János találkozott a szomszédokkal?*
János meet.PST.3SG the neighbor.PL.INST
'Did János meet the neighbors?'
B: ‖*Találkozott.*
meet.PST.3SG
'(He) met.'

Emphatic polarity furthermore licenses the ellipsis of the *v*P – which is an instance of licensing across a distance, implemented as an *Agree* relation between a feature of Pol and the ellipsis triggering [E]-feature on T (adopting the theory of long-distance ellipsis licensing by Aelbrecht 2010). The configuration of positive polarity verb-echo answers is thus the following.[5]

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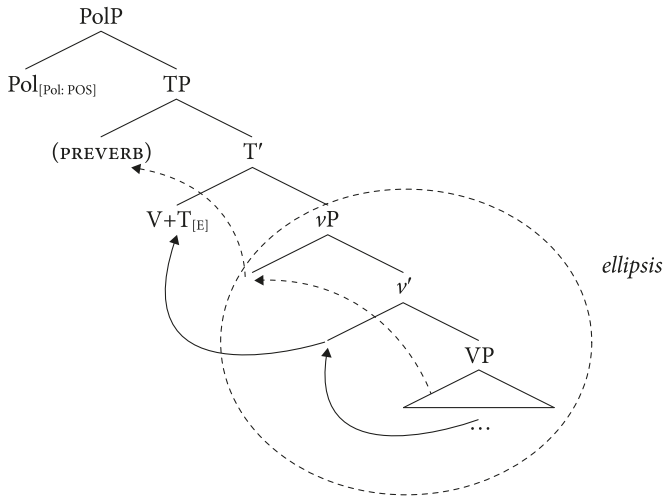
5. An alternative would be to say that the verb moves to Pol^{0} and the entire TP elides. In this case ellipsis licensing by Pol^{0} would take place locally (under sisterhood). Reasons for not adopting this alternative analysis have to do with verb-echo answers that (optionally) contain not just the finite verb, but also any number of infinitives in so-called verbal complexes, cf. (i). Note also that the preverb alone is also a suitable answer (Lipták 2012).

(i) A: *Be akarsz menni a boltba?*
PV want.2SG go.INF the shop.INE
'Do you want to go into the shop?'
B: *Be (akarok (menni)).*
PV want.2SG go.INF
'I do. / I want. / I want to go.'

As I argued in Lipták (2013), multi-verb answers of this sort cannot be explained by assuming head movement to Pol^{0} and TP ellipsis, as (i) the verbs do not form a single verbal head, but rather a complex verb phrase and (ii) positing remnant XP-movement for the verbal material out of the ellipsis site would present many unwanted complications (see Holmberg 2016 for the

(16)



What is crucial to stress for the argument to be made in Sections 4 and 5, verb-echo answers are answers to a polar question. As such, their sole semantic import is the expression of affirmative polarity: the verb-echo answer provides a value for the polarity variable that the polar question asks about (Holmberg 2016), which is a positive value in this case. The focus in the answer is the polarity specification, and this is what the emphasis on the verb signals. Importantly, the lexical content of the verb is not in focus: the verb is fully given, it does not represent either contrastive or new information focus of any sort.

3. The verbal identity requirement

Having seen that Hungarian has V-stranding verb ellipsis and it is derived by verb movement to a functional projection (identified as T^{o} above), we now turn to the topic of this paper, the Verbal Identity Requirement, repeated from (3) above:

(17) *Verbal Identity Requirement* (VIR)
The antecedent and target-clause main verbs of VP ellipsis must be identical, minimally, in their root and derivational morphology.

As discussed in the introduction, the VIR requires that the stranded lexical verb is the exact same lexical item as its correlate, ruling out a change to any other verb, synonymous or distinct in meaning. In Lipták (2013), I provided (18a) without

same conclusion for Finnish verb-echo answers.) Structures like (i) therefore argue for the presence of a (possibly) long distance licensing relation between Pol^{o} and the elided constituent.

any further comment as illustration that Hungarian also shows this requirement on verb stranding, stating also that if the verb is contrastive (cf. (18b)), the identity requirement does not hold (data from Bánréti 2007: 25). Similarly, when the VIR applies, it only applies to the lexical content of the verb, and not to its inflectional morphology (18c) (compare the Finnish facts in (4)–(5)):

(18) a. A: *Kedveli János a szomszédokat?*
like.3SG János the neighbor.PL.ACC
'Does János like the neighbors?'
B: **Szereti.*
like/love.3SG
'(He) likes/loves.'

b. *Én* VETTEM *drága autót, te meg* ELADTÁL.
I buy.PST.1SG expensive car.ACC you on.the.other.hand PV.sell.PST.2SG
'I BOUGHT an expensive car and you SOLD one.'

c. A: *Megcsinálnád a házifeladataimat?*
PV.do.COND.2SG the homework.POSS1SG.PL.ACC
'Would you do my homework?'
B: *Hát, megcsinálhatom.*
well PV.do.POT.1SG
'Well, I may do.'

The situation is similar in many other languages when it comes to the observed split: non-contrastive verbs fall under the VIR, but contrastive verbs do not, as was claimed for Russian (Gribanova 2013; 2017), European Portuguese (Santos 2009), Swahili (Ngonyani 1996). In fact, all languages we know of in this domain show this split, with the exception of Irish (Gribanova 2017; McCloskey 2017), Uzbek (Gribanova 2020) and Lithuanian (Portelance 2020): in the latter three languages, the VIR holds for both contrastive and non-contrastive verbs in the same way.

The VIR is a highly puzzling requirement in both types of languages, because it is specific to verb movement out of an ellipsis site, making configurations like (1) exceptional when it comes to the way ellipsis identity should be calculated. In other elliptical environments, lexical identity is *not* required for elements that receive pronunciation *outside the ellipsis site*, including items that move there from inside the ellipsis site.

To appreciate this fact, we provide some background on identity relations in ellipsis. It is well-known that material inside the ellipsis site falls under specific identity restrictions (cf. the definition of the *recoverability* condition in Chomsky 1965, as well as Merchant 2001; 2013; Chung 2006; Barros 2014; Lipták 2015 for more recent discussion). The identity restriction holding on elided material has

two ingredients according to our current understanding: a semantic requirement called e-GIVENNESS (Merchant 2001) requiring mutual entailment between the ellipsis site and its antecedent (cf. (19a)) and a lexico-syntactic requirement banning the introduction of new lexemes in the ellipsis site (originating from Chung 2006, cf. (18b)):

(19) Identity requirements on elided material
  a. *semantic*:
  Elided constituents are e-GIVEN.[6] (Merchant 2001: 26, (42))
  b. *lexico-syntactic*:
  Any non-trace lexeme *m* that occurs in an elided phrase must have an equivalent overt correlate *m'* in the elided phrase's antecedent.
  (Merchant 2013: 460, (63))

As neither of these restrictions holds for elements *outside* the ellipsis site, those items may be lexically non-identical to their correlates (when they have a correlate). This also holds for constituents that move out of the ellipsis site via A- or A-bar movement, like the A-movement of a subject (20), the A-bar movement of a *wh*-constituent (21a), or a contrastively focused phrase (21b). The variables left behind in the ellipsis site by A- and A-bar moved constituents do not count for the purposes of identity calculations (Rooth 1992; Merchant 2001):[7]

(20) *Bill will bring a present to Sue …*
  and John$_i$ *might* [$_{vP}$ ~~*t*$_i$ *bring a present to Sue*~~], *too.* A-movement

(21) a. *Alex has applied for the position, but I don't know who else.* Ā-movement
  b. A: *Alex wanted to eat NUTS.*
  B: *No, CHOCOLATE*$_i$ [$_{TP}$ ~~Alex wanted to eat *t*$_i$~~].

As examples (20)–(21) testify, there is no lexico-syntactic condition holding for ellipsis-external material, which makes the behavior of verb-stranding ellipsis in this respect very puzzling: why is verb movement out of the ellipsis site distinct

6. An expression E counts as e-GIVEN iff (i) E has a salient antecedent A and, modulo ∃-type shifting, A entails the F-closure of E and (ii) E entails the F(ocus)-closure of A. The F-closure of α is defined as the result of replacing F-marked parts of α with ∃-bound variables of the appropriate type (modulo ∃-type shifting; which is a type-shifting operation that raises expressions to type <t> and existentially binds unfilled arguments.)

7. The representation here follows the move-and-delete approach to remnant formation in clausal ellipsis (Merchant 2001), in which the remnant of ellipsis moves out of the elided chunk. The identity considerations would remain the same in *in-situ* approaches with the difference that pronounced remnants (as opposed to non-pronounced material) do not require lexical identity.

from other movements with respect to the application of a lexical identity condition?

For languages in which the VIR is relaxed for contrastive verbs, such as Hungarian (cf. (18b) again), the behavior of contrastive verbs can be understood if we can argue that contrastive verbs undergo *focus-driven* movement out of the ellipsis site. This can be achieved if we demonstrate that they move via A-bar XP-movement, or they proceed via *syntactic* head movement that leaves traces in a similar manner as the movement in (21b), i.e. such that the trace of the focus-marked item is ignored by the identity requirements in (19).[8]

The application of the VIR to non-contrastive verbs is still puzzling for these languages, however, as something needs to be said about the special nature of non-contrastive head movement out of ellipsis triggering this effect in way or another. An influential account for the facts, Schoorlemmer & Temmerman (2012), states that the stranded verb in these cases must be part of the ellipsis site in LF, and thus fall under the jurisdiction of the conditions in (19) after all, because (non-contrastive) head movement takes place in PF only.

I have argued elsewhere that the VIR should not be attributed to head movement in Hungarian, based on the observation that the effect is triggered by phrasal movement out of an ellipsis site, too, in cases of preverb-stranding ellipsis, where only a preverb is stranded as a remnant of ellipsis (Lipták 2012; 2018), illustrated in (22). In this example, both *át* 'across' and *keresztül* 'across' are preverbs associated with the verb *gázol* 'wade', with roughly synonymous meaning, yet they are not exchangeable in preverb-stranding ellipsis:

(22) A: *A fiúk átgázoltak a patakon végül?*
the boy.PL THROUGH$_1$.wade.PST.3PL the stream.SUP eventually
'Did the boys wade through the stream eventually?'
B: **Keresztül.*
THROUGH$_2$
'Yes.' Lit. 'Through.'

In this paper, I report other considerations about the VIR: I argue that we should not attribute the VIR to head movement out of an ellipsis site, because it is possi-

8. The latter approach to the VIR is proposed by Gribanova (2018). This work differentiates between syntactic head movement and postsyntactic head amalgamation on the basis of independent criteria (see Gribanova & Harizanov 2019) and claims that the VIR applies to all types of verbs (contrastive and non-contrastive) only in languages in which verb movement is postsyntactic (as in Irish). Languages in which (the relevant step of) verb movement is syntactic exhibit the VIR only for non-contrastive types of head movement, contrastive head movement taking place in syntax and leaving a variable in the ellipsis site just like any other variable.

ble to find contexts where head movement does take place out of an ellipsis site, yet the VIR is not triggered. This context is described in the next section.

4. Response particles remove the need for identity

The argument is based on the following observation: while verb-echos are degraded when they are lexically non-identical, the exact same answers are acceptable or significantly improved when accompanied by response particles before or after the verbal answer.

Let's call verbal answers that only contain a verb 'verb only' echo answers, while the type in which an echoic verb is preceded or followed by a response particle, 'verb plus particle' echo answers. Using this terminology, we can state that in a 'verb only' echo a lexical mismatch is dispreferred, but in a 'verb plus particle' answer the mismatch is tolerated. In this section, we describe this effect in three steps. We start the discussion by looking at affirmative answers to questions with positive polarity (Section 4.1.) and support the generalization by the findings of a questionnaire study in Section 4.2. Then we turn to other types of verbal echos in Section 4.3. and show that the generalization also holds for the 'reversing' type of answers, that is, for negative answers to polar questions with positive polarity and for positive answers to polar questions with negative polarity.

4.1 Affirmative verb-echos with and without *igen*

To illustrate the generalization we are about to introduce, we need to construe examples with synonymous verb pairs, such as *berak* [into.put$_1$] / *betesz* [into.put$_2$] 'put into something' and *bérbe ad* [rent.into give] / *kiad* [out.give] 'rent something'. These verbs have identical denotations, and do not exhibit stylistic, register or expressive differences. In addition, they have identical argument structures, too – this is important, in order to rule out the possibility that verb-echos are unacceptable due to syntactic non-identity between the elided *v*P and its antecedent (Levin 1982; Johnson 2001; Den Dikken 2020, among others).

The following sets of data (obtained via a pilot study in 2017) show that verb-echo answers are degraded if the answer and the question use these lexically distinct verbs, cf. (23B2, 24B2), but this degradation disappears if the verbal answer is accompanied by an affirmative response particle, cf. the (B3) and (B4) examples below.[9] Note that the response particle *igen* 'yes' in Hungarian can be used in ini-

9. Section 4.2 below will specify more exactly to what extent B3 and B4 answers are ameliorated with respect to B2 ones, reporting acceptability judgements by 17 speakers.

tial or clause final position in an utterance, speakers having a slight reference for the initial position.

(23) A: *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2SG the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC the bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B1: *Beraktam.*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.1SG
B2: ?*Betettem.*
INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG
'(I) put.'
B3: *Igen, betettem.*
yes INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG
B4: *Betettem, igen.*
INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG yes
'(Yes), (I) put, (yes).'

(24) A: *Bérbe adta a tulajdonos ezeket az ingatlanokat?*
rent.INTO give.PST.3SG the owner these.ACC the tenements.PL.ACC
'Did the owner rent these tenements?'
B1: *Bérbe adta.*
rent.INTO give.PST.3SG
B2: ?*Kiadta.*
OUT.give.PST.3SG
'(He) rented.'
B3: *Igen, kiadta.*
yes OUT.give.PST.3SG
B4: *Kiadta, igen.*
OUT.give.PST.3SG yes
'(Yes), (he) rented, (yes).'

Interestingly, the same effect can be observed if the mismatching verbs are not fully synonymous, but nevertheless can be interchangeably used in a given context, such as *felad* [up.give] / *elküld* [away.send] 'post something' or *néz* [look.at] / *figyel* [watch] in the sense 'follow something', as illustrated below. Note also that in both cases, the pairs differ in their entirety: the latter pair lacks preverbs to begin with, and the former differs in both preverb and verb.

(25) A: *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
UP.give.PST.2SG the invitation.PL.ACC the foreign guest.PL.DAT
'Have you posted the invitations to the foreign guests?'
B1: *Feladtam.*
UP.give.PST.2SG
B2: ?*Elküldtem.*
AWAY.send.PST.1SG
'(I) posted.'
B3: *Igen, elküldtem.*
yes AWAY.send.PST.1SG
B4: *Elküldtem, igen.*
AWAY.send.PST.1SG yes
'(Yes), (I) posted, (yes).'

(26) A: *Nézed az árfolyamokat minden nap?*
look(at).2SG the rate.PL.ACC every day
'Do you look at the rates every day?'
B1: *Nézem.*
look(at).1SG
B2: ?*Figyelem.*
watch.1SG
'(I) watch.'
B3: *Igen, figyelem.*
yes watch.1SG
B4: *Figyelem, igen.*
watch.1SG yes
'(Yes), (I) watch, (yes).'

Now, why are the above data problematic for the verbal identity requirement (VIR)? Importantly, the VIR-violating 'verb only' answers (in B2) involve ellipsis, just as the 'verb plus particle' answers. In 'verb plus particle' answers the verb shows up without its otherwise obligatory and un-pro-dropable internal argument(s), and spells out as the only overt word in its clause. This must mean that the internal arguments and other *v*P-material must have undergone single constituent (*v*P-)ellipsis in these examples, for the reasons listed in Section 2. The addition of the response particle does not change the elliptical nature of the verbal answer in any way.

To demonstrate this point more precisely, we need to consider some background on the syntactic distribution and function of response particles. Response particles are words capable of answering polar questions or responding to assertions by themselves. When doing so, response particles convey a full-fledged pos-

itive or negative proposition, which is due to the fact that they contain polarity features on their own. Earlier research (partly on Hungarian) such as Farkas (2009); Roelofsen & Farkas (2015) maintained that polar responses to questions and assertions are categorized by two polarity types: absolute polarity (the polarity of the response, being either positive ([POS]) or negative ([NEG]), and relative polarity, which is defined as polarity with respect to the utterance they respond to. As such they can agree with a previous polarity (have an [AGREE] relative polarity feature) or disagree with it (have a [REVERSE] relative polarity feature).

Zooming in on the working of the absolute polarity feature of response particles, I assume, together with Holmberg (2016), that polar questions ask about the value of a polarity variable inside them. An answer to a polarity question values the polarity of the sentence in the question, which can be done in more than one way. In Hungarian, the positive polarity value in an answer is most naturally provided either by (a) an echoed verb, (b) a response particle or (c) a combination of the two. I assume that all these answers are truth-conditionally equivalent (Holmberg & Roberts 2014).

In echoic 'verb only' answers, the positive polarity of the answer is signaled as sentential emphasis on the verb, as was argued in Section 3, with the rest of the verb phrase elided. Providing an example for [POS]/[POS] type of discourse, the structure of the answer can be illustrated in (26), where gray shading indicates ellipsis.

(27) A: *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2SG the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC the
táskádba?
bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B: [$_{\text{PolP[Pol:POS]}}$ [$_{\text{TP}}$ ‖beraktam [$_{v\text{P}}$ a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskámba]]]

In dialogues where the answer is provided by a response particle alone, the particle directly values the polarity of the answer, via its own polarity features. The particle *igen* has an absolute positive feature ([POS]), while *nem* has an absolute negative polarity feature [(NEG)] (Farkas 2009). For the specific implementation of how such a feature interacts with the proposition that counts as the answer, I furthermore follow the strand of research that assumes that the valuation of polarity is syntactic: response particles form part of an elliptically reduced proposition, in which the polarity is valued via agreement by the polarity feature of the response particle (Kramer & Rawlins 2009; Roelofsen & Farkas 2015; Wiltschko 2017, among others). The constituent following the response particle is lexically identical (up to the feature of polarity) to the proposition in the question and can therefore undergo ellipsis.

The position of response particles can be conceived of as a focus position above the PolP, from where they value the polarity of the clause via agreement (Holmberg 2016). Assuming for Hungarian that the elided category in this case is the entire PolP, the structure of a simple *igen* answer therefore can be analyzed as in (28B), the dashed line indicating an agreement relation between the response particle and the polarity specification of the elided clause.

(28) A: *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2SG the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC the bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B: [$_{FocP}$ igen$_{[Pol: POS]}$ [$_{PolP[Pol:\_]}$ [$_{TP}$ beraktam a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskámba]]]

The third option for providing and answer to a polar question is the combination of a verb-echo and a response particle in the answer, as we specified above. When in combination, the response particle and the verb are separated by a comma in writing and require a prosodic break between them, with both the particle and the verb-echo in a prosodic phrase on its own. I take the prosodic realization to indicate that these combined answers contain a bi-clausal structure or an adjunction/juxtaposition relation (see also Gribanova 2017 or Esipova 2021 for a similar claim about Russian). In other words, combined answers are a sequence of the two distinct answer types, in either order:

(29) The structure of 'verb plus particle' answers
i. with an initial *igen*
A: *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B: [$_{FocP}$ igen$_{[Pol: POS]}$ [$_{PolP[Pol:\_]}$ [$_{TP}$ …]]], [$_{PolP[Pol: POS]}$ [$_{TP}$ beraktam [$_{vP}$ a holnapi órákra…]]]
ii. with a final *igen*
A: *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B: [$_{PolP[Pol: POS]}$ [$_{TP}$ beraktam [$_{vP}$ a holnapi órákra…]]], [$_{FocP}$ igen$_{[Pol: POS]}$ [$_{PolP[Pol:\_]}$ [$_{TP}$ …]]]

Importantly, as (29) shows, 'verb plus particle' answers involve head-movement out of an ellipsis site, just like 'verb only' answers do. The fact that they do not exhibit the VIR effect shows therefore that the VIR *cannot* be a condition on head-movement out of the ellipsis site: if it was such an effect, we would expect it to rear its head in configurations like (29), contrary to our finding above.

Note that the conclusion we reached does not only follow with respect to the analysis of response particles as words introducing elliptical clauses. Even if one takes response particle answers to be non-elliptical, with the response particle as a propositional anaphor (Krifka 2013), the same conclusion follows: the verb-echo before or after the particle still needs to be considered elliptical in its own right.

It is also important to point out that under the view taken here, namely the clausal ellipsis view to particle answers, the final positioning of the response particle provides the best argument for the claim we are making. This has to do with the fact that in such examples, consider (29iiB again), the elided *v*P in the first, verb-echo part of the utterance most likely has its antecedent in the polarity question that immediately precedes it. In the opposite pattern (29iB), the verbal echo follows the response particle and can be anaphoric to the elliptical clause that the particle is associated with.[10] This makes 'verb plus particle' answers with a final particle the most minimally different from 'verb only' echos, as in both cases the missing *v*P is directly anteceded by a polar question.

4.2 Findings of a questionnaire study

To address the question whether the addition of a response particle indeed impacts the acceptability of V-stranding in polarity contexts, I conducted a web-based acceptability judgment survey with native speakers of Hungarian (mostly living in Pest and Baranya counties). The questionnaire was run via the Qualtrics platform in January 2022 and was distributed via personal contacts.

The questionnaire aimed to check the validity of the claims in the above section and to see whether answers containing other types of polarity (negative, reversing, see Section 4.3 below) show similar results. The experimental items (36 in total) were elliptical verbal responses in a dialogue format. The answers varied along two conditions: match vs. mismatch in the verbs and the presence vs. absence of the response particle next to a verb. The mismatching verb pairs had two lexicalizations: *berak* [into.put$_1$] vs. *betesz* [into.put$_2$] 'put into something', and *felad* [up.give] vs. *elküld* [away.send] 'post something'. Participants were asked to grade the acceptability of the test items on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was defined

10. A less likely option is that in (29iiB) the verb-echo is cataphoric and takes its antecedent in the missing constituent following the response particle, while in (29iB) it is anaphorically related to the missing material after the response particle. As no difference in behavior is observable between the acceptability of these two orders (see Section 4.2 for observations of this type), I leave this possibility uninvestigated. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

as "teljesen rossz" (completely bad) and 5 was defined as "teljesen jó" (completely fine). For positive answers to positive questions, the data looked as follows:

(30) – *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2SG the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC the bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
– *Beraktam.*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.1SG
'(I) put.'

(31) – *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'idem'
– *Betettem.*
INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG
'(I) put.'

(32) – *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'idem'
– *Igen, betettem.*
yes INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG
'Yes, (I) put.'

(33) – *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'idem'
– *Betettem, igen.*
INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG yes
'(I) put, yes.'

(34) – *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
UP.give.PST.2SG the invitation.PL.ACC the foreign guest.PL.DAT
'Have you posted the invitations to the foreign guests?'
– *Feladtam.*
UP.give.PST.2SG
'(I) posted.'

(35) – *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
'idem'
– *Elküldtem.*
AWAY.send.PST.1SG
'(I) sent.'

(36) – *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
'idem'

– *Igen, elküldtem.*
yes AWAY.send.PST.1SG
'Yes, (I) sent.'

(37) – *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
'idem'
– *Elküldtem, igen.*
AWAY.send.PST.1SG yes
'(I) sent, yes.'

Further experimental items included other answer types using a verb-echo with and without a response particle, namely answers with the negative response particle *nem* and the positive reversing particle *de* (see the description of these in Section 4.3.). The examples were mixed with 18 fillers (with 4 of them being a floor level anchor) and presented in a randomized order. As part of the fillers, the participants had to judge two dialogues with plural object omission, illustrated in Example (38):

(38) – *Miért dugta el Peti az ajándékokat?*
why hide.PST.3SG away Peti the gift.PL.ACC
'Why did Peti hide the gifts?'
– *Hogy a lánya ki ne bontsa vacsora előtt.*
that the daughter.POSS.3SG out not open.IMP.3SG dinner before
'So that his daughter does not open (them) before dinner.'

These sentences were added to control for the possibility of plural object drop as the elliptical strategy in (30)–(37). As Section 2.1 mentioned, V-stranding ellipsis needs to be differentiated from other omission processes. For the cases at hand, speakers who can drop plural objects might not resort to verb-stranding ellipsis, but to an alternative derivation whereby the object is missing as a result of object drop and the locative phrase is treated as an optional argument in the answer, shown in (39).

(39) – *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2SG the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC the bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
– *Betettem* [$_{DP}$ ~~őket~~].
INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG them
'(I) put them.'

To remove this possibility, the study only analyzed data from informants for whom plural object drop as in (38) was ungrammatical or degraded, which

amounted to 17 of the 50 informants participating in the study. The rest of this paper considers the data from these 17 informants only.[11]

The results of the study when it comes to lexically matching and mismatching affirmative answers to polar questions in (30)–(37) are summarized in Table 1. The mean acceptability scores per test item show that while mismatching 'verb only' answers were degraded compared to the fully acceptable identical verb pairs, 'verb plus particle' answers were given better scores in both lexicalizations. The improvement is substantial in both cases: in the case of the *berak / betesz* pair, the result is full grammaticality, in the case of the *felad / elküld* pair, the result is degraded somewhat but cannot be considered fully ungrammatical (mean score 3.9).

Table 1. Mean scores of positive answers to positive questions, in matching and mismatching verb pairs

	Matching answer	**Mismatching answer**		
			'verb plus particle'	
	'verb only'	**'verb only'**	**With initial *igen***	**With final *igen***
berak / betesz	4.9 (Example (30))	3.6 (Example (31))	4.4* (Example (32))	4.2* (Example (33))
felad / elküld	4.8 (Example (34))	2.6 (Example (35))	3.9* (Example (36))	3.8* (Example (37))

Importantly, the difference between the 'verb plus particle' answers is statistically significant when compared to the 'verb only' answer in both lexicalizations (marked by the stars), according to the related-samples sign-test (at .05 significance level), when comparing (32) to (31) ($p = .0027$); (33) to (31) ($p = .0339$); (36) to (35) ($p = .0027$) and (37) to (35) ($p = .0005$). This shows that the 'verb only' and the 'verb plus particle' answers are perceived differently by informants. And this difference is observable in case of *igen*-initial and *igen*-final answers alike, suggesting that both types behave the same way (see fn. 10).

11. Considering that standard works on the grammar of Hungarian (e.g. Kenesei et al. 1998: 261; É. Kiss 2002: 231, among others) and also Lipták (2013) take plural object drop impossible, the finding that two-thirds of my speakers fully accept plural object omission in sentences like (38) is indicative of an ongoing change in the language. As no demographic data other than age and place of residence was collected in my study, it is difficult to say whether this innovative variety is an areal phenomenon. At any rate, many speakers who accepted plural object drop registered Budapest as their current place of residence.

Furthermore, the direction of improvement is similar for both types of verbs, whether the mismatch concerns the verb only but not the preverb (*berak* vs. *betesz*) or both verb and preverb (*felad* vs. *elküld*). While the 'verb only' mismatching answer scores lower in the latter case, it improves more than a full point when accompanied by a response particle. According to the definition of the verbal identity requirement in Goldberg (2015), repeated here again from (3) above, both of these pairs should trigger a violation of the condition, as at least one of their parts differs in its root morphology.

(3) *Verbal Identity Requirement* (VIR) (Goldberg 2005: 171, (26))
The antecedent and target-clause main verbs of VP ellipsis must be identical, minimally, in their root and derivational morphology.

In the case of the pair *berak* / *betesz*, the items show a difference in the root morphology of the verb (*rak* / *te-(sz)*). In the case of the pair *felad* / *elküld*, we have two pairs of differences: the particles differ in their roots (*fel* / *el)* and the verbs do, too *(ad* / *küld*).

On the whole, we can conclude that the lexical mismatch is acceptable or slightly degraded in these answers when the elliptical verbal answer is accompanied by an affirmative *igen* response particle, and shows substantial and statistically significant improvement when compared to the 'verb only' answer type. This supports the generalization we presented in the previous section, and strengthens the conclusion that we do not need to cater for an explanation for the preference for identity in 'verb only' answers in terms of a specific property of head movement out of an ellipsis site.

Further, the fact that mismatching 'verb only' answers have degraded acceptability (with the means being 3.6. and 2.6), but are not perceived as fully unacceptable also makes it seem that VIR is not a hard morphosyntactic requirement, but rather a preference of some kind. While acceptability judgments are generally not categorical and cannot be used to inform the theory directly, there is one observation that we can make in our dataset that points in this direction: the fact that mismatching preverb-stranding answers, such as (40) (see also (22) above), received a very low score (mean 1.5) by the informants. This kind of mismatch clearly represents much stronger ungrammaticality than verb-stranding data above. In addition, the strong ungrammaticality does not disappear with the addition of a response particle, either (cf. (B2)), which shows that we are dealing with a different type of mismatch in this case:

(40) A: *A fiúk átgázoltak a patakon végül?*
the boy.PL THROUGH$_1$.wade.PST.3PL the stream.SUP eventually
'Did the boys wade through the stream eventually?'

B1: **Keresztül.* (fully ungrammatical, mean score 1.5)
THROUGH$_2$
B2: **Keresztül, igen.*
THROUGH$_2$ yes
'Yes.' Lit. 'Through, yes.'

Summarizing the discussion so far, Sections 4.1 and 4.2 argued that movement out of an ellipsis site does *not* trigger a morphosyntactic condition by which the moving head needs to be lexically identical to its correlate in the antecedent. With this option off the table, the question then is, what explains that non-identical 'verb only' answers are degraded? Section 5 will turn to this question and offer a pragmatic solution. Before turning to the pragmatic explanation about the preference for identical verbs in 'verb only' verb-stranding ellipsis, the next section presents other types of verb-echos that show a similar behavior to the ones we have described in the previous two sections.

4.3 The same pattern in other echo answers: Negative and reversing echos

In addition to positive answers to polar questions with positive polarity, other combinations are also possible and were tested in the questionnaire study I described in the previous section. It turns out that reversing answers exhibit the same pattern we established in the previous section, to the extent the comparison with a 'verb only' and a 'verb plus particle' answer can be made to begin with.

To start with negative reversing echos, they differ from non-reversing positive echos in a couple of respects. First, what we should treat as a 'verb only' answer for our purposes strictly speaking does not only contain a verb: there must be a negative marker *nem* before the verb as well (in addition to verb – preverb inversion when applicable). Second, the response particle *nem* happens to be homophonous with the negative particle, and even more importantly, it is preferably used in initial position (cf. the awkwardness of B2 with a final *nem*).

(41) A: *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2SG the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC the bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B1: *Nem raktam be.*
not put$_1$.PST.1SG INTO

B2: *(Nem), nem raktam be, ??(nem).*
no not put$_2$.PST.1SG INTO no/not[12]
'(No), (I) haven't put, (no).'

As the above example illustrates, a negative answer to a positive question can either be given without a response particle (cf. (40B1)) or with such a response particle in initial position (cf. (40B2)). The syntactic structure of such answers furthermore largely resembles the structure of affirmative answers, with the difference that instead of affirmation, the PolP layer of the clause is specified for a negative value:

(42) The structure of negative 'verb only' answers
A: *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B: [$_{\text{PolP[Pol:NEGM]}}$ nem raktam be [$_{vP}$ a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskámba]]]

(43) The structure of negative 'verb plus particle' answers
A: *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B: [$_{\text{FocP}}$ nem$_{\text{[Pol: NEG]}}$ [$_{\text{PolP[Pol:\_]}}$ [$_{\text{TP}}$ …]]], [$_{\text{PolP[Pol: NEG]}}$ nem raktam be [$_{vP}$ a holnapi órákra…]]]

Having seen the available options of forming a response, the comparison we are interested in has to be made between an answer including only the negated verb and an answer with an initial *nem* response particle. The expectation is that the latter type of answer scores higher with respect to the former one when containing mismatching verbs.

The expectation is borne out for both verbs under investigation, *berak / betesz* 'put into something', and *felad / elküld* 'post something', when comparing the answers in the following dialogues.

12. The gloss of this utterance final *nem* is deliberately left vague: it is *a priori* unclear whether this element corresponds to a response particle or to the negative marker with predicate ellipsis following – since predicate ellipsis is possible after the negative marker (cf. (i)) in Hungarian.

(i) *Mari most olvas, de Peti nem.*
Mary now reads but Peti not
'Mary is reading now but Peti is not.'

(44) – *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2SG the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC the
táskádba?
bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
– *Nem tettem be.*
not put$_2$.PST.1SG INTO
lit. 'I haven't put.'

(45) – *Beraktad a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'idem'
– *Nem, nem tettem be.*
no not put$_2$.PST.1SG INTO
'No, (I) haven't put.'

(46) – *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
UP.give.PST.2SG the invitation.PL.ACC the foreign guest.PL.DAT
'Have you posted the invitations to the foreign guests?'
– *Nem küldtem el.*
not send.PST.1SG AWAY
'(I) haven't posted.'

(47) – *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
'idem'
– *Nem, nem küldtem el.*
no not send.PST.1SG AWAY
'No, (I) haven't sent.'

Table 2. Mean scores of negative answers to positive questions, in matching and mismatching verb pairs

	Matching anwer	**Mismatching answer**	
			'verb plus particle'
	'verb only' (with negation)	**'verb only'**	**with initial *nem***
berak / betesz	4.8 (Example (41B1))	3.8 (Example (44))	4.4* (Example (45))
felad / elküld	4.8	2.8 (Example (46))	4.0* (Example (47))

Comparing the 'verb plus particle' answer to the 'verb only' answer in both lexicalizations we see improvement in acceptability, which was moreover significant according to the related-samples sign-test, when comparing (45) to (44) ($p = .025$); and when comparing (47) to (46) ($p = .004$).

Another type of reversing answer that is possible to construct are reversing echos with a positive polarity answer to a negative question. In this type of echo, the reversing response particle *de* (glossed as PRT and translated as 'but' below) is obligatory in polite discourse and *de* is furthermore confined to the initial position of the clause.

(48) A: *Nem raktad be a holnapi órákra a könyveket*
not put$_1$.PST.2SG INTO the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC
a táskádba?
the bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you not put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B1: *De.*
PRT
'But (I have)!'
B2: *De, betettem.*
PRT INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG
'But, (I) put!'
B3: ?**Betettem.*
INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG
'(I) put.'

The fact that *de* is obligatory in these examples is put down to the fact that polarity reversal of the [NEG]/[POS] type is marked and must be overtly realized (Farkas 2009: 114). Structurally, *de* can also be thought of as a response particle that carries an absolute positive polarity feature as well, which agrees with the polarity of the elided clause following it:[13]

13. In assuming that *de* has an absolute positive polarity feature, I differ from Farkas (2009), who claims that *de* only has a [REVERSE] feature. If however, an absolute positive polarity feature is also present in this item, we can explain why *de* is incompatible with reversing answers of the [POS]/[NEG] type to polar questions, such as (i):

(i) A: *Mari elment?* (Farkas 2009: (36))
Mari AWAY.go.PST.3SG
'Did Mari leave?'
B: **De nem ment el.*
PRT no go.PST.3SG AWAY
'No, she didn't leave.'

Farkas (2009) furthermore mentions that answers like (iB), where *de* is followed by a negative clause are not altogether ill-formed, but are used mainly in protracted disputes of the sort in (ii):

(49) The structure of 'verb plus particle' answers with *de* as a response particle
A: *Nem raktad be a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'Did you not put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
B: [$_{FocP}$ de$_{[Pol:\ POS]}$ [$_{PolP[Pol:\_]}$ [$_{TP}$ …]]], [$_{PolP[Pol:\ POS]}$ beraktam [$_{vP}$ a holnapi órákra…]]]

Due to the fact that the *de* is obligatory, a 'verb only' answer type cannot be constructed strictly speaking. Nevertheless, similarly to the two data sets we have seen before (the [POS]/[POS] and the [NEG]/[POS] answers), a mismatching answer with a *de* response particle is perceived as acceptable in this ([NEG]/[POS]) case. Consider the acceptability of the data in (50) and (51).

(ii) A: *Mari elment.* (Farkas 2009: (35))
Mari AWAY.go.PST.3SG
'Mari left.'
B: *Nem, nem igaz. Nem ment el.*
no not true not go.PST.3SG AWAY
'No, that's not true. She didn't leave.'
A: *De igen, elment.*
PRT yes AWAY.go.PST.3SG
'But yes, she left.'
B: *De nem, nem ment el.*
PRT no not go.PST.3SG AWAY
'But no, she didn't leave.'

I believe that dialogues like (ii) do not contradict the claim that *de* has an absolute [POS] polarity value when used as a response particle. In (ii), we are dealing with *de igen* and *de nem* as disagreement markers, a usage different from that of a response particle answering a polar question. (Dis)agreement markers have a different distribution from response particles (Holmberg 2016; Wiltschko 2017). This can be seen in that (dis)agreement markers such as *nem igaz* '(not) true', *hamis* 'false', *pontosan* 'right', and their equivalents in other languages can only respond to assertions and not to polar questions, as seen in (iii). *De igen* and *de nem* are similar.

(iii) A: *Mari elment?*
Mari AWAY.go.PST.3SG
'Did Mari leave?'
B: **Nem igaz.* / **Hamis.* / **Pontosan.* / **De igen.* / **De nem.*
not true false right PRT yes / PRT no
(intended) 'That's not true.' / 'That's false.' / 'That's right.' / lit. 'But yes.' / lit. 'But no.'

(50) – *Nem raktad be a holnapi órákra a könyveket*
not put$_1$.PST.2SG INTO the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC
a táskádba?
the bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you not put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
– *De, betettem.* (acceptable: mean score 4.5)
PRT INTO.put$_2$.PST.1SG
'But, (I) put.'

(51) – *Nem adtad fel a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
not give.PST.2SG UP the invitation.PL.ACC the foreign guest.PL.DAT
'Have you not posted the invitations to the foreign guests?'
– *De, elküldtem.* (acceptable: mean score 4.2)
PRT send.PST.1SG
'But, (I) sent.'

And answers of this sort are significantly different from mismatching 'verb only' answers to positive polar questions: (50) is different from (31) ($p = .0015$) and Example (51) is different from (35) ($p = .0001$), respectively.

Lastly, the questionnaire study also contained dialogues with negative answers to negative questions such as (52)–(54) below.

(52) – *Nem raktad be a holnapi órákra a könyveket*
not put$_1$.PST.2SG INTO the tomorrow.ADJ lesson.PL.SUB the book.PL.ACC
a táskádba?
the bag.POSS2SG.ILL
'Have you not put the books for tomorrow's lessons in your bag?'
– *Nem tettem be.*
not put$_2$.PST.1SG INTO
'(I) haven't put.'

(53) – *Nem raktad be a holnapi órákra a könyveket a táskádba?*
'idem'
– *Nem, nem tettem be.*
NO not put$_2$.PST.1SG INTO
'No, (I) haven't put.'

(54) – *Nem adtad fel a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
not give.PST.2SG UP the invitation.PL.ACC the foreign guest.PL.DAT
'Have you not posted the invitations to the foreign guests?'
– *Nem küldtem el.*
not send.PST.1SG AWAY
'(I) haven't sent.'

(55) – *Nem adtad fel a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
'idem'
– *Nem, nem küldtem el.*
no not send.PST.1SG AWAY
'No, (I) haven't sent.'

The judgments of these kind of data show only partial similarity to the patterns of positive and reversing answers we have seen above: the pair *berak/betesz* shows the same improvement in the 'verb plus particle' case (and the difference between (53) and (52) is significant, $p = .020$), but the *felad/elküld* pair shows hardly any improvement in the 'verb plus particle' case and the difference is not significant, either.

Table 3. Mean scores of negative answers to negative questions, in matching and mismatching verb pairs

	Matching anwer	**Mismatching answer**	
			'verb plus particle'
	'verb only' (with negation)	**'verb only'**	**with initial *nem***
berak / betesz	5.0	3.5 (Example (52))	4.3* (Example (53))
felad / elküld	4.9	3.2 (Example (54))	3.5 (Example (55))

Due to this, it is not clear whether negative answers to negative questions show the same phenomenon that previous types of answers have shown. Further research is needed to establish whether there is a systematic difference between these answers and all the other types.

Putting negative answers to negative questions aside, the rest of the data in this section showed a similar improvement of 'verb plus particle' answers as the positive responses to positive questions we started out with. What we see is that the addition of a response particle (*igen, nem, de*) ameliorates the badness of the mismatching verb-echos and that in many cases the addition of the particle yields an acceptable, passable answer to a polar question.[14] This in turn shows that the

14. A reviewer wonders whether the same effect is triggered when a verb echo is combined with propositional adverbs (such as *possibly*, *probably* in English), which can also provide answers to polar questions. To answer this question, my questionnaire study contained mismatching verbal answers with *talán* 'perhaps' and *valószínűleg* 'likely', but such adverbs do not naturally combine with verbal echos to begin with, cf. (iB1). Due to this, it is not surprising that a mismatching example is similarly marked (iB2).

need or preference for lexical identity across question-answer pairs with a verbal answer should not be taken to be a morphosyntactic requirement on head-stranding ellipsis, because if it was such a requirement, we would expect that it rears its head in answers with and without a response particle, in a completely parallel fashion.

Having established this, in the next section we provide the beginnings of an explanation for the patterns we have seen. We concern ourselves with the question of what kind of effect is the VIR effect, if not a morphosyntactic requirement.

5. Towards defining the need for identity in verb-echos

As a tentative explanation for the patterns observed in the previous section, I suggest that the preference for an identical verb in verb-echo answers to polar questions is due to a pragmatic implicature.

I assume that the expected conversational move following a polar question is that of resolving the question about the polarity variable of the proposition, by way of providing a positive or negative value for it. When an answer to a polar question is provided using a verb, a repeated lexically identical verb in the answer is the most unmarked way of answering.[15] This must be due to the fact that the sole semantic import of an answer to a polar question is that of providing a value for the polarity variable that the polar question asks about. As the content of the verb is fully given, and not under discussion (it is not what the question is about), the use of the same lexical verb as in the question should be considered the unmarked, and thus strongest, form of verbal answer possible to a polar question.

(i) A: *Berakták anyuék az edényeket a mosogatógépbe?*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2PL mother.COL the vessel.PL.ACC the dishwasher.ILL
'Have mother and her associates put the vessels into the dishwasher?'
B1: ??*Berakták talán.*
INTO.put$_1$.PST.2PL perhaps
B2: ??*Betették talán.*
INTO.put$_2$.PST.2PL perhaps
'(They) have put perhaps.'

15. That verb-echos are unmarked ways of answering polar questions also explains why this kind of question is a grammaticalized answer strategy in many languages – according to Holmberg (2016: 69), by and large half of the languages we know of use verb-echo answers to answer polar questions.

This can be linked to the fact that exact lexical repetition has an important role in maintaining discourse coherence in question-answer pairs (and in discourse in general, see Freywald & Finkbeiner 2018). Following Svennevig (2003), we can say that exact repetition is indicating the appropriation or endorsement of the answerer concerning the formulation of the question by the questioner. Using a non-identical, synonymous, near-synonymous, or entirely different verb would imply less than full acceptance of the proposed formulation: a non-identical verb in effect signals modification or correction as to the content of the proposition asked about, that is, it is not the expected discourse move, namely an answer about the value of the polarity variable.

On the basis of these considerations, and adopting the idea from Halliday & Hasan (1976) that reiteration of lexical content is the strongest form of lexical cohesion on a scale, I propose that for the purpose of answering a question about polarity, verb echo answers that contain only a verb form a *scale* of answer types, in which echo answers are the strongest type of answer and different verbs the weakest, with synonymous and near-identical verbs found in the middle of the scale:

(56) The scale of verbal answers to polar questions

Strong		Weak
echo (repetition)	synonym or near-identical verb	different verb

Referring to this scale of answer types, we can understand the preference for echo-answers above synonymous or other types of verbs in Hungarian as something that is due to a pragmatic inference. The use of an alternative implicates the inapplicability of a stronger alternative on the same scale. To give an example, the weaker, non-identical response in (57B2) gives rise to a quantity implicature (based on Grice's maxim of quantity) that the answerer (assuming he is cooperative) cannot assert a stronger alternative, namely the fully-matching, lexically identical echo-answer alternative (57B1) for some reason.

(57) A: *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
UP.give.PST.2SG the invitation.PL.ACC the foreign guest.PL.DAT
'Have you posted the invitations to the foreign guests?'

B1: *Feladtam.*
UP.give.PST.2SG
'(I) posted.'

B2: ??*Elküldtem.*
AWAY.send.PST.1SG
'(I) sent.'

In the absence of any other linguistic material signaling the reason why the strongest echo-answer is not a suitable answer to use, a non-identical verbal answer is difficult to interpret, because such a response does not provide the expected discourse move unambiguously. Since it introduces some modification of the initial formulation of the proposition asked about, it cannot be taken to be an answer about the value of the polarity of the question without further ado.

To what extent a different verb creates a problem for interpretation can arguably depend on how much it differs from the original verb. As we have seen in Table 1, a mismatching *berak* / *betesz* pair was considered less degraded than the *felad* / *elküld* pair, most likely due to the fact that in the former only the verb but not the preverb, in the latter both the verb and the preverb differed. In addition to these kinds of lexical difference, there are no doubt other differences, related to register, style, or levels of formality, which can contribute to the acceptability of mismatching verb-echos, an effect that we deliberately did not study in this paper and which we leave for future work.

The solution sketched above is able to explain why the addition of a response particle, which provides the requested value for the polarity directly (see the formal mechanism described in Sections 4.1 and 4.3), does not face this problem. In 'verb plus particle' answers, the response particle itself provides the expected and unambiguous answer to the polar question posed by valuing the polarity of the asserted proposition in the answer. Due to this, the verbal answer no longer needs to carry "the weight" of having to provide this answer unambiguously. In other words, since the answer in this case provides the expected conversational move due to the presence of the response particle, the verbal answer does not give rise to the same type of quantity inference as 'verb only' echos, and thus non-identical synonymous or near-identical verbs can be used.

Formulating the proposed explanation in somewhat different terms, we can state that there is a dispreference in languages to express different conversational turns (or speech acts) by one and the same linguistic expression. If an utterance aims to supply an answer to a polar question and at the same time introduce an alternative assertion with respect to the original question (a corrective move of some type or other), these two turns should be indicated by distinct lexical means. Viewed this way, a mismatching verbal echo such as (57B2) is degraded because it tries to do two things: provide an answer to the original question and assert what the speaker believes is the case, which differs from the question in its choice of words. A 'verb plus particle' answer in (58B) does not have this problem, because

the first part of the reply (the response particle) provides the answer and the second part (the verbal echo) introduces an assertion.[16, 17]

(58) A: *Feladtad a meghívókat a külföldi vendégeknek?*
UP.give.PST.2SG the invitation.PL.ACC the foreign guest.PL.DAT
'Have you posted the invitations to the foreign guests?'
B: *Igen, elküldtem.*
yes AWAY.send.PST.1SG
'Yes, (I) sent.'

I leave a more specific and detailed formulation of this pragmatic explanation for further studies, hoping that something along these lines can form a feasible explanation of the patterns described in Section 4. What is important to stress is that the pragmatic explanation offered in this section is capable of explaining the less than super strong nature of the VIR-violating examples: if it is not a formal condition that needs to be satisfied, we expect that it does not yield absolute ungrammaticality but rather the kind of degraded acceptability (a preference) that we described in Section 4.2.

6. Conclusion and outlook

The purpose of this paper was to show that the Verbal Identity Requirement should not be seen as a requirement on head movement out of ellipsis sites, and thus should not be explained with reference to that, either. The argument was

16. In the case of affirmative answers to positive questions, the order of these discourse moves does not matter as we have seen in Section 4.2: mismatching answers (just like matching answers) are acceptable both with initial or final *igen*. In the case of reversing answers (see Section 4.3), the *de* particle always precedes the verbal answer, which might be the due to the pragmatic principle *Disagree first!* introduced by Esipova (2021). According to this principle, if the speaker both disagrees with an antecedent statement and makes an assertion, the disagreement has to be indicated first.

17. In some way, this regularity recalls the type of answer in what Lipták (2020) calls *Pom Pom* dialogues, where a fragment provides answer to a question, followed by a lexical correction of what the addressee believes was wrongly stated by the questioner.

(i) A: *Where are you running to?*
B: *To school, but I am not running.*

Here too, answer and correction are provided by two propositional entities: a fragment and a corrective assertion. What we see in verb-echos is similar in that responding to the question and providing the lexical content of the answer are separated. I thank a reviewer for calling my attention to this.

based on the observation that one can find V-stranding ellipsis configurations (namely those answering a polar question) that do not show evidence for this requirement when they are accompanied by a response particle. I tentatively suggested an explanation for the observed preference for the use of identical verbs in polar question-answer pairs, reducing the effect to a pragmatic restriction on proper answerhood. The fact that the VIR is not a morphosyntacyic condition resonates with similar findings by other scholars on other languages, namely by Thoms (2018) on Goidelic languages.

The discussion left a lot of issues unattended that should be researched to see if the findings and the explanation hold water. First of all, if the pragmatic condition I proposed in the previous section is correct, we expect that its effect can be found not just in Hungarian, but in other languages as well. Whether this is indeed the case needs to be researched. The only language that I know of in which data of the sort I consider in this paper are reported is Gribanova (2017). The following example contains mismatching verbs, in combination with a positive polarity particle and it is indicated to be ungrammatical by the author. In other words, the presence of a polarity particle does not lift or ameliorate the effect of the VIR is Russian.

(59) A: *Paša poterjal knigu v biblioteke, i žurnal v*
Paša lose.PST.SG.M book.ACC in library.PREP and magazine in
stolovoj?
cafeteria.PREP
'Did Pasha lose a book in the library, and a magazine in the cafeteria?'
B: **Da, posejal.* Russian (Gribanova 2017: 1104)
yes, lose.PST.SG.M
'Yes, lost.'

Interestingly, two Russian speakers I consulted indicated a different pattern of judgments: one of them finding the answer perfectly fine with the particle, but considering it odd without such a particle (this resembles the Hungarian pattern we have seen), the other accepting the answer both with and without the particle (with a preference for the latter type). This shows that individual differences could be quite substantial.

Considering the same context in Finnish, three native speakers I consulted reported that a mismatching answer with a response particle (as in 60B) is better than the one without it (cf. (4)) to some degree:

(60) A: *Hajotti-ko Marja ruukun?* Finnish
broke$_1$-Q Marja the.pot.GEN
'Did Marja break the pot?'

B: {*Kyllä* / *joo*}, *rikkoi.*
yes$_{formal}$ yes$_{informal}$ broke$_2$
lit. 'Yes, broke.'

Due to these observations, I am hopeful that effects similar to the one described in this paper in Hungarian might be found in other languages as well. It seems to me that a study of the type I report in this paper could be useful to establish whether response particles have an effect in languages where the VIR has been reported to exist and which have response particles to begin with.[18]

Another issue that the pragmatic condition in Section 5 raises is broader then the study of elliptical sentences. If the account is in the right track, we expect that an effect of a similar sort is also found in answers that do not contain ellipsis, as illustrated in (61) – if ellipsis is not responsible for the preference for an identical verbal answer, it is predicted that non-identical non-elliptical answers should be dispreferred to the same (or at least comparable) degree as elliptical answers.

(61) A: *Feladtad a leveleket a külföldi vendégeknek?*
UP.give.PST.2SG the letter.PL.ACC the foreign guest.PL.DAT
'Have you posted the letters to the foreign guests?'
B1: ??*Elküldtem őket.*
AWAY.send.PST.1SG they.ACC
B2: *Elküldtem őket, igen.*
AWAY.send.PST.1SG they.ACC yes
'(I) have sent them (yes).'

My preliminary investigation suggests that non-identical verbs are degraded somewhat in these contexts. The next step towards a better understanding of the restrictions on answerhood will need to be a systematic investigation of identity in these contexts as well as other contexts in which repetition is found in an answer, including elliptical and non-elliptical ones of all kinds.[19]

18. The latter is not the case in Irish, one of the few languages in which the VIR holds most strongly (see Section 3). Irish lacks response particles of the 'yes' and 'no' type and thus there is no way of constructing 'verb plus particle' answers. I thank Jim McCloskey for clarifying this for me.

19. One such context is narrow focus question-answer pairs, which is an understudied question type (see Holmberg 2016: 216–226 on questions of this type in Finnish and Hungarian). It is formally a polar question as it can be answered by a response particle alone (iB1) but can also receive an answer formed by echoing the narrow focus constituent in the question as well (iB2). Small caps in these examples indicate narrow focus.

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(i) A: *HANGVERSENYEN voltatok tegnap este?*
concert.SUP be.PST.2PL yesterday evening
lit. 'Were you at a concert yesterday evening?'
B1: *Igen.*
yes
B2: *HANGVERSENYEN.*
concert.SUP
lit. 'At a concert.'

A lexical mismatch with near-synonymous nouns (*hangverseny* vs. *koncert*), in combination with an *igen* particle did not yield substantial improvement in my questionnaire study in the case of this example, in fact it scored lower than the one without the particle when the particle was initial position:

(ii) A: *HANGVERSENYEN voltatok tegnap este?*
B1: ??*Koncerten.* (average 3.7)
concert.SUP
lit. 'At a concert.'
B2: ??*Igen, KONCERTEN.* (average 3.5)
yes concert.SUP
lit. 'Yes, at a concert.'

The answer in (iiB1) seems to have a corrective metacommunicational meaning, signaling that the speaker does not endorse the questioner's use of the word with the intended denotation. This strong metacommunicational meaning is missing from the mismatching synonymous verb-echos that I described in this paper. I believe the different pattern we see here stems from the fact that these data do not represent the exact same context as verb-echos: in narrow focus answers, the echoed constituent is interpreted as narrow focus of the assertion asked about (and for this reason could be considered as an alternative question without explicit alternatives). Possibly due to the fact that the echoed phrase is the lexical focus of the answer, a change in lexical content might be more difficult to accommodate than in verb-echos where the verb is not the lexical focus of the utterance. The precise behavior of narrow focal answers is highly relevant for finding out whether the proposal I sketched in Section 5 is specific to polar questions, or whether it can be extended to answers of all types. I thank a reviewer for raising this issue.

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Abbreviations

ABL	ablative
ACC	accusative
ADJ	adjectivizer
COL	collective plural
COND	conditional
DAT	dative
GEN	genitive
ILL	illative
IMP	imperative
INE	inessive
INST	instrumental
PL	plural
POT	potential
PREP	prepositional case
PRT	particle
PST	past tense
PV	preverb
Q	polar question particle
SG.M	masculine singular
SUB	sublative
SUP	superessive

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