On the Syntax of Stripping in Libyan Arabic

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Abstract

The paper discusses a type of clausal ellipsis referred to as stripping with special focus on its syntactic properties and distribution, on the one hand, and its interaction with information structure on the other. The paper argues that stripping can be derived by focus movement of the remnant out of TP plus deletion of that TP at the PF interface in a way similar to that proposed by Depiante (2000), Merchant (2003) and Kolokonte (2008). The behaviour of the remnant with respect to preposition stranding, identity readings, binding and locality effects can be taken as arguments in favour of this movement-plus-deletion analysis. Given that stripping involves focus movement prior to TP ellipsis, it is further argued that the remnant in stripping, as far as information structure is concerned, is perceived as new informational focus.

Keywords: Ellipsis, Stripping, Morphological case-marking, Binding, Preposition stranding, Island domains, Focus, PF deletion

1. Stripping: A Crosslinguistic Perspective

Hankamer and Sag (1976: 409) define stripping as 'a rule that deletes everything in a clause under identity with corresponding parts of the preceding clause, except for one constituent (and sometimes a clause-initial adverb or negative)'. The term stripping is also referred to as bare argument ellipsis. It is widespread crosslinguistically and has been attested in a number of languages as illustrated in (1)-(5).

(1) English

    Abby speaks passable Dutch, and Ben, too. (Merchant 2003: 1)

(2) Greek

O	Pertros	milaei	aglika	(ala)	ohi	galika.
the	Petros-NOM	speak.3MS	English	but	not	French

'Petros speaks English but not French'.   (Kolokonte 2008: 118)

(3) German

Peter	wurde	eingeschult	und	Anna _	auch.	
Peter	was	sent-to-school	and	Anna	too	(Winkler 2005:159)

(4) Dutch

Hij	heft	gisteren	met	Peter	gepraat,	en
he	has	yesterday	with	Peter	talked	and

waarschijnlijk	met	Charlotte
probably	with	Charlotte.

'He talked to Peter yesterday, and probably to Charlotte.' (Aelbrecht 2006: 2)

(5) Standard Arabic

raʔaitu	Zaid-an	(wa)	*laysa*	xalid-an
saw.1MS	Zaid-ACC	(and)	not	Khalid-ACC

'I saw Zaid not Khalid.' (Al Horais 2008: 10)

The elliptical clauses in (1)-(5) are characterized by two salient features. First, they are not well-formed structures in isolation; second, they are only interpreted as full sentences with reference to the antecedent clause in the discourse (Culicover & Jachendoff 2005: 234). Thus, the ellipsis in (1) is interpreted as 'Ben speaks passable Dutch.'

It is worth noting that stripping needs to be differentiated from a similar clausal ellipsis construction refered to as negative contrast. Negative contrast differs from stripping in that it lacks the conjunction 'but', as illustrated in (6) and (7) from English and Catalan respectively. Accordingly, when the conjunction is used, ellipsis is interpreted as stripping and when it is not, the structure is interpreted as negative contrast (see Drübig 1994; Busquets 2006; Kolokonte 2008).

(6) English

   John bought the book, not Peter.   (Kolokonte 2008: 35)

(7) Catalan

	Va	venir	al	cinema	[la MARTA],	no	[EN MIQUEL]
a.	It	came	to the	movies	MARTA	not	MIQUEL
b.	Va	venir	al	cinema	[la MARTA], però	no	[EN MIQUEL]
	It	came	to the	movies	MARTA	but not	MIQUEL

(Busquets 2006: 167)

Negative contrast constructions differ also from stripping in that they are licit with antecedents containing negation, whereas stripping is not, as in (8) (Kolokonte 2008: 36).

(8) A: I thought it was Peter who didn't pass the exams.

   B1: No, MARY didn't pass the exams, not Peter. (Negative-contrast)
   B2: *MARY didn't pass the exam, but not Peter.   (Stripping)

(Kolokonte 2008: 37)

This study provides an overview of the syntax of stripping in Libyan Arabic[1]. It is organized as follows: section 1 introduces stripping from a crosslinguistic erspective. Section 2 then discusses cases of stripping in the language, while section 3 discusses stripping in syntactic theory and reviews previous analyses of the phenomenon. Section 4 discusses the interaction between ellipsis and information structure. Section 5 provides an account and explanation for stripping. Finally, section 6 presents the conclusions.

2. Stripping in Libyan Arabic

Stripping occurs in Libyan Arabic. In such constructions, ellipsis elides an entire clause except for one constituent (the remnant). The remnant is typically preceded by a sentential modal adverb such as 'probably', 'possibly', or 'maybe' and the focusing adverb *ḥətta* 'too', as in (9) and (10).

(9) Ali   yətkəllem   iṭali,   w   taqrīban   ḥətta   bu-h.
   Ali   speak.3MS   Italian   and   probably   too   father-his
   'Ali speaks Italian, and probably his father too'.

(10) Ali   šrē   šəgga,   w iḥtimal   ḥətta   siyyara.
    Ali   bought.3MS flat   and possibly   too   car
   'Ali bought a flat, and probably a car too.'

Libyan Arabic stripping differs from stripping structures in other languages in that negative

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[1] Libyan Arabic includes three main dialects spoken in three dialectal areas: (a) the western area (Tripolitania and Fezzan), (b) the eastern area (Cyrenaica) and finally (c) the transitional zone extending from the western city of Misurata in the Tripolitania region and the city of Sebha in the south to Cyrenaica (see Owens 1984; Pereira 2008).   The variety of Libyan Arabic used in this study is Western Libyan Arabic, referred to henceforth as LA.

stripped clauses cannot be preceded by the conjunction 'but'. In English, for example, stripping is grammatical with the presence of the conjunction 'but', as in (11). However, this is not the case in Libyan Arabic, as illustrated by the examples in (12) and (13).

(11) John plays football but not basketball.

(12) *anē   mšēt   l-s-sinəma,   lakən   miš   l-s-sūg.
      I   went.1S   to-the-cinema,   but   not   to-the-market
      'I went to the cinema, but not to the market.' (Intended reading)

(13) anē   mšēt   l-s-sinəma,   miš   l-s-sūg.
      I   went.1S   to-the-cinema,   not   to-the-market
      'I went to the cinema, not to the market'.

Furthermore, the fact that the elliptical clause in (14) can have an antecedent with overt negation indicates that the cases of ellipsis with the negative marker 'miš' such as (14) are negative contrast.

(14) Ali   ma-mša-š   l-s-sinəma,   miš   Omar.
      Ali NEG-went.3MS-NEG   to-the-cinema,   not   Omar.
      'It is Ali who didn't go to the cinema, not Omar'.

Stripping displays several properties. As mentioned above, the remnant in stripping is typically accompanied by the focusing adverb *ḥətta* 'too' and a modal adverb such as 'possibly, probably, or maybe', as in (15). Stripping occurs in coordinated clauses and across utterance boundaries, as in (15) and (16) respectively.

(15) Omar   safər   aməs,   w   ʔḥtimal   ḥətta   Ali.
      Omar   left.3MS   yesterday   and probably   too Ali
      'Omar left yesterday, and probably Ali too.'

(16)   A: sməʕt   inna   Ali   səžžəl   fi   kors   iṭali.
              heard.1MS   that   Ali   enrolled.3MS   in   course   italian
              'I heard that Ali enrolled in an Italian course.'

        B: ʕarəf,   w   ḥətta   Omar.
              know.1MS   and too   Omar
              'I know, and Omar too'.

Languages that lack an equivalent to standard VP ellipsis are argued to realise VP ellipsis via an equivalent elliptical construction, namely stripping (e.g. Chao 1987 for French). However, stripping in LA differs from VP ellipsis in that, while remnants in the latter can precede the antecedent, as in (17), remnants in stripping obligatorily follow the antecedent, as in (18).

(17) kan   ma-təgder-š,   anē   nəmši.
      if   NEG-can.2MS.NEG   I   go.1S
      'If you can't, I'll go.'

(18) a. Omar   bi-žži   l-lḥəfla,   w   yəmkən   ḥatta Ali.
         Omar   FUT.come.3MS   to-the-party   and   maybe   too   Ali
         'Omar will come to the party, and maybe Ali too.'

     b. *w   yəmkən   ḥatta   Ali,   Omar   bi-žži   l-lḥəfla.
        and   maybe   too   Ali   Omar   FUT.come.3MS   to-the-party
        '*and maybe Ali too, Omar will come to the party.'

Finally, stripping also differs from VP ellipsis in that it is illicit in both embedded contexts and island domains, as shown in the contrasts in (19) and (20) respectively.

(19)   a. gal   inn-əh   ma-yəgder-š,   yiži,   lakən   ʕaʔtəqəd
          said.3MS   that-he   NEG-can.3MS-NEG   come.3MS   but   think.1S
          inn-əh   yəgder.
          that-he   can.3MS
          'He said that he can't come, but I think that he can.'

       b.*Ali   ʔžžər   hoš   w   aʕtəqid   inna   Zayd   gal   ḥatta maktab.
         Ali   rent.3MS   house   and   think.1S   that   Zayd   said.3MS   too   office
         '*Ali rented a house and I think that Zayd said an office too.'

(20) a. Omar   gdər   ysafər   lakən   waḥəd   nšər   išāʕə
        Omar   could.3MS   travel.3MS   but   someone   spread.3MS   rumor
        inn-əh   ma-gdər-š.
        that-he   NEG-could.3MS-NEG
        'Omar could travel, but someone circulated a rumor that he couldn't.'

     b.*Omar   gdər   ysafər,   lakən   waḥəd   nšər   išāʕə
       Omar   could.3MS   travel.3MS   but   someone   spread.3MS   rumor
       inna   ḥatta   Yasin.
       that   too   Yasin.
       '*Omar could travel, but someone circulated a rumor that Yasin too.'

3. Stripping in Syntactic Theory

Two main analyses of stripping have been proposed. These are the non-ellipsis and the ellipsis approaches. This section discusses these approaches.

3.1 The Non-Ellipsis Approach

The non-ellipsis approach was proposed by Reinhart (1991) and argues that stripping does not involve clausal deletion as it is devoid of syntactic structure. The remnant that appears in the stripped clause, for example in (21) is base-generated in its surface position. Stripping is derived by the adjunction of the correlate at LF to the remnant in the second conjunct via Quantifier Raising, thus forming a coordinated structure. This is illustrated in (22).

(21) John passed the exam and Bill too.

(22)
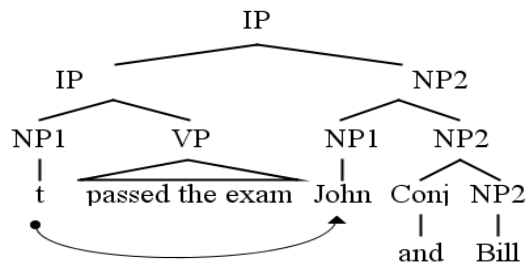
The analysis assumed by Reinhart (1991) argues that stripping involves DP conjunction, which means that it is not clausal ellipsis. However, Merchant (2003) provides a number of arguments showing that stripping does involve clausal ellipsis and that the relationship between the antecedent and stripped clause cannot be just a DP conjunction.

In the spirit of Yoon (1996), Merchant (2003) argues that the behaviour shown in stripping in the context of partial predicates such as 'be dirty' provides evidence that stripping involves clausal conjunction and is thus clausal ellipsis[2]. For instance, with the predicate 'be dirty', the conjoined phrase can be true if the predicate holds for one subpart of the conjoined entities, as in (23a), or for both of the conjoined entities in the coordination as in (23b) yielding a 'split interpretation'.

(23)   a. The plates and the bowls are still dirty.
        b. The plates are still dirty and the bowls are still dirty.

(Merchant 2003: 2)

Consequently, if stripping involves an elliptical conjoined XP, then it follows that it should have the two interpretations in (23a) & (23b). However, this is not the case, as illustrated in (24); stripping can only give rise to the split interpretation, which indicates that it involves clausal conjunction. This confirms that the ellipsis in stripping is clausal ellipsis.

(24) The plates are still dirty, and the bowls, too.   (Merchant 2003: 2)

Another counterargument against the non-ellipsis approach involves the preposition stranding phenomenon observed by Depiatne (2000). The argument here is that languages that do not allow p-stranding under movement do not permit p-standing in stripping, as shown in (25) from Greek; while p-stranding languages such as English allow both options, stranding or pied-piping, as in (26).

(25) a. Milisa   me   ton   Saki   xthes,   kai   *(me)   tin   Anna.
         I.spoke   with   the   Sakis   yesterday   and   with   the   Anna
         'I spoke with Sakis yesterday, and (with) Anna.'

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[2] Yoon (1996) makes a distinction between 'partial' and 'total' predicates, as illustrated in (i):

(i) a. Are the plates dirty?   (yes, if some of the plates are dirty):   *Partial predicate*

   b. Are the plates clean?   (yes, this means that all the plates are clean):   *Total predicate*

   b. Milisa   me   ton   Saki   kai   tin   Anna   xthes.
      I.spoke with   the   Sakis   and   the   Anna   yesterday
      'I spoke with Sakis and Anna yesterday.' (Merchant 2003: 2)

(26) I spoke with Sakis yesterday, and (with) Anna.   (Merchant 2003: 2)

The contrast between (25a) and (25b) illustrates that p-stranding is impossible in the context of stripping, while it is grammatical in DPs, as in (25b). This is not predicted under the assumption that the remnant and the correlate DPs in stripping constitute a conjoined DP. Instead, it supports the claim that the remnant in stripping is in a separate clause conjoined with the antecedent.

Finally, as pointed out by Merchant (2003), the occurrence of certain sentential and speaker-oriented adverbs in stripping indicates that it involves clausal/sentential conjunction and not DP conjunction, as shown in (27).

(27) Abby speaks passable Dutch, and [probably/possibly/fortunately] Ben, too.

(Merchant 2003: 2)

To sum up, stripping involves a clausal conjunction, and thus it should be considered a form of clausal ellipsis. The next section discusses whether or not the ellipsis site in stripping has a structure and how ellipsis in stripping operates.

3.2 The Ellipsis Approach

The ellipsis account was first advocated by Hankamer and Sag (1976: 409) and argues that stripping is a type of surface anaphora with a fully articulated syntactic structure that deletes via a syntactic rule under identity with a corresponding antecedent. Recent research has shown that ellipsis in stripping involves the deletion of a fully-fledged clausal structure (see Depiante 2000; Merchant 2003; Al Horais 2008; Kolokonte 2008). There is sufficient evidence in favour of this analysis, such as from morphological-case marking, p-stranding, and sloppy identity readings.

3.2.1 Morphological Case-Marking

Given that the stripped remnant can be a subject or object DP, it is predicted that such a DP will display the features it displays in non-elliptical constructions. Among the classical arguments is the morphological case marking in sluicing observed by Ross (1969) and Merchant (2001), in which the case of the remnant wh-phrase has to match the case of its correlate in the antecedent clause. For instance, the wh-phrase in (28) requires the nominative case, not the accusative, which is assigned by the verb ksero 'know', as in (29). This is accounted for if we assume an internal structure in which case assignment can take place prior to movement and deletion.

 (28) Greek
     Kapjos   irthe,   alla   dhe   ksero   {pjos   /   *pjon}.
     someone came, but   not   know.Isg   who.NOM/   who-ACC
     'Someone came, but I don't know who.'   (Merchant 2001: 43)

(29) Dhe   ksero   {* i apantisi   /   tin apantisi}.
     not   know.Isg   the answer.nom   the answer-ACC
   'I don't know the answer'. (Merchant 2001: 43)

The remnant in stripping also has to agree in case with its correlate, suggesting that the elliptical clause contains a syntactic structure as in (30) and (31), indicating that the ellipsis site has a syntactic structure in which the case-assignment of the remnant takes place prior to movement and ellipsis.

(30) Modern standard Arabic

   ʔaʕṭaitu   zaid-an   l-kitab-a   laysa xalid-an/*xalid-un
   gave.1s   Zaid-acc   the-book-acc   neg   Khalid-acc/Khalid-nom
  'I gave Zaid the book not Khalid'.   (Al Horais 2008: 7)

(31) Greek

   Irthe   o   Yanis,   oxi   o   Yorgos   / *oxi   ton   Yorgo
   came   the   John-NOM,   not   the   George-NOM / not   the   George-ACC
  'John came, not George.'   (Kolokonte 2008: 22)

3.2.2 Identity Readings

Identity readings can be an argument in favour of the deletion account in that they provide evidence that ellipsis has a syntactic structure. The ellipsis site in (32) can have strict and sloppy identity readings, indicating that there exists a pronoun in the ellipsis site. Consequently, on the strict reading, such a pronoun has a referent identical to that of the pronoun in the antecedent clause, while on the sloppy reading, the pronoun behaves as a variable bound by the subject of the second conjunct, which is the stripped clause.

(32) Libyan Arabic

   Zayed   bʕət   flus   l-xu-h,   w   iḥtimal   ḥətta   Ali.
   Zayed   sent.3MS   money   to-brother-his   and   probably   too   Ali
   'Zayed sent money to his brother, and probably Ali too.'
   Sloppy reading: 'Ali sent money to his brother.'
   Strict reading: 'Ali sent money to Zayed's brother.'

In conclusion, stripping contains a syntactic structure and it involves a clausal conjunction. The question now is how ellipsis is derived and how the displaced remnant is interpreted. As for the derivation of ellipsis, I follow the deletion approach and assume that the ellipsis in stripping is a PF phenomenon; and, with respect to the interpretation of stripping, recent research has argued that it has to do with information structure. This latter point is discussed in the following section.

4. Ellipsis and Information Structure

The notion of information structure refers to 'the linguistic encoding of notions such as focus versus background and topic versus comment, which are used to describe the information flow' (Schwabe & Winkler 2007: 1). Focus and topic are expressed by syntactic or

phonological means such as word order and pitch accent respectively (Richter & Mehlhorn 2006: 247-8). It has been argued that ellipsis in stripping is linked to information structure, since the remnant in such constructions is interpreted in terms of focus (see for example, Brunetti 2003; Merchant 2003; Basquet 2006; Al Horais 2008; Kolokonte 2008). With respect to stripping in Libyan Arabic, I propose that the remnant in stripping is interpreted as new information focus.

4.1 Focus Constructions

Focus is related to the notion of information structure. There are two types of foci that need to be distinguished, namely informational focus and identificational (contrastive focus). Informational focus conveys new, non-presupposed information which is assumed not to be shared by the speaker and the hearer (see Kiss 1998, Kenesei 2006). This is illustrated in (33), where the constituent 'Zayd' carries a new informational focus.

(33) Q: Who did Omar call?
    A1: Omar called ***Zayd***.
    A2:# ***Omar*** called Zayd.

Contrastive/identificational focus 'represents a subset of the set of contextually or situationally given elements for which the predicate phrase can potentially hold; it is identified as the exhaustive subset of this set for which the predicate actually holds' (Kiss 1998: 245). Contrastive focus does not only convey an identificational reading, but also 'requires a limited number of contextually given alternatives' (Molnár 2006: 204); it operates on a closed set of entities whose members are known by participants to which the focused element is identified and contrasted (see Kenesei 2006). For example, among the various pieces of clothing available for Mary in (34), Mary picked only a 'hat' and not anything else.

(34) Mari   **egy kalapot** nézett   ki   magànak.
    Mary   a   hat.ACC picked   out   herself.ACC
    'It was **a hat** that Mary picked for herself.'   (Kiss 1998: 249)

The two types of foci are distinguished syntactically by the fact that, while contrastive focus involves syntactic reordering in the sense that it occurs in a particular syntactic position, informational focus imposes no such requirement. For example, contrastively focused constituents in Hungarian must occur in a preverbal position, as in (34), while new information focus appears normally in post-verbal positions, as in (35).

(35) Mari   ki   nézett   magànak   EGY   KALAPOT.
    Mary   out   picked   herself.ACC   a   hat.ACC
    'Mary picked for herself A HAT.'   (Kiss 1998: 249)

4.2 Focus Constructions in Arabic

Focus in Arabic is realised by different means depending on the type of focus in question; a focused constituent can appear in situ or in a left peripheral position, as in (36) (see Moutaouakil 1989; Ouhalla 1997, 1999; Aoun et al. 2010). The former is perceived as new informational focus, while the latter is normally interpreted as contrastive focus.

(36) Standard Arabic

    a. šariba   zayd-un   ŠAY-AN.
     drank.3MS   zayd-NOM   tea-ACC
   'Zayd drank TEA'.

    b. ŠAY-AN   šariba   zayd-un.
     tea-ACC   drank.3MS   zayd-NOM
   'It was tea that Zayd drank.'   (Aoun et al. 2010: 202)

The focus construction in (36a) is perceived as new information; it can be a felicitous answer to a question such as 'what did Zayd do?'. The structure in (36b), where the focused constituent appears in the left periphery, is understood contrastively, that is, the focused constituent is contrasted with existing conflicting information (see Moutaouakil 1989; Ouhalla 1997, 1999). Furthermore, focus can be expressed by cleft constructions (Ouhalla 1999), as in (37), and pseudo-cleft constructions as in (38) (Moutaokil 1989: 24).

(37) Standard Arabic

   ZAYNAB-u   hiyya   llatii   ʔallaf-at   l-riwaayat-a.
   Zaynab-NOM PRON.she   RM   wrote.3FS   the-novel-ACC
   'It was ZAYNAB who wrote the novel.'   (Ouhalla 1999: 341)

(38) Standard Arabic

   l-laðī   sāfahtuhu   Zaydun
   the-one   greeted-1S-3SA Zayd-NOM
   'The one I greeted was Zayd.'   (Moutaokil 1989: 24)

Arguably, focus in Libyan Arabic can be expressed via exactly the same means, as in (39). Thus, the in-situ strategy in (39a) expresses new information focus, whereas the structure in (39b), where the focused constituent is in the left periphery, is interpreted with a contrastive reading. Likewise, the cleft structure in (40) is a strategy of realising contrastive focus in the language.

 (39) Libyan Arabic

    a. šrabət   ŠAHI.
     drank.1MS   tea
     'I drank tea.'

    b. ŠAHI šrabət.
      tea   drank.1MS
     'It was tea that I drank.'

(40) ZAYD   huwwa   illi   allef   r-riwaya.
    Zayd   PRON.he   that wrote.3MS   the-novel
    'It's Zayd who wrote the novel.'

However, based on ellipsis data, it is proposed that not all constituents that appear in the left periphery in Libyan Arabic are interpreted contrastively; rather they can also be interpreted as new information focus. The next section discusses this issue.

4.3 Focus Restrictions and Ellipsis

Ellipsis in stripping and in fragment/short answers is constrained by information structure since the remnant in such structures is interpreted as a focused element (see Brunetti 2003; Merchant 2003, 2004, 2006; Kolokonte 2008). Based on ellipsis data, Brunetti (2003) proposes that new informational focus in Italian can appear in the left periphery. Kolokonte (2008) supports this view, claiming that there are two focus projections in the left periphery; one, the lower, is occupied by new focus, while the other is designated for contrastive focus. I adopt this view and assume that new information focus can also appear in the left periphery in Libyan Arabic in the context of ellipsis.

A first argument is based on short/fragment answers which are assumed to involve ellipsis (Merchant 2004, 2006; Krifka 2006). The structure in (41) is analysed as IP ellipsis derived by focus movement of the remnant to the left periphery followed by deletion or non-realisation of the IP which constitutes the background information (see Krifka 2006).

(41) Question: Who did John introduce to Sue?
     Answer: Bill$_F$.   (Krifka 2006: 130)

There is evidence in support of this analysis from connectivity effects such as case-marking, p-stranding, and binding and locality effects (Merchant 2004, 2006). It has been observed that the remnant in short/fragment answers displays the same connectivity effects that it displays in non-elliptical counterparts, that is, in full answers.

With respect to morphological case-marking, the remnant in short answers bears only the same case that it would display in full answers. The remnant in (42) bears the accusative case, indicating that it originates as an object of the verb 'sucht'. The short answer in (43) can be explained in the same way; the remnant starts as a subject bearing the nominative case which is expected in full answers prior to movement and ellipsis.

(42) German
   Q: Wen   sucht   Hans?
      who.ACC   seeks   Hans
      'Who is Hans looking for?'
   A: ∗Dem   Lehrer.
       the.DAT   leader
   A: Den   Lehrer.
      the.ACC   leader   (Merchant 2004: 677)

(43) Greek:
      Q: Pjos   idhe tin   Maria?
          who.NOM   saw the   Maria
          'Who saw Maria?'

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A:    O       Giannis.
      the     Giannis.NOM
A:    *Ton    Gianni.
      the     Giannis.ACC      (Merchant 2004: 676)
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Fragment answers show binding effects, which supports the analysis that they are derived from focus movement followed by TP ellipsis. This is exemplified in example (44). The anaphor in the fragment answer is acceptable despite the absence of any antecedent. The grammaticality of (44a) can be explained under the assumption that there is a clausal structure in the ellipsis site hosting the antecedent, which in such a case leads to satisfying Condition A of the binding theory (see Merchant 2004, 2006).

(44) Who does John like?
    a. Himself.
    b. John likes himself.   (Merchant 2006: 76)

The p-stranding phenomenon also supports the movement and ellipsis analysis. P-stranding is permitted in fragment answers only if it is permitted in full answers. In (45), stranding a preposition is unacceptable since German is a non-p-stranding language; the preposition in such cases has to be pied-piped. In p-stranding languages such as Swedish, both options are available, as shown in (46)

(45) German

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a. Mit    wem    hat Anna    gesprochen?
   with   who    has Anna    spoken?
b. Mit    demHans.
c. *Dem   Hans.
   the    Hans             (Merchant 2004: 686)
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(46) Swedish

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a. Vem     har   Peter   talat   med?
   who     has   Peter   talked  with?
b. Mary.   (Merchant 2004: 685)
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Extending the case-marking effect to Libyan Arabic data is not possible since case is not morphologically marked in this language. This is illustrated in (47), where the remnant, which functions as an object, bears no case-marking. However, since this is a non-p-stranding language, p-stranding is not permitted in fragment/short answers, as in (48); and it is not allowed in full answers either.

(47) Q: šen   šrē   Omar?
       what   bought.3MS   Omar
       'What did Omar buy?'
  A: siyyara.
     car
     'A car.'

(48) Q: mʕə   man   təkəllem   Omar?[3]
      with   who   talked.3MS   Omar
      'With whom did Omar talk?'

    A1: *Ali.
    A2: √mʕə   Ali.
        'With Ali.'

The p-stranding effect can be straightforwardly accounted for by the deletion analysis, according to which the remnant PP starts as a complement of the verb 'yətkəllem' and moves up to the left periphery before the entire TP gets deleted at the PF interface. Such an analysis, if on the right track, accounts not only for the assumption that the ellipsis site contains a structure and thus can be treated as a PF phenomenon, but also for the argument that the remnant which expresses new informational focus can appear in the left periphery (see Brunetti 2003)[4].

The second argument in favour of the assumption that the remnant undergoes A'-movement to the left periphery is the fact that the remnant in fragment answers is sensitive to island domains, as mentioned in 3.3.4 (see Merchant 2004 for further discussion). This is exemplified in (49)-(50) from English.

(49)   a. Did Ben leave the party because *Abby* wouldn't dance with him?
          b. *No, Beth.
          c. No, he left the party because Beth wouldn't dance with him.

(50)   a. Did Abby vote for a *Green Party* candidate?
          b. *No, *Reform Party*.
          c. No, she voted for a *Reform Party* candidate.

                                     (Merchant 2004: 688)

The ungrammaticality of (49b) & (50b) is expected if we assume that the fragment DPs derive from the structures in (c) and that they have moved across island domains to the left periphery. The same locality effects are found in Libyan Arabic fragment answers; examples (51) & (52) indicate that the remnant in short answers is sensitive to island constraints.

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[3] Resumptive wh-questions, which are compatible only with nominal constituents, do not permit PP remnants as fragment answers, as shown in (i):

(i) A: man   hu   illi   Omar   təkəllem   mʕə-ah?
       who   PRON.he   that   Omar   talked.3MS   with-him
       'Who is it/the person that Omar talked with?'

    B: (*mʕə) Ali.
         with   Ali

[4] The assumption that the remnant, e.g. in (47) can be in situ, that is, in the TP, and that all of the TP except for the constituent that surfaces as a remnant, as illustrated in (ii), elides is unacceptable since it would entail that a syntactic operation can apply to a string of words that do not make up a constituent.

(ii) ~~Omar~~ ~~šrē~~   siyyara.
     Omar bought.3MS   car

(51) Adjunct island

Q: huwa   žē   liʔan   Ali   ma-ʕəm-š   Omar?
   huwa   came.3MS because   Ali   NEG-invited.3MS-NEG   Omar
   'Did he come because Ali didn't invite Omar?'

A1: *la,   Ahmed.
    no,   Ahmed.

A2: la,   huwa   žē   liʔan   Ali   ma-ʕəm-š   Ahmed.
    no   he   came.3MS because   Ali   NEG-invited.3MS-NEG   Ahmed
    'No, he came because Ali didn't invite Ahmed.'

(52) Relative clause island

Q: Ali   šrē   l-ktab   illi   Omar   ʔllfə-h   l-Samir?
   Ali   bought.3MS   the-book   that   Omar   wrote.3MS-it   for-Samir
   'Did Ali buy the book that Omar wrote for Samir?'

A:1 *la,   l-Asma.
     no   for-Asma.

A2: la,   Ali   šrē   l-ktab   illi   Omar   ʔllfə-h   l-Asma.
    no   Ali   bought.3MS   the-book   that   Omar   wrote.3MS-it   for-Asma
    'No, Ali bought the book that Omar wrote for Asma.'

To sum up, these facts show that remnants in fragment answers involve movement to the left periphery.

5. Analysis of Stripping: A PF Deletion Account

Stripping has been analysed as a PF deletion process (see Depiante 2000; Merchant 2003; Kolokonte 2008). In the spirit of the deletion approach, I propose that stripping in Libyan Arabic can be derived by the movement of the remnant to the left periphery plus PF deletion. There are several pieces of evidence to argue in favour of the PF deletion account. First, locality effects can be diagnostic of movement; that is, if there is movement, it must obey island constraints. This prediction is borne out as the remnant in stripping is sensitive to islands, as illustrated in (53)-(55). The ungrammaticality of the elliptical structures below can be ascribed to the fact the remnant has moved from within an island domain.

(53) Complex noun phrase

*Ali   saddəq   l-wəld   illi   təkəllem   mʕə   Omar,   w   ḥətta
 Ali   believed.3MS   the-boy   that   talked.3MS   with   Omar   and   too
 mʕə Sami.
 with Sami
'*Ali believed the boy who talked with Omar, and with Sami too.'

(54) Adjunct islands

*Ali   zʕəl   liʔan-i   təkəllemt   mʕə   Omar   w   ḥətta   mʕə   Asma.
 Ali   got sad   because-I   talked.1MS   with   Omar   and   too   with   Asma

'*Ali got sad because I talked with Omar, and with Asma too.'

(55) Relative clause island

*Ali	šrē	l-ktab	illi	Omar	ʔəllfa-h		l-Samir,
Ali	bought.3MS	the-book	that	Omar	wrote.3MS-it		to-Samir

w   ḥətta   l-Asma.

and   too   to-Asma.

'*Ali bought the book that Omar wrote to Samir, and to Asma too.'

Second, as noted by Depiante (2000), the existence of preposition stranding can be used in arguing for the movement and deletion analysis of stripping (see 3.2). In Libyan Arabic, preposition stranding is not allowed in stripping, as illustrated in (56) and (57). The ungrammaticality of (56) can be ascribed to the ban on p-stranding in the language[5]. The structure in (57) is acceptable since it involves the movement of the prepositional phrase to the left periphery[6].

(56)

*Ali	təkəllem	mʕə	Omar,	w	ʔḥtimal	ḥətta	Asma$_i$
Ali	talked.3MS	with	Omar	and	probably	too	Asma

[Ali   t̶ə̶k̶ə̶l̶l̶e̶m̶   m̶ʕ̶ə̶   t$_i$]

Ali   talked.3MS   with

'Ali talked with Omar, and probably Asma too.' (Intended reading)

(57)

Ali   təkəllem   mʕə   Omar,   w   ʔḥtimal   ḥətta

Ali talked.3MS   with   Omar   and   probably   too

mʕə   Asma$_i$ [A̶l̶i̶ ̶t̶ə̶k̶ə̶l̶l̶e̶m̶ t$_i$].

with   Asma   Ali   talked.3MS

'Ali talked with Omar, and probably with Asma too.'

Despite, by hypothesis, being displaced to a left peripheral position in the elided clause, the

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[5] The structure in (58) is grammatical when the remnant   interpreted as a subject, as illustrated in (i):

(i)

Ali	təkəllem		mʕə	Omar,	w	ʔḥtimal	ḥətta	Asma$_i$
Ali	talked.3MS		with	Omar	and	probably	too	Asma

[t$_i$ t̶ə̶k̶ə̶l̶l̶e̶m̶t̶ ̶ ̶m̶ʕ̶ə̶   O̶m̶a̶r̶]

talked.3FS   with   Omar

[6] It is worth noting that p-stranding is not allowed in Standard Arabic stripping either, as in (i).

(i)

sa-ʔðhab-u	illa	r-rabaT-i	(wa)	*laysa*	*(illa)	l-Gahirat-i
will-go.1ms	to	Rabat-Gen	(and)	neg	*(to)	Cairo-Gen

'I will go to Rabat not to Cairo.'   (Al-Horias 2008: 13)

remnants in (56) and (57) are interpreted as new informational focus. They are not in contrast with any existing information, but rather they express new information that is not shared by the speaker and the addressee. The very same case can be observed in constituent questions. In such constructions, such as in (58), interrogative pronouns are assigned new focus and thus are normally answered with declarative clauses containing new information focus. The fact that the remnant appears in the left periphery in ellipsis is an indication that it undergoes focus movement (see Brunetti 2003 for discussion of the same issue in Italian).

(58) Q: šen   šrēt?
          what   bought.2MS
          'What did you buy?'

      A: ktab.
          book
          'A book.'

Given that the remnant in (59) is not in contrast with any existing information and constitutes new information that is not shared by the speaker and the hearer, I assume that it undergoes movement to a focus projection in the left periphery.

(59) Ali   safer   ams,   w   ʔḥtimal   ḥətta   Omar.
     Ali   left.3MS   yesterday   and   probably   too   Omar
   'Ali left yesterday, and probably Omar too.'

For the derivation of (59), I follow the PF deletion approach to ellipsis and argue that it is a PF phenomenon and that the ellipsis is licensed by an [E]llipsis[7] feature residing in the head of FocP. Consequently, once the remnant has moved to spec FocP, E sends off the complement of the head in which it resides, which is the TP, for non-pronunciation at PF, resulting in TP ellipsis.

(60)

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[7] Merchant (2001, 2004) proposes that ellipsis is licensed by an [E]llipsis feature. This feature is the locus of the properties distinguishing elliptical from non-elliptical constructions. The E feature has specific syntactic, phonological and semantic requirements that vary according to the elliptical category and need to be satisfied in order for ellipsis to take place. For discussion on the nature of the E feature, see Merchant (2001, 2004).
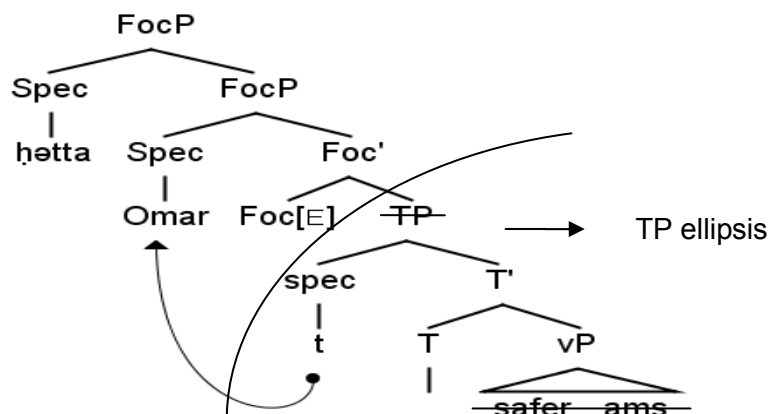
6. Conclusion

This paper has discussed stripping in Libyan Arabic from a generative perspective. Based on facts of locality, binding and p-stranding effects, it is proposed that stripping can be derived by focus movement of the remnant to the left periphery followed by TP deletion at PF. Furthermore, as far as information structure is concerned, it is argued that the remnant, which occupies a spec position in the left periphery, is interpreted as new information focus.

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