

# Discourse contribution of naming a referent

(or: “interactional re-analysis of Left Dislocation”):

comparative study of two languages

Pavel Ozerov

University of Münster

pozerov@uni-muenster.de

# Goals and structure of the talk

- Explore the function of “lone” NPs...
- Analysis of “Left Detachment” (“Left Dislocation”) in two typologically different languages

# The structure of the talk

1. Introduction
  - a) Information Structure vs. Interactional Information Management
  - b) Left Detachment
  - c) Online Syntax
  - d) The design of the study
2. Left Detachment in Israeli Hebrew
3. Left Detachment in Anal Naga
4. Conclusions

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# Interactional Information Management

- “Traditional” Information Structure: Universal pragmatic categories
  - *Topic* – an entity at the centre of the interlocutors’ attention so that new information is stored as about it (cf. Gundel 1988, Lambrecht 1994, Lambrecht and Michaelis 1998)
- Proposed approach: Bottom up (Matić and Wedgwood 2013, Ozerov 2018)
  - *Interactional Information Management*
- A myriad of mostly yet unexplored, language-specific categories of interaction-management, attention-management, attitude-management, modality, evidentiality, subjectivity, epistemicity...
  - marked directly, trigger indirect IS-like effects
  - glossed over as “topic” and “focus”

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# Introduction – LD?

- Left Dislocation/Detachment (LD) – topicalising syntactic construction (e.g. Lambrecht 2001)

*John<sub>i</sub>, I saw him<sub>i</sub>.*

- Related constructions:

- Hanging Topic (HT)      *My work, I'm going crazy!*
- “Subject Marking-construction” (SM)      *Dad, you know... did something like that.* (Netz and Kuzar 2010)

# Introduction – LD?

- Clearly indicates/announces the TOPIC of the clause
  - Clear topic–comment partition
- PSRR (Principle of the Separation of Reference and Role):  
*“Do not introduce a referent and talk about it in the same clause”* (Lambrecht 1994:178, Kuzar and Netz 2007, Kerr 2014 among many others)
- Interactional studies: Various specific discourse-managing functions
  - turn-taking (Ochs and Duranti 1979 for Italian)
  - turn-taking, assessment, overlap... (Pekarek Doehler et al. 2015)



# LD?

- Apparent universal topicality effects with LD?

Hebrew:

*DOʁ \_ / lifa'mim o's-im l-o 'HAMbucker //*

PN sometimes do.PRES-PL to-3M hamburger

'Dor, sometimes we make a hamburger for him.' (C711\_0\_sp1\_027-028)

Anal Naga:

*mì.lá-to... / ból-k<sup>h</sup>e? p<sup>h</sup>ùl-lé:lo-hín-nú=nâ.e*

pine-ABS stem-one cut-IDEO .openly-1PL-NFUT=ADDR

Lit: 'Pine, we cut one stem [there], eh?'

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# Online syntax

- *Projection* – “more to come” and the possibilities for this “more”; “the individual part foreshadows another” (Auer 2005)

*The...* → *NP*

*Here comes...* → *DP*

*The sun...*

*NP – the moon, and the stars*

*VP – has disappeared...*

*cop + adj – is red*

*...*

- Online syntax – “Speakers improvise at each point as the discourse unfolds” (Hopper 2011:31)

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# The study

- Analysis of “lone NPs” – NPs that are:
  - Not projected by previous material
  - Form a separate Intonation Unit
- Information status (new, given, inferable), function (updating, elaborating, re-instantiation, stance, contrast)
- turn management (overlap, starting TCU...), back-channeling, prosody, hesitation
- form (NP, pronoun), larger structure (stand-alone, sentence, LD/HT...)



# The study

- Detached NPs and their functions
  - Some tokens develop into LD-like structures
- Are LD cases and alike constructions with a dedicated function? (NO!)
  - Or are these ad-hoc continuation choices for the detached noun? (YES!)
    - The regular local reason for the detached NP

# Main findings

- Detached NPs are a product of different (commonly known) strategies of interactional discourse management
  - Routinised/secure starting points
  - Attention alignment wrt referent
- LD-like outcomes are not fixed constructions used for IS (or other purposes)
  - But are occasional by-products of the strategies above
  - LD (NP+Clause): Cherry-picked examples of much broader phenomena
- Different language-specific strategies
  - Syntactic differences (V-final language → dominance of heavy starting points)
  - Cultural differences



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# Detached NPs in Israeli Hebrew

- Israeli Hebrew (Semitic)
  - Free constituent order – but tendency for (A) VP
  - NOM-ACC
- 2.5 hours of natural speech (CoSIH)
  - 528 examples
- 3 major reasons for detached NPs
  - online re-planning
  - online recycling
  - attention-alignment

# Online trajectory re-planning

- Initiating move
  - with an NP
  - a pronoun
  - ....
  - continuing tone/  
hesitation
- Bare NP's/pronouns – underspecified projection
- Highly routinised starting points
  - Very secure attempt to start when the rest is not planned
- Re-adjustment of the trajectory
  - Retrospectively leaves a stranded NP behind: 149 examples (28% of total 528)
  - if continued with a clause: “LD”-like (48% of all LD-like)

# Resonance/recycling

- Repeating a part of the preceding utterance or echoing its structure (Du Bois 2014)
- Interactional/discourse-structuring effects
- Both re-planning and recycling are found in turn-taking, argumentative discourse, competition for turn, sequence opening, lengthy monologues

# Re-planning and recycling

*A was telling about his bus trip in Mongolia. After a 4 sec long pause, the interlocutor takes the turn.*

*rega | ve=ha-otobus | kmo=ma nir'e?*  
hold.on and=**DEF-bus** | like=what looks?  
'Just a second, and **the bus**, what does it looks like?' ...1.5...  
*ha-otobu:s| kmo: |...2.5...kmo=ma je=haja be=fnot ha-arba'im*  
**DEF-bus like like=what that=was in=year.PL DEF-40's**

*kaze //*

**that.one**

'The bus... like... ... like what there was in the 40's.

One of these.'

# Trajectory re-planning

<i>ima</i>	<i>feli</i>   ...	<i>ani</i>	<i>m- --</i>	<i>ma</i>	<i>fe=ani</i>	<i>jaxol</i>	<i>lehagid</i>
mother	my	1SG	(cut)	what	that=1SG	can	to.tell
<i>l-exa</i>	<i>ze</i>	<i>fe=ima</i>		<i>feli</i>	<i>bemefex</i>  ..	<i>kol</i>	<i>fnot</i>
to-2SG.M	it	that=mother		my	during	all	years.of
<i>xaj-eha</i>	<i>ani</i>	<i>xofev</i>	<i>haja</i>	<i>l-a</i>	<i>ha-ze</i>	<i>fel=SEB</i>	
life-3SG.F	1SG	think	was	to-her	DEF-this	of=SEB	

My mother | ... | wh- | what I can tell you | is that my mother\_ | during  
| ... all her life | I think | **she** had this one of SEB'



# Detached NP – re-planning+recycling

- Not “introduce a referent – say something about it”
- But: “begin with the likeliest starting point... and improvise from there”
  - 25% of detached NPs; 48% of LD-like
- “begin by echoing preceding talk... and improvise from there”
  - 30% of detached NPs, 49% of LD-like
- The combination of the two: 32% of LD-like

# Hebrew detached NPs – Summary

role	% of total (out of 528)	% of LD-like (out of 196)
updating	42	13
recycled	30	49
re-planning	25	48
planned ref. intr.	6	17

66%

- Begin with the likeliest constituent – improvise from there
  - depart from the more obvious, expected...
- Recycle/resonate – continue the talk
  - recycled/resonated is given/accessible
- Align attention – use it later (not necessarily propositionally/*about* it)



# Detached NP – re-planning+recycling

- Language properties prompt starting with accessible NP
  - Free constituent order – but tendency for **(A) VP** aka (S)VO
- A-argument (typically given, recycled...) as a routinised starting point

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# Detached NPs in Anal Naga

- Israeli Hebrew (Semitic); 2.5 hours of natural speech (CoSIH)
  - NOM-ACC
  - free constituent order
  - 528 examples
- Anal Naga (Kuki-Chin, Tibeto-Burman; Manipur, India; 20,000 speakers); 1 hour of natural interaction
  - ERG-ABS NP, hierarchical V-indexation
  - V-final
  - 196 examples



# Detached NP in Hebrew vs. Anal Naga

	Hebrew		Anal Naga	
	% of total (out of 528)	% of LD-like (out of 196)	% of total (out of 196)	% of LD-like (out of 150)
<b>develop into LD-like</b>	37		77	
<b>updating</b>	42	13	1	0.5
<b>planned ref. intr.</b>	6	17	25	33
<b>recycled</b>	27	49	12	12
<b>re-planning</b>	25	48	57	63
<b>new referent</b>	19	26	58	60

- Major reasons for detached NPs
  - online re-planning
  - (online recycling)
  - attention-alignment
- Different weight for these factors
  - due to the syntax-related nature of the likely start

# Syntax of Anal Naga

- Verb final

tendency for (A)PV

*k<sup>h</sup>i.k<sup>h</sup>i-pá tɕam<sup>h</sup>ù háŋ-t<sup>h</sup>é-nú*

PN-father cow UP.TEMP-accompany-NFUT

‘Khikhi’s father took the cows up.’



# Detached NPs in Anal Naga

- 196 detached NPs
  - 150 (77%) continued into LD-like

*Warsun asà:n*      *va-na-ká:=te=nâ |*

PN      earlier      3-REL-shoot=DISC.SHFT=ADDR

*va-t<sup>h</sup>al=so*      *t<sup>h</sup>à-pá:-já:-nú=vê*

3-gallbladder=ADD      good-AUG-JUST-NFUT=ADDR

**‘The one that Warsung shot earlier, its gallbladder was also very good.’**

# Reasons for detached NPs

- Re-planning – the primary reason for NP separation: 113 cases (57%), 95 develop into LD (63% of LD)
  - Not a LD-construction
    - but unplanned move: start with X – improvise from there (50 LD + 44 regular)
- Attention-alignment: 25% of total, 33% of LD-like
  - external referent – 17 cases (10 LD + 7 regular)
  - negotiated – 32 cases (14 LD + 7 regular)

# Starting points

- (A)PV order

- highly frequent PV

→ Starting points are heavy!

- e.g. a new P-argument (typically regarded as focal, highly newsworthy)

*aro: va-tò:m-ká-hín-to*                      *a-hún-η-hòl-jè-nú*

**EXCL 3-bear-shoot-PL-ABS**                      CIS-UP.HOME

‘Oh, they brought here **a bear that they shot.**’





# Starting points

- Detached NP
  - “heavy, new, newsworthy” information
  - but the following talk can relate back to it (cf. focal LD in Japanese, Yamaizumi 2011)



(A mentions a place in the forest, B takes turn)

*mì.lá-to... | bó!-k<sup>h</sup>e?      p<sup>h</sup>ù!-lé:lo-hín-nú=nâ.e*

pine-ABS | stem-one    cut-IDEO.openly-1PL-NFUT=ADDR

‘We cut a pine tree there.’

Lit: ‘Pine, we cut one stem there, eh?’

# Starting points

- Starting points as reflected by detached NPs:
  - 1) 60% - new, “focal” P
    - start with the likeliest constituent =
      - “name the primarily introduced/newsworthy referent!”
  - 2) Recycling/shifting to given: 23%

# Alleviating “heavy” starting points

- Large set of adnominal markers that foreshadow the intended goal
  - *-te* – discourse shift (“Contrastive Topic”)
  - Direct negotiation regarding the referent
    - Highly frequent final marker =*nê/nâ/nô* and/or special contour
      - Calls for alignment, identification; requests **back-channelling**
    - 23% of LD-examples
- “ALIGN ATTENTION ON A REFERENT – USE IT LATER”
- Introduction → repetition
  - 11% examples

# Alleviating starting points

➤ “*There is*” referent introduction:

- typicallythetic
- no topic
  - let alone no topic status for the newly introduced referent
- But what about languages with NV-clause structure?

# Alleviating “heavy” starts

*As we were cutting wood...*

*k<sup>h</sup>upasa-he-tô |... k<sup>h</sup>upasa-e=nâ |*

bee-1DEM-ABS      bee-2DEM=ADDR

*at<sup>h</sup>e                  e-k<sup>h</sup>è-lem.lom-e*

like.that      NMLZ-hang-IDEO.openly-2DEM

*e-ám-vá=ve*

NMLZ-be-COP=EXCL

(Lit: ‘This bee? This bee, eh? There was one hanging like that.’)

‘There was a bee hanging openly like that.’



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## 1) On-line trajectory re-planning

- Start with the likeliest constituent – improvise from there
- ~ half of cases develop into a syntactically regular clause

## 2) Align-attention on a referent – act in this regard

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## 1) On-line trajectory re-planning

- Start with the likeliest constituent – improvise from there
- Hebrew: accessible, recycled
- Anal Naga: (i) new, newsworthy      (ii) accessible

# Conclusions

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<b>recycled</b>	27	49	12	12
<b>disfluency</b>	25	48	57	63
<b>new referent</b>	19	26	58	60

## 2) Align-attention – act in this regard

- Hebrew: negotiated sequence-openings/exophoric pointing
- Anal Naga: negotiated referent introduction/activation

# Conclusions

- Detached NPs are a product of different (commonly known) strategies of interactional discourse management
  - Starting points
  - Attention alignment
  - Recycling
- Some are continued immediately with apparent LD-like outcomes

# Conclusions

- Different language-specific strategies
  - Syntactic differences (V-final → heavy starting points)
  - Cultural differences (frequency of direct negotiation)
- LD – Universality of Topic-Comment?
  - LD? By-product of static examination of the collocation “NP + clause”
    - Cherry-picked examples of much broader phenomena
  - Speakers do not orient themselves on “topicality”
    - No need in pre-empirical universalist extra-machinery

Thank you ! תודה רבה

e-m<sup>h</sup>àn

NMLZ-happy

a'm-pá:-kà

be-AUG-NFUT