Discourse contribution of naming a referent (or: “interactional re-analysis of Left Dislocation”):

comparative study of two languages

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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*$_i$, *I saw him*$_i$.

• 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)
• Apparent universal topicality effects with LD?

Hebrew:

DOפ_ / lifa'mim o's-im l-o 'HAMביגדכ | |
PN sometimes do.PRES-PL to-3M hamburger
‘Dor, sometimes we make a hamburger for him.’ (C711_0_sp1_027-028)

Anal Naga:

µì.lá-to... / ból-kʰe? phùl-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)

  \[\text{The... } \rightarrow \text{ NP} \quad \text{The sun...} \quad \text{VP} – \text{has disappeared...} \]

  \[\text{Here comes... } \rightarrow \text{ DP} \quad \text{NP – the moon, and the stars} \quad \text{cop + adj – is red} \]

• 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

• 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)

• Bare NP’s/pronouns – underspecified projection
  • Highly routinised starting points
    • Very secure attempt to start when the rest is not planned
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
A was telling about his bus trip in Mongolia. After a 4 sec long pause, the interlocutor takes the turn.

‘Just a second, and the bus, what does it looks like?’ …1.5...

‘The bus... like... ... like what there was in the 40’s. One of these.’
Trajectory re-planning

**My mother**... 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

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- 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/\textit{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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3. Left Detachment in Anal Naga

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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

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- 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

\[k^h_i.k^h_i-p\acute{a} \quad t\text{c}am^h\grave{u} \quad h\acute{a}n-\acute{t}^h\acute{u}-n\acute{u}\]

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

\textit{Warsuŋ asà:n va-na-ká:=te=nâ |}
PN earlier 3-REL-shoot=DISC.SHFT=ADDR
\textit{va-tʰal=so řʰà-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-húŋ-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)

$mì.lá-tó... | ból-kʰe? \ phùl-lé:lo-hín-nú=nâ.e$

pine-ABS | stem-one cut-ID E O.openly-1PL-N F U T=A D D R
‘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:
  • typically thetic
  • 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...

$kʰupașa-he-tô \ ... \ kʰupașa-e=nâ \ /
bee-1DEM-ABS bee-2DEM=ADDR

$atʰe \ e-kʰè-lem.lom-e \ e-ám-vá=ve$

like.that NMLZ-hang-IDEO.openly-2DEM 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
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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-mʰàn  am-páː-kà
NMLZ-happy  be-AUG-NFUT