To the right of the clause: right dislocation vs. afterthought

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German right dislocation

NP-‘right dislocation’: an NP at the right edge of the clause and a coreferent pro-form inside the clause:

(1) Hast Du ihn schon gesehen, (ich meine) den Karl?

have you him already seen, (I mean) the Karl

[Schindler (1995: 44)]

German right dislocation

(2) a. ("Der Taifun!" rief Lukas dem Kapitän zu. Da ist er!"

("The typhoon_mask!" called Lukas the captain to. There is he!"

Ja, da war er, der Taifun.

Yes, there was he_i, the typhoon_i

[Ende, M.: Jim Knopf und die Wilde 13]

b. (Den Tag, den vergess' ich nicht,)

(That day, D-PRON_{AKK} forget I not)

der war viel zu schön, der Tag.

D-PRON_i was much too wonderful the day_i.

[Altmann (1981:129)]

right dislocation marks the referent of the right-peripheral NP as the "subject" for the following discourse segment (discourse topic referent)
The structure of the talk

I. right dislocation (RD) vs. afterthought (AT) in German: functional and formal differences
   I.1. RD vs. AT: discourse functions
   I.2. RD vs. AT: prosodic and syntactic differences

II. AT: discourse attachment via discourse relation Afterthought

III. RD vs. AT: two general options of the use of the right edge
   III.1. German
   III.2. Russian
   III.3. French

IV. Summing up and conclusions
I. Right dislocation vs. afterthought

(3) a. Sie war ein original, die Madame Dutitre.  
*she was an original   the MD*  
(Sie verstand nie, warum man über ihre Aussprüche lachte)  
*(She never understood why everybody laughed at her remarks.)*  

b. (Serena und Teresa kommen auch mit.)  
*Serena and Teresa are coming too.*  
Ich mag sie nicht, | (ich meine) Serena.  
*I like her/them not, (I mean) Serena*

RD vs. AT: discourse functions:

- RD: marking the discourse topic referent for the following discourse segment
- AT: repair strategy, resolving a potentially unclear reference in the host sentence
I.1. RD vs. AT: discourse functions

- **RD**: global, forward-looking discourse structuring strategy
- **AT**: local, backward-looking repair strategy
I.2. RD vs. AT: prosodic differences

- RD: prosodically integrated in the host sentence
- AT: a prosodic unit of its own

(4) a. [Ich MAG sie nicht die Brigitte]. \[RD\]

   b. [Ich MAG sie nicht] | [die BriGITte]. \[AT\]

(I don't like her, Brigitte.)

(|: pause; [:]: prosodic unit; CAPITALS: main accent)
## I.2. RD vs. AT: syntactic differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RD</th>
<th>AT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strict morphological agreement between the clause-internal pro-form and the NP</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a subordinate clause between the clause-internal pro-form and the NP possible</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free position in the host sentence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>optional additions (ich meine ('I mean'), also ('that is'), tatsächlich ('really'), natürlich ('sure') etc.)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 Frontier: see Appendix for examples (cf. also Averintseva-Klisch (forthc.))
I.2. RD vs. AT: syntactic differences

RD is prosodically and syntactically integrated into its host sentence, whereas AT is not:

- RD: right IP-adjunct
- AT: an ‘orphan’ (Haegeman (1991))

attached at the discourse level
II. AT: discourse attachment: preliminaries

- SDRT (Asher / Lascarides (2003))
- coordinating vs. subordinating discourse relations (Asher / Vieu (2005))

(5) (α) Tom came in. (β) He switched on the light. (γ) Then he put his jacket off.

(6) (α) Tom visited his friends yesterday. (β) First he visited Fred. (γ) Then he dropped in on Sarah.
II. AT: discourse attachment: preliminaries

- SDRT (Asher / Lascarides (2003))

- coordinatin vs. subordinating discourse relations (Asher / Lascarides (2003), Asher / Vieu (2005))

Tests for coordination / subordination: (Asher / Vieu (2005))

\[
given: \text{discourse } (\alpha, \beta, \gamma); \ R (\alpha, \beta); \ R = ?\]

- Attachment Test \leftarrow 
- Continuation Test 
- Anaphora Test \leftarrow 
- Compatibility Test
II. AT: discourse attachment

• Attachment Test:
  If it is possible to attach $\gamma$ to $\alpha$, then R is subordinating; if attachment is possible only to $\beta$, then R is coordinating

(7) a. Dann ist sie weggelaufen, \(\alpha\)
    *Then is she run-away*

  b. (ich meine) die Serena. \(\beta\)
    *(I mean) the Serena*

  c. Das macht sie immer wenn sie wütend ist. \(\gamma\)
    *That does she always when she angry is*
II. AT: discourse attachment

• Anaphora Test:
  if for any $\gamma$ attached to $\beta$ no pronominal element in $\gamma$ can be bound by referents in $\alpha$, then $R$ is coordinating; if some can, then $R$ is subordinating.

(8) a. Dann ist sie weggelaufen, $\quad (\alpha)$
   Then is she run-away

   b. (ich meine) die Serena. $\quad (\beta)$
   (I mean) the Serena

   c. Das war nicht besonders schlau. $\quad (\gamma)$
   That was not especially clever
II. AT: discourse attachment

- SDRT (Asher / Lascarides (2003))
- coordinating vs. subordinating discourse relations (Asher / Vieu (2005))

- according to the tests, Afterthought is subordinating:

(9) (α) Hast du ihn schon gesehen, (β) ich meine den Karl?

\[\text{Afterthought}\]

(see also Averintseva-Klisch (forthc.))
II. AT: discourse attachment

⇒ SDRT (Asher / Lascarides (2003))
⇒ coordinating vs. subordinating discourse relations (Asher / Vieu (2005))

(I) Afterthought \((\alpha, \beta)\) is a cognitive-level, subordinating discourse relation, which holds whenever the speaker of \(\alpha\) (=host sentence) and \(\beta\) (= AT) supplies \(\beta\) with the speech act related goal of clearing the reference of a discourse referent \(x\) that has been introduced in \(\alpha\) by establishing a relation \(x=z\), where \(z\) is a discourse referent introduced in \(\beta\), and the reference of \(z\) in the discourse representation is assumed to be unambiguous.

[Averintseva-Klisch (forthc.), (19)]
II. AT: summing up: syntax vs. discourse attachment

- **Syntax**: 'orphan'

- **Discourse**: subordinating discourse relation

![Diagram showing the structure of the sentence: IP -> NP\_i
Hast du ihn\_i schon gesehen

> den Karl

Afterthought (discourse subordination)
III. RD vs. AT: two options of the use of the right edge

- two general functions of the right edge:
  - global discourse structuring strategy: marking the discourse topic referent: RD (backgrounding, 'familiarity topic',...)
  - local repair strategy: supplying additional information: AT (additions ...)

- only RD vs. AT observed here

Hypothesis: languages differ with respect to their using both functions of the right clause edge, some using both and some preferring only one of the options
III.1. German: RD vs. AT as options

- both options widely used (see above)

(10) (Den Tag, den vergess' ich nicht,) der war viel zu schön, der Tag.
   (That day, him forget I not) he was much too wonderful the day.

- RD: right-peripheral construction, IP-adjunct

(11) Hast Du ihn schon gesehen, ich meine den Karl?
    have you him already seen, I mean the Karl.

- AT: an 'orphan' to the right of the clause

- Interdependence of the discourse function and the syntax?
Ill.2. Russian: RD vs. AT as options

ניRussian: few syntactic constraints: "free word order"
⇒ word order is caused by information structure

Hypothesis:
• RD is not needed, as there are possibilities to realize information structure marking (also discourse topic marking) via word order inside the clause
• AT as an option present in the spoken language

(12) (Ego žena revnujet ego k Tereze Lido.)
(His wife is jealous of Teresa Lido.)

Onа́ и puskajetsja za nim v pogonju, ego žena и. ⇐ AT
She и starts for him in pursuit his wife и.
(She и pursues him, his wife и) [attested oral data]
III.2. Russian: RD vs. AT as options

(13) a. Doždju ne zalit' ego, étot ogon', vetru ego ne zadut'.

\[
\text{rain}_{\text{DAT}} \text{ not quench } \text{him this fire}_{\text{MASK}} \text{ wind}_{\text{DAT}} \text{ him not blow-out}
\]

(No rain can quench it, this fire, no wind can blow it out.)

[V. Matvejeva, Songs]

b. Meier Wolf vsju žizn' kobil den'gi, čtoby uvidet' Stenu Plača.

\[
\text{MW whole life saved money so-that see wall of-weeping}
\]

(MW saved money his whole life long to see the Wailing Wall)

On videl ejë teper', étu stenu.

\[
\text{he saw her now this wall}_{\text{FEM}}
\]

[...]. Ėto prostaja požarnaja stena [...]

[...]. It simple fire-brigade wall [...]

[A. Galić, Matrosskaja Tišina]

RD is possible. But: seldom; (13a): rhythm; (13b): imitation of a certain sociolect
III.3. French: RD vs. AT as options

a preliminary sketch:

(14) a. Il-a-mangé la soupe, Jean.
   he has eaten the soup Jean

b. Il est beau, ce tableau!
   he is beautiful, this picture

☞ roughly: RD is used for 'familiarity topic'

(15) Il-a-mangé la soupe, | JEAN.
   he has eaten the soup Jean

☞ AT is available as an option of spoken language

☞ RD is widely available (in the spoken language)

☞ syntactic reasons for RD: to achieve more syntactic freedom
   (Lambrecht (1981))
III.3. French  RD: SOV ⇒ SVO

(16) a. Pierre i-la-voit, Marie.
   \[ P \text{ } CL_{\text{MASK}}\text{-}CL_{\text{FEM}}\text{-sees, } M \]
   b. Pierre voit Marie.
   \[ P \text{ } \text{sees } M \]

[Lambrecht (1981: 77)]

⇒ syntactic reasons for RD: more syntactic freedom achieved:

   \[ P \text{ } \text{sees } M \] / *P \text{ } \text{sees } / *\text{Sees}
   S-V-O \Rightarrow ... 
   
   b. Pierre i-la-voit, Marie. / Pierre i-la-voit. / I-la voit.
   \[ P \text{ } \text{CL_{MASK}}\text{-}CL_{\text{FEM}}\text{-sees, } M / P \text{ } \text{CL}_{\text{MASK}}\text{-}CL_{\text{FEM}}\text{-sees} / CL_{\text{MASK}}\text{-}CL_{\text{FEM}}\text{-sees} \]
   \[ ... \Rightarrow S-O-V \]

⇒ dislocated phrases are omissible: SVO ⇒ artificial SOV

(Lambrecht (1981))
III.3. RD vs. AT as options: summing up

a preliminary sketch:

- For the occurrence of RD, the syntactic character of the language seems to matter: more syntactic freedom, less RD
  
  "free" word order
  Russian → German → French
  RD seldom
  "fixed" word order

- For AT the syntax does not play any role, as AT is not part of its host sentence, and thus has no syntactic effects. AT is always possible as an option of the spoken language

- cross-linguistic interdependence of the discourse function and the syntax?
  - RD (discourse structuring): part of its host sentence
  - AT (repair): orphan
IV. Summary and conclusions

• For German, the differentiation between RD and AT was proposed:
  ▫ RD is a global discourse structuring strategy, used to mark the discourse topic referent for the following discourse segment.
    RD is a real part of its host sentence (right IP-adjunct)
  ▫ AT is a local reference repair strategy
    AT is an orphan, i.e. syntactically autonomous, and gets integrated into its host sentence only at the level of the discourse

• For the discourse attachment of AT, the discourse relation *Afterthought* was formulated, and its subordinating character was specified
IV. Summary and conclusions

• The hypothesis was put out that, cross-linguistically, right edge of the sentence can be used
  ▫ either for global discourse strategies of information status marking (discourse topic marking)
  ▫ or for local repair strategies
• Differences with respect to the use of these options are expected depending on the language:
  ▫ AT is always available (at least as spontaneous strategy of spoken language)
  ▫ the use of RD might be either supported or impeded by the syntax of the language in question
Thank you!

Thanks
to my supervisor Claudia Maienborn (Univ. Tuebingen) for her constant support
to Manfred Consten (Univ. Jena) for extensively discussing relevant issues
to Mareile Knees (Univ. Jena) and Fabienne Fritzsche (ZAS Berlin) for their helpful comments
References


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References


