An Ellipsis Approach to Contrastive Left-Dislocation
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Nutshell of this article

> – This article proposes an analysis of contrastive left-dislocation (CLD), which reduces to an interplay of Ā-movement and ellipsis, akin to recent treatment of elliptical construction.
>
> – This analysis resolves the paradoxical fact that the dislocated XP shows connectivity into the clause it precedes, while other properties betray its clause-external status.

1 Introduction

Contrastive left-dislocation (CLD) is a construction in which a left-peripheral XP precedes a complete clause containing a resuming element.

(1) a. Den Peter, den habe ich gesehen.
         the Peter him have I   seen
         'I saw Peter'

Terminology

- Dislocated XP(= dXP): e.g. Den Peter

- Correlate: resuming element, e.g. den

- Host clause: the clause containing the correlate.

Analysis to be defended:

- CLD is derived from the following underlying biclausal structure, and the dXP is a remnant of clausal ellipsis.

(2) $[_{CP1}$ dXP$_i$ <$[\ldots t_i \ldots]$]> $]$ $[_{CP2} \ldots$ correlate $\ldots]$ ("<$\ldots$>" = PF-deletion)

- The juxtaposed CP_1 and CP_2 are parallel, modulo the difference between dXP and correlate.

- This parallelism licenses ellipsis in CP_1; The *d*XP has Ā -moved to the edge of CP_1 , enabling constituent deletion of the remainder of the clause.

2 Core Properties of CLD

dXP:

- The dXP has the pragmatic function of a (contrastive) topic or a focus.

- The dXP can be prosodically integrated into the host clause, but may alternatively be separated from it by an intonational break or even by interjections.

  (3)   *German*

      a.   Den Peter, {#/ ja/ genau/ verdamn} den habe ich gesehen.
          the Peter #/yeah/exactly/damn   him have I   seen
          'Peter, {#/ ja/ genau/ verdamn}, I saw him, yesterday.'

☞ This suggests that the dXP bears a rather loose structural relation to the host clause.

- Semantically, it is essentially vacuous, having no truth-conditional effect on compositional interpretation.

- CLD is virtually unrestricted with respect to the category of the *d*XP. (i.e. There are no inherent constraints on the category of the *d*XP.

Correlate:

- It is typically realized as a pronoun resuming the *d*XP.

- Leftward movement of the correlate out of an island induces deviance.

  (4)   a. *Den Peter, den$_i$ kenne ich die Frau   [die t$_i$ suletzt gesehen
           the Peter that know I   the woman that   last   seen
           hat].
           has
           Intended: 'I know the woman who was the last to see Peter.'

☞ This suggests that the *d*XP is generated externally to the host clause: it precedes a syntactically complete (gapless) V2 clause.

Clause-external properties:

Infinitivus pro participio

- The IPP is consistently judged to be unacceptable in a case of VP-dislocation.

  (5)   a. *Griechisch lernen, das habe ich immer schon wollen.
             Greek   learn   that have I   always   want.INF
          b. Griechisch lernen, das habe ich immer schon gewollt.
             Greek   learn   that have I   always   want.PTCP

☞ If the dislocated VP originates in the host clause, it ought to be as acceptable.

- When dislocated-VP is analyzed as an extrasentential constituent, its deviance follows from the unacceptability of the host clause, which is due to the fact that VP proform generally obviate the IPP.

- The facts fall into place once it is acknowledged that the dXP is not part of the host clause at any stage of the derivation.

Clause-internal properties:

- The dXP agrees in case with its correlate.

  (6)   *German*

          a. Seinen$_i$ besten   Freund, den   sollte jedar$_i$ gut
             his.ACC best.ACC friend   him.ACC should everyone well
             behandeln.
             treat.
             'Everyone should treat his best friend well.' (Grohmann 2003:143)

- The pronoun it contains is bound by an element in the host clause.

3 Movement and Ellipsis in CLD

A wealth of proposals locating CLD is on either side of the *base-generation* vs.*movement* dichotomy.

Base generation approach

- The dXP is base-generated as a left-peripheral adjunct to the host clause.

- This analysis is supplemented with a specially devised chain formation mechanism.

(7) $[_{CP}$ dXP$_i$ $[_{CP}$ ... correlate$_i$ ...]]

(8) A CHAIN $<\alpha_1, \ldots, \alpha_n>$ is a sequence of nodes sharing the same θ-roles such that for any i, $1 \leq i \leq n$, α_i c-commands and is coindexed with α_{i+1}. (Frey 2004b:223).

- The effect of CHAIN Mechanism is a movement-like dependency (a CHAIN) between dXP and correlate, crucially in the absence of actual movement.

- Identity in θ-role between dXP and correlate and the resulting exceptional CHAIN formation are simply stipulated, in violation of the θ-Criterion (Chomsky 1981).

Monoclausal movement apporach

- In Grewendorf's (2008) dXP and correlate are originally composed in a "big DP" (of which the dXP is the specifier and the correlate is the head).

- Big DP is split up in the course of the derivation as follows: the big DP raises to the left periphery, followed by very local Ā -movement of the dXP to an even higher left-peripheral position.

- The approach is still forced to countenance exceptional V3 structures in CLD, given the robust nature of the V2 requirement.

   (9) *Dutch*

   a. Gisteren, toen heeft jan dat boek snel terug gebracht.
   yesterday then has Jan that book quickly back brought
   'Jan quickly returned the book yesterday.'

- Extraction of the dXP from a phrase and the correlate in the base would invariably violate the Adjunct Condition.

Ellipsis approach

- CLD is analyzed as derived from a juxtaposition of two clauses, the linearly first of which is reduced by clausal ellipsis at PF, leaving only the fronted dXP as a surface remnant.

   (10) $[_{CP1}$ dXP$_i$ $<[\overline{\ldots t_i \ldots}]>$ $]$ $[_{CP2}$ ... correlate ... $]$ ("$<\ldots>$" = PF-deletion)

- Adopting Merchant's (2001) implementation of ellipsis liensing,

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(11)   *Focus Condition on Clausal Ellipsis*
The propositional sister α of a clausal-initial XP can be deleted only if α is e-GIVEN.

(12)   *e-*GIVEN*ness.*
An expression X counts as e-GIVEN if and only if X has a silent antecedent A and, modulo $\exists$-type shifting,
  a.   A entails E-clo(X), and
  b.   X entails E-clo(A).

(13)   The E-closure of α (E-clo(α)) is the result of replacing all E-marked subelements of α with variables of the appropriate type.

(14)   *German*

  a.   *$[_{CP1}$ Den Peter $[_E$ habe ich t beleidigt]], $[_{CP2}$ den $[_A$ habe ich t
        the peter   have I   insulted   him   have I
        einen Idioten genannt]]
        an   idiot   called
        'I called Peter an idiot.'

Merits

- It circumvents the V3 problem (detrimental to both base-generation and monoclausal movement approaches): each of the two CPs is a standard V2 clause, and V3 order arises only superficially, as a result of PF deletion in CP_1.

- No real antecedent-trace mismatch arises, because the *d*XP antecedes its (PP-) trace in CP_1, whereas the R-pronoun has stranded its preposition in CP_2.

(15)   *Dutch*

  a.   naar zijn$_i$ promotie, daar$_k$ kijkt iedere taalkundige$_i$ naar t$_k$
        to   his   defense   there looks every linguist   to
        uit.
        out
        'Every linguits looks forward to his defense.'
  b. $[_{CP1}$ $[_{PP}$ naar zijnpromotie]$_i$ [kijkt iedere taalkundige$_i$ t$_i$ uit]]
        $[_{CP2}$ daar$_k$ kijkt iedere taalkundige$_i$ naar t$_k$ uit.]

- It correctly accounts for the range of categories that can(not) be dislocated, since it is deviant simply because no suitable antecedent is provided for the

anaphoric correlate.
e.g. QPs, nonspecific indefinites, and negative polarity items (NPIs), *wh*-phrases, reflexives, and subparts of idioms as *d*XPs

(16)   *German*

    a. *Keinen Studenten, den habe ich gesehen.
        no   student   him have I   seen
        Intended: 'I saw no student.'

    b. *Fast   alle Studenten, die   habe ich gesehen.
        almost all student   them have I   seen

    c. *Auch nur irgendeinen Studenten, den habe ich gesehen.
        any   student   him have I   seen

4 Connectivity

The main theoretical challenge posed by CLD is to reconcile the extrasentential status of the dXP with concurrent indications of its connectedness to a clause-internal position.

4.1 Form Identity: Case and Theta-role

- Obligatory case agreement between *d*XP and correlate in CLD.

(17)   a.   Den Peter,   den   habe ich gesten   gesehen.
          the Peter.ACC him.ACC have I   yesterday seen

       b.   Dem peter,   dem   habe ich gestern   geholfen.
          the Peter.DAT him.DAT have I   yesterday helped

- Form identity in case is a straightforward consequence of the parallel structure of $CP1_1$ and CP_2, enforced by the Focus Condition: the dXP and the correlate are case-marked by the same predicate.

(18) $[_{CP1}$ Dem peter$_i$, [~~habe ich t$_i$ geholfen~~]] $[_{CP2}$ dem$_k$ [habe ich t$_k$ geholfen.]]

- It is directly analogous to that proposed in (Merchant 2001) for sluicing, where the sluiced *wh*-phrase is case-marked in the parallel reduced clause.

4.2 Form Identity: P-stranding

- *Form-identity generalization II* (Merchant 2001):
  A Language *L* will allow preposition stranding under sluicing if and only if *L* allows preposition stranding under regular *wh*-movement.

- The analysis of CLD advanced here predicts the (im)possibility of P-stranding in a given language to be reflected in these constructions as well, since the *d*XP Ā-moves prior to deletion.

- This prediction is borne out: pied-piping of P by the *d*XP is obligatory in German but degraded in Norwegian, Swedish, and Icelandic.

(19)   *German*

    a.   Sie hat mit jemandem gesprochen, aber ich weiß nicht *(mit)
          she has with someone   spoken   but I know not   with
          wem.
          who

    b. *(Auf) den Peter, auf den habe ich lange arten müssen.
        for   the Peter for him have I   long   wait must

(20)   *Norwegian*

    a.   Peter har snakket med noen,   men jeg vet   ikke (??med)
          Per   has talked with someone but I   know not with
          hvem
          who

    b. (??Med) min syster, henne blev   jag ofta osams med.
        with   my sister her   became I   often upset with

5 Predictions and Extentions

5.1 Islandhood of the dXP

- The ellipsis analysis of CLD predicts that the *d*XP cannot contain a trace related to an element in the host clause.

- The discrepancy is predicted by the ellipsis apporach: the stranded argument would have to be extracted from *d*XP, but such cross-clausal movement is generally impossible.

(21)   *German*

    a.   Zugegeben hat er nicht dass er falsch lag.
        admitted   has he not   that he false lay
        'He didn't admitted that he had been mistaken.'

    b. *Zugegeben, das hat er nicht dass er falsch lag.
        admitted   that has he not   that he false lay

    c.   Zugegeben dass er falsch lag, das hat er nicht
        admitted   that he wrong lay that has he not

- There is no straightforward explanation on the assumption that CLD constructions are monoclausal structures, derived by movement of the *d*XP.

5.2 Parallelism and Control Infinitivals

- Explaining the deviance of controlled PRO is not straightforward to base-generation (adjunction) analysis relying on a CHAIN-formation mechanism.

  (22)   *German*
  a.   Peter hat angeordnet [PRO die Straß zu fegen]
        Peter has ordered   the street to sweep.'
        'Peter ordered the street to be swept.'
  b.   *Die Arbeiter$_i$, Peter hat angeordnet [PRO$_i$ die Straß zu fegen]
        the workers   Peter has ordered   the street to sweep
        'Peter ordered workers to sweep the street the street to be swept.'
  c.   Die Arbeiter$_i$, Peter hat angeordnet dass die   die Straß fegen
        the workers   Peter has ordered   that they the street sweep
        sollen
        should

- Subject *d*XPs resumed by PRO are ruled out because infinitival clauses fail to license an overt subject; consequently, parallelism cannot be satisfied in these cases.

- By contrast, no conflict between parallelism and subject licensing arises in finite clauses.

5.3 Locality in CLD

  (23)   *German*
  a.   Seinem$_i$ Vater, Maria glaubt [$_{CP}$ jeder$_i$ wird dem
        his.DAT father Maria thinks   everyone will him.DAT
        Geld   leihen]
        money lend
        'Maria thinks that everyone will lend money to his father.'
  b.   *Seinem Vater, dem$_k$ glaubt Maria, jeder   wird t$_k$
        his.DAT father him.DAT thinks Maria everyone will
        Geld   leihen]
        money lend

- On the ellipsis analysis of CLD, the puzzle disappears, since V2 and verb-final clauses are semantically parallel for purposes of e-GIVENness. There-

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fore, elliptical CP*1* can differ structurally from CP_2 such that the *d*XP undergoes long movement from a verb-final complement clause, not crossing any island boundary.

- Such cases pose a serious problem for monoclausal movement analyses of CLD. If the *d*XP had moved from a clause-internal position, it would have moved from the embedded V2 clause into the matrix.

6 Conclusion: Dislocation Subdued

- Option offered by neither movement nor base-generation apporach turns out to be adequate.

- The ellipsis analysis proposed in this article allows us to give an account for qua sentence fragments, *d*XPs are both clause-external and clause-internal, the reduced clause being underlyingly parallel to the host clause.

- The ellipsis analysis leads us to expect that a reversal of ellipsis directionality ought to be possible: *forward* ellipsis.

- The biclausal source of CLD is masked by PF deletion, yielding a V3 pattern at the surface.

- Having undergone regular Ā-movement within CP_1, the *d*XP is correctly predicted to display exactly the same grammatical properties it would have in the corresponding nonelliptical clause, without having to resort to any special mechanisms.

- The analysis naturally extends to cases of CLD with forward deletion in CP_1, and is likely to shed light on various related phenomena cross-linguistically.

7 Remaining questions

- CLD and other elliptical constructions share a common derivational pattern: movement to the clausal edge and subsequent ellipsis of the remainder of the clause.
    - Non-elliptical versions of the reduced structure are generally acceptable, while naturally (qua repetition) exhibiting a high degree of redundancy.
    - By contrast, a fragment answer, the question tag in a split question, and the *wh*-remnant of sluicing shows less deviancy.

(24)   a.   #Den Peter habe ich gestern   gesehen. Den habe ich gestern
               the peter have I   yesterday seen   him have I   yesterday
               gesehen.
               seen
               'I saw Peter yesterday. I saw him yesterday.'

        b.   A: Welches Mädchen hat Hans gestern nacht am   Bahnhof
                  which   girl   has Hans last   night at.the station
               geküsst?
               kissed
               'Which girl did Hans kiss at the station last night?.'
               B: Maria (# hat Hans gestern nacht am Bahnhof geküst).

- How could we capture CLD in interrogative?

(25)   a.   Den Peter, kennst   du denn?
               the Peter, know.2SG you him.def
               'Peter, do you know him?'

References

Ott, Dennis. 2014. An Ellipsis Approach to Contrastive Left-Dislocation. Linguistic Inquiry 45:269-303.