

Left-Dislocation Revisited

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to provide syntactic evidence that left-dislocated NPs (LDs) do not belong inside the structure of the sentences with which they are usually associated. It is argued here that the relationship between LDs and these sentences is merely a semantic one of co-reference and that, therefore, no formal, structural liaison exists between them. The analysis that contemplates the left-dislocated constituent as a sister of a lower clausal node inside the highest S node is consequently abandoned in favour of a discourse-oriented interpretation. According to this, left-dislocation is best seen as involving structurally independent co-referential units in discourse.

1. Introduction

With the exception of those who see left-dislocation as apposition (Bitea 469ff.; Meyer 173), most of the studies of this construction divide up into two mutually irreconcilable analyses.¹ On the one hand, much of the generative literature regards left-dislocation (henceforth also LD) as a constituent inside a superordinate clausal node that branches off into the dislocation proper and the usual sentence node. In this external configuration relative to the predication contained in the lower sentence, the LD is said to occupy a TOP(IC) position inside the overall sentence structure. On the other hand, many functional linguists and discourse analysts in general view LD as syntactically unrelated to the sentence it refers to. According to this latter interpretation, left-dislocated NPs are just independent NPs in discourse.

Both the aforementioned analyses may be accused of resting on *a priori* assumptions. Thus, on the one hand, the generative approach focuses itself on ways of determining the best position in the derivation of the NP inside the sentence tree. But, in so doing, it presupposes that the LD belongs inside the sentence structure. On the other hand, the discourse approach largely assumes that, following from its topic-introducing function in speech, the true nature of dislocated NPs reveals itself only above the structural sentence

level, that is, at the higher level of discourse. But in taking this for granted, the proponents of this theory often fail to provide the evidence that supports their claim in strictly syntactic terms.

The present paper is an attempt to provide a body of strictly syntactic evidence in favour of a discourse analysis of LD. In essence, it will be claimed here that, as far as the relationship between the two co-referential NPs is concerned, (1) and (2) below are exactly identical (here and in what follows co-reference is marked in italics):

- (1) They came with *Peter*. *He* is so nice!
 (2) *Peter*, *he* is so nice!

This means that in neither case the relationship between the two NPs involved is structural in nature, but, rather, merely a semantic one of co-reference.

Sections 2 and 3 below contain brief descriptions of LD itself and of the formal representation alluded to above. Section 4 expounds arguments for the discourse thesis defended here. Section 5 focuses on evidence derived from a comparison of LDs and peripheral sentence adverbials. Finally, the main conclusions reached in this study are summarised in section 6.

2. Description

Let us start by considering examples of left-dislocation. (3)-(5) below are dislocated NPs adduced in Geluykens, who studies LD in a conversational discourse:

- (3) *This woman*, *she* is not very well off (Geluykens 43)
 (4) *Dear old Sandy Paterson*, oh! I want to see *him* (Geluykens 45)
 (5) Oh good, *Jean Piaget*, what was the point of having a book about *him* around? (Geluykens 47)

As can be seen, left-dislocated sentences have an NP set off by commas at the beginning of a clause and a proform which “stands ‘proxy’ for it in the relevant position in the sentence” (Quirk et al. 1310). LDs occur typically in the spoken register, where, according to Givón (209ff.), they perform two main communicative functions, namely, first, “to mark important referents—most commonly definite or generic—that are brought back into the discourse after a considerable *gap of absence*” (209); and, second, to serve “as a cue in the *turn-taking system in conversation . . . at turn-initial points*, where a new speaker often wrestles the floor away from the previous speaker” (211).

3. The TOP(IC) Node

The term left-dislocation goes back to Ross (“Constraints on Variables”). In this influential work Ross defined left-dislocated NPs as the product of a *copying* rule which moves a

constituent to the leftmost position in the S tree leaving a pronominal copy in the original place. The co-reference relationship between the two NPs is guaranteed as a result of the movement transformation. Ross opposed copying rules of this sort to *chopping* rules, such as Topicalization, in which no proxy proform is left behind after movement of the NP (Emonds *A Transformational Approach*). For reasons that need not detain us here, Ross's theory came in for a good deal of criticism and was subsequently abandoned in favour of a non-transformational approach. Thus, the view soon became firmly established among generative grammarians that left-dislocation does not involve movement but, rather, generation in the base (Hirschbühler; Rivero; Radford 530ff.; Haegeman 213, 368-70; van der Spuy, all more or less derivative of Chomsky 71ff.).² To be precise, LDs are base-generated in a *non-argument position* through *adjunction* to the sentence. In essence, this analysis entails a surface structure as shown in tree (6) to be found in the Appendix, which, using more traditional representational conventions, can be turned into tree (7). At this juncture, it is important to stress that this article is not about ways of refuting the details of (6) above (such as adjunction, A' positions and so on) from a generative standpoint. Rather, it is about ways of refuting the very assumption that the LDed constituent is a constituent of the sentence to start with, no matter the configuration chosen. This qualification is not immaterial. In the generative literature the base-generation theory of LD is just a part of a general conception of grammar, and the way this part relates to the other aspects of the grammar stems from general postulates of the theory. I will not discuss how the LD part of the grammar makes sense in the overall generative system, that is, how adjunction is justified, how position in the CP framework relates to the structural position of topicalization and so on (that is for generativists to decide). My concern will be a more basic one: namely, what evidence is there for saying that "detached" NPs belong (in whatever the way) with the sentences that follow them. Put this way, the issue addressed here does not depend so much on particular syntactic theories as on such fundamental syntactic primitives as phrase-structure, dependency and representation.³

Coming back to tree (7), it is interesting to observe that the dislocated NP is generated as a sister of the whole sentence, thereby giving rise to a superordinate S node that comprises the two. In this respect, the external position that the base-generation theory assigns to LDs relative to the predication is an exact copy of the position that is usually allocated to peripheral sentence adverbials (Baltin), as shown in tree (8). In section 5 below we will therefore compare the behaviour of LDs with that of such peripheral adverbials. First, however, we will discuss some arguments which support the view that LDs do not belong inside the structure of S.

4. Dissociation from S

Consider first the degree of separation between the two co-referential NPs in LD. In typical textbook examples of dislocation the LD is usually adjacent to the clause which contains the pronominal copy, as in (9)-(11):

(9) *This room, it really depresses me* (Emonds 32)

- (10) *Max*, I really like *him* (Baltin 21)
 (11) *John*, I gave *him* the book (Maling and Zaenen 275)

For these cases the structural representation schematized in (7) is attractive in that it appears to capture the fact that the whole clause “is about” the referent of the dislocated NP. There is, as it were, a sense of “relatedness” that (7) above intuitively expresses. However, as is well-known, the clause containing the copy can appear deeply embedded and therefore very far apart from the dislocated phrase, as in (12)-(14):

- (12) *The damn dog*, you know I’ve told her a thousand times to let her mother know I don’t want *it* in my house
 (13) *The doctor upstairs*, my brother has just told me they took *her* to hospital yesterday night. It’s dreadful!
 (14) *Peter*, believe it or not, as I was strolling along Venice beach the other day, I came across a group of people giving out leaflets and stuff, and there *he* was with this look of mission in his eyes, a leaflet in his hand, all ready to hand the leaflet to me . . . I couldn’t believe my eyes!

If one takes these latter instances into account, (7) no doubt seems less attractive. For notice that a phrase-marker such as (7) admits of only two ways of accommodating the structures in (12)-(14): either the tree shows the NP pointing only to the clause containing the copy (let us call this the *target* clause), across the other intervening clauses (*ie* discontinuously), or it shows the NP rather indiscriminately pointing to everything that appears to its immediate right. Trees (15)-(16) in the Appendix illustrate these two alternatives respectively. However, both approaches are objectionable. Thus, on the one hand, the discontinuous tree must be discounted because (among other things) it is not possible to place the dislocated NP in a position adjacent to its target clause, as (12b)-(14b) below clearly demonstrate:

- (12b) *You know I’ve told her a thousand times to let her mother know that *the damn dog*, I don’t want *it* in my house
 (13b) *My mother has just told me that *the doctor upstairs*, they took *her* to hospital yesterday night. It’s dreadful!
 (14b) *Believe it or not, as I was strolling along Venice beach the other day, I came across a group of people giving out leaflets and stuff, and *Peter*, there *he* was with this look of mission in his eyes, a leaflet in his hand, all ready to hand the leaflet to me . . . I couldn’t believe my eyes!

On the other hand, by making the detached NP point to all the clauses to its right, (16) loses much of the intuition captured by (7), since such intuition (apparently the only “evidence” for the sentence-based theory under consideration) rests crucially on the sense of “relatedness” felt to exist solely between the detached phrase and the clause that contains a copy of it. *From a strictly structural point of view*, it is hard to see what differentiates the relation between the LD and its target clause in (14) above, repeated

here, from the relation existing between those very same constituents when these appear in whole texts such as (14c) below:

(14) *Peter*, believe it or not, as I was strolling along Venice beach the other day, I came across a group of people giving out leaflets and stuff, and there *he* was with this look of mission in his eyes, a leaflet in his hand, all ready to hand the leaflet to me . . . I couldn't believe my eyes!

(14c) *Peter*, believe it or not, I was strolling along Venice beach the other day, see? Now as I turned towards the pier I came across a group of people giving out leaflets and stuff and, surprise! there *he* was with this look of mission in his eyes, a leaflet in his hand, all ready to hand the leaflet to me . . . I couldn't believe my eyes! (Notice the full-stop between *see* and *Now*)

To contend that, with mere co-reference in the copying structure, the distance is no problem at all is not enough, for the same argument applies to (14c), but no one would posit a PM like (7) for this latter. A PM is a formal representation of structure. This means that constituents that appear in it must be linked in a way that goes beyond mere long-distance co-reference. If instead of assuming that the LD and the far-away copy are linked through formal hierarchical structure (the sentence structure), one were to assume that the two NPs are merely co-referential units in discourse, then the material intervening between the dislocated phrase and the clause would automatically cease to be a problem. After all, co-referential relationships in discourse typically involve long-distance bindings of NPs.⁴

This takes us to another relevant consideration. One interesting question to ask when dealing with LD is the following: how has LD acquired its status as a construction? In other words, what syntactic features motivate the grammarians' underlying assumption that all left-dislocations constitute a specific syntactic construction? In the light of the kind of cases which are typically discussed in grammars, such as (9)-(11) above, there appears to be three such criterial features.⁵ The first, just alluded to, is the juxtaposition of the NP and the copy-containing clause. The second, related to this, is the absence of non-clausal material intervening between the NP and the clause. And the third is the fact that the co-reference relation involves a full NP and a pronominal copy of it. However, these three features, though maybe enough to activate intuitions on structure, cannot be the basis for a rigorous syntactic analysis. In reality, just as the first feature fails to apply in instances like (12)-(14) above, the second and third features are also often absent from real LDs. Consider the following series of examples:

(17) *Peter*, *he* is a very nice person

(18) *Sean*, I can't believe that the coach has decided to give *him* the grant

(19) *Sue*, to be sure, yes, yes, now I remember *her*

(20) *The girl*, *the other girl*, well, you know, *she* was just gorgeous

(21) *Peter*, I can't stand *the jerk* (adapted from Radford 531)

(22) *Student hunting*, I think the police have always considered *that activity* as a pleasant sport (Hirschbühler 159)

(23) *The tall blonde who is over there*, I think I've already seen *that face* somewhere (Hirschbühler 159)

- (24) *Student hunting*, well, you know, I think the police have always considered *that activity* as a pleasant sport
 (25) *The tall blonde who is over there*, yeah, sure, I think I've already seen *that face* somewhere

(17)-(25) may be said to illustrate a spectrum in the prototypicality of LDs.⁶ Thus, (17) is fully prototypical in that it exhibits the three criterial properties alluded to above. (18) fails to meet the juxtaposition criterion. In (19)-(20) various discourse fillers intervene between the NP and the clause, thus violating the second criterion above. (21)-(23) do not contain pronominal copies but, rather, full NPs, so they do not satisfy the third criterion. Finally, (24)-(25) fail to meet more than one criterion at the same time. If to the three features mentioned we add a semantic criterion of co-reference between the two NPs, also present in prototypical cases such as (9)-(11), then (26)-(27) below fail to conform to prototypical conditions for LD in every possible respect, for the NPs in these examples are, strictly speaking, not even co-referential⁷:

- (26) *France*, well, yes, *Paris* is quite all right but I'd rather stay with Italy
 (27) *Music*, yes, I like *reggae* quite a lot, but disco music does not interest me so much

Notice that the intuitions about the structural association between the NP and the clause diminish as we move down the previous series of examples. Even allowing for the fact that mere intuitions about structure might be taken as the sole evidence for the sentence-based view of LD in cases such as (17), or even in (18) (Rodman 450), it is not at all clear that we can use them for such frequent structures as (19)-(27). Nor for others like (28):

- (28) *Ian*, what a laugh man, the other day in the queue for the cinema, what a laugh. I went there with Sis and I found *him* there and guess who was with him: Jane. When he saw us he blushed all over

in which the material intervening between the NP and the clause proper is so heavy that it can even justify the use of a full-stop between the two units in writing. However, all of (17)-(28) involve the same phenomenon. Intuitions aside, structurally speaking they all consist of an independent NP that functions as the starting point of the message—by introducing a referent—and a complete sentence one of whose constituents is co-referential with that introductory NP. Features such as the material intervening between the TOPIC NP and the clause, the degree of separation between the two co-referential phrases, or the nature of the second NP, should not, in principle, affect the structural claim made through PM (7) above. However, these factors, when present, do highlight the independence of the dislocated phrase relative to the structure of the clause.

An interpretation of left-detached NPs as independent units in discourse would be appropriate for *all* of (17)-(28) above. But, more than just that, it would also explain certain constraints on the form of the NP that occurs inside the sentence. Notice that this is not entirely free:

- (29) *Peter*, I think I heard Jane say *he* is resigning
 (30) *Peter*, I think I heard Jane say *the idiot* is resigning
 (31) **Peter*, I think I heard Jane say *the doctor* is resigning (with co-reference between *Peter* and *the doctor*)

It appears from (29)-(31), and also from (25)-(27) above, that full NPs are barred from occurring in the position of the copies unless such NPs provide either some evaluative or emotive colouring to the referent they express (e.g. *Tom*, I can't stand *the jerk*), or a metonymic designation of it. Be that as it may, it turns out that the very same constraints observable in LDs are also found in ordinary discourse:

- (29b) By the way, have you heard about *Peter*? I think I heard Jane say *he* is resigning
 (30b) By the way, have you heard about *Peter*? I think I heard Jane say *the idiot* is resigning
 (31b) *By the way, have you heard about *Peter*? I think I heard Jane say *the doctor* is resigning (with co-reference between *Peter* and *the doctor*)

Now, of course, since the concept of sentence structure cannot be invoked to account for purely pragmatic factors underlying the use of proforms in discourse,⁸ it is clear that such a concept is also inapplicable for explaining the behaviour of the LDs in (29)-(31). Consider now the compatibility of LD with interjections. (32)-(35) are from Greenberg (285), who first pointed out the facts:

- (32) *John* man ' Mary really loves *him*
 (33) **John* man ' Mary really loves
 (34) *Bill* man ' I really hate *him*
 (35) **Bill* man ' I really hate

Greenberg used the previous set of examples to refute Chomsky's suggestion that topicalization and left-dislocation are one and the same kind of structure (Chomsky 80ff.). Indeed, as Greenberg points out, the fact that topicalizations cannot occur to the left of interjections, unlike LDs, is a very clear indication that they are tightly integrated into the structure of the sentence, and that left-dislocated constituents, conversely, are removed from that structure. Surprisingly, however, rather than use (32)-(35) as evidence that LDs are not sentence constituents at all, Greenberg, and others after him, choose to explain the appearance of LDs to the left of interjections as in tree (36) in the Appendix. In effect, what (36) does is to grant to interjections the status of some kind of sentence adverbial (or "CP adjunct," Radford 533) which is closer to the nucleus of the predication than the LD. But this is surely questionable. First, (36) ignores the obvious fact that interjections can also appear leftmost in the string, that is, to the left of the detached phrase:

- (37) Man ' *John*, Mary really loves *him*

Indeed, the freedom of interjections and LDs to alternate their respective positions in front of the sentence, strongly suggests that they have very little to do with the sentence's

relational network. In the second place, and most importantly, there is absolutely no evidence for (36). In particular, there is no evidence that interjections belong inside the structure of S. In this respect, the claim that they do is a matter of mere postulation. In actual fact, it is dubious that outcries of pleasure, anger, surprise or pain, such as *Oh!*, *Alas!*, *Ouch!* *Man!* and the like have a role to play sentence internally. Like vocatives (Huddleston 225-6), interjections can stand alone non-elliptically, which means that they can hardly be seen as dependent elements. They can follow, precede, or interrupt a sentence. In short, their behaviour is not subject to sentence-building constraints, and is therefore best seen in the broader, less structurally-dependent context of discourse. This given, the appearance of LDs to their left in instances such as (32) and (34) above strongly suggests that LDs are independent from the sentence structure too.

A further indication of this independence is the pronunciation of these strings. As Bowers (273) points out, “dislocated constituents have the falling intonation contour that is typically assigned to whole sentences.” Using his own representational convention, one might illustrate such a contour as follows:

(38) *John* I can't stand *him*

Not unexpectedly, the more distinct and perceptible the phonological dissociation of the LD from the clause, the more the criterial features mentioned above fail to obtain. Thus, as we move down the series of examples in (17)-(25) above, our pronunciation must become more drawn-out in order to mark the appropriate semantic ties existing between the LD and its relevant target. The reason for this extra need for clarification through the intonation is that such ties are not encoded syntactically.

5. LDs and Sentence Adverbials

In addition to the previous considerations, the structural claim made through (7) above can be refuted on other grounds. As noted briefly in section 3, (7) defines a structure with an external projection of the lower S that can be filled by either a left-dislocation or a sentence adverbial (Baltin 25ff.), as shown in tree (39). According to (7), then, the syntactic relationship between a sentence adverbial and the following clause is exactly the same as that existing between a left-dislocation and its copy-containing clause. This is a claim that can be proved wrong.

The arguments that follow in the remainder of this section bear evidence that the behaviour of LDs and sentence adverbials vis-a-vis their respective clauses is markedly different. It will be shown that whereas (7) can adequately express the relationship between a sentence adverbial and its clause, such an analysis is unhelpful for LD because LD is even further removed from its target clause than is implied by (7). Indeed, the evidence below will add to the comments made in the last section to establish that LD is syntactically independent from the structure of that clause.

The first revealing difference between LD and sentence adverbials concerns embedding. Ever since Emonds (33), it has been well known that LD clauses cannot

undergo any embedding process. Notice (40)-(43):

- (40) *He is a man to whom *liberty* we could never grant *it* (Baltin 21)
- (41) *The fact that *these clams*, I buy *them* right at the shore means that they are sure to be fresh (Emonds 33)
- (42) *I told you that *this movie*, you wouldn't like *it* much (Emonds 33)
- (43) *That *Pamela* we can't see *her* now is clear⁹

By contrast, despite their detached position, peripheral sentence adverbials can be easily carried along in any embedding process that affects the clauses they modify:

- (44) He is a man to whom, unfortunately, we could never grant liberty
- (45) The fact that, unfortunately, I can't buy these clams right at the shore means that they are sure not to be fresh
- (46) I told you that, unfortunately, you wouldn't like this movie much
- (47) That unfortunately we can't see Pamela now is clear

This contrast is revealing in that embedding is an essential property of the grammar of the sentence. Without such a property, language users would be severely constrained in their communicative capabilities, and would be restricted to resort to kernels of the form of *Mary likes John*, *Peter hit the ball* and so on. The fact that LDs cannot be integrated into larger strings together with their clauses is thus a very clear indication that the grammar of the sentence constitutes a foreign domain for them. It is surprising to find out that the theoretical implications of this fact have been largely neglected by much of the generative literature on LD.

Consider in the second place the differences in respect of overt prepositional case assignment, in the sense discussed in Lambrecht (53ff.), which has little to do with the GB notion of case. Understood broadly, and despite the poverty of English morphology, case assignment continues to be a relational principle of the sentence structure in English. It so turns out that LDs—unlike adverbials—do not need overt prepositional case assigners, as (48)-(53) clearly demonstrate:

- (48) I spoke to Liz the other day
- (49) *Liz*, I spoke to *her* the other day
- (50) From an economic point of view, the reform will be disastrous
- (51) *An economic point of view, the reform will be disastrous
- (52) To everyone's surprise, they eventually turned up for the show
- (53) *Everyone's surprise, they eventually turned up for the show¹⁰

Once again, the distinct behaviour of LDs and peripheral adverbials highlights the fact that the latter are subject to sentence-building processes while the former exist independently of those processes. There is a good reason why LDs can behave in this way: once an LD brings a referent into the discourse, the structural grammaticalization of that referent is assumed by its copy and thus need not be expressed twice. Assignment of overt case to the pronominal copy is of course mandatory and respectful with the principles of sentence

structure (**I spoke Liz*). By contrast, adverbials do not contain copies and must therefore make explicit their role in the sentence by assuming overt case themselves.

In the third place, consider the positional restrictions of LDs and adverbials. Although English is a language which imposes rather strong constraints on the movement of clause constituents (much more so than Spanish or French, for instance), it is nevertheless possible to move practically all constituents to a limited number of positions in the sentence one way or another.¹¹ Thus, subjects change their position in interrogatives, VPs can be fronted, NPs can be separated from their governing prepositions, and so on. The same happens with sentence adverbials, although their mobility is characteristically quite constrained. The important aspect to be emphasized here is that the movement potential of these adverbials is in sharp contrast with that of LDs simply because LDs cannot be moved at all!. This is evident from the following examples:

- (54) *Peter*, I managed to give the book to *him* the other day
- (55) *I *Peter* managed to give the book to *him* the other day
- (56) *I managed *Peter* to give the book to *him* the other day
- (57) *I managed to give *Peter* the book to *him* the other day
- (58) *I managed to give the book *Peter* to *him* the other day
- (59) *I managed to give the book to *him Peter* the other day
- (60) ?I managed to give the book to *him* the other day, *Peter*
- (61) Fortunately, I managed to give the book to him the other day
- (62) I fortunately managed to give the book to him the other day
- (63) I managed, fortunately, to give the book to him the other day
- (64) I managed to give the book to him the other day, fortunately

It may be objected that the ungrammaticality of (54)-(60) can be predicted on structural grounds.¹² Thus, for instance, if we stipulate that LDs must always c-command their clauses (and not just their copies), then indeed all of (54)-(60) would behave in the expected way. But notice that this constraint (apart from not being able to account for the restrictions on embedding) actually comes down to saying that LDs simply cannot move. The question is: why is this the case? A non sentential analysis can provide an explanation: LDs cannot change their position sentence-internally because they are not part of the sentence. On the contrary, a sentential analysis cannot explain why LDs are the only phrasal constituents of the sentence that cannot move at all. Since mobility of the constituents of the sentence is—albeit in a constrained fashion—an essential property of sentence grammar, the failure of LDs to move within certain limits under the structural scope of the sentence's dependency tree is once again a clear symptom of their structural dissociation from it.

6. Conclusion

All in all, there appears to be good reason for an analysis that views left-dislocated NPs as independent discourse units which simply co-refer with a proform occurring inside a

sentence. Three considerations in favour of this analysis may serve as concluding remarks:

The first is that there is no single piece of evidence for the sentence-based theory of LD. For a string to be a constituent inside a sentence, that string must perform a specific function inside the sentence's relational network, and this means that the string in question must relate to the other sentence constituents through the sentence's hierarchical structure (Bowers 271ff.). There is normally abundant evidence to prove that, say, a subject or an object NP, a prepositional complement, a modifying adverbial and so on belong inside the sentence's tightly-knit structure in different ways. But in dislocated sentences, as has just been pointed out, there seems to be absolutely no evidence for a definite constituent structure. This is in itself no small reason for rejecting the base-generation, TOPIC-phrase theory.

In the second place, all the evidence available argues against that theory. The amount and nature of the material intervening between the LD and the clause, the constraints on the form of the second NP, the positional compatibility with interjections, and the intonation, on the one hand, together with facts of embedding, overt case and movement, made revealing through a comparison of LD with peripheral constituents of the sentence, on the other hand, provide cumulatively more than compelling support for the discourse theory of LD advocated throughout this study.

In the third place, there is psychological motivation for this latter theory. In unplanned, spontaneous speech we often start talking by just referring to something, and only after we do so do we bother to accommodate the newly-introduced referent into a propositional structure (and that not always). At times we simply produce a referent NP and feel that some elaboration is needed to clarify who or what we are talking about. By the time the referent NP+ its elaboration are completed, we realise that the whole initial string (a possible subject or object) has proved too long, and too heavy, so we simply use a pronoun for short and thus imbricate the whole elaboration -referentially- into a neat sentence format. LDs such as (18)-(28) above, or (65) below:

(65) *What about the kind of situation that begins with Lear, where you get him dividing up his kingdom? Isn't that equally a kind of donné for the tragedy?* (Geluykens 47)

can hardly admit of any other interpretation.¹³ To cite Geluykens (45), LDs cannot be seen as "word order variations," because, being structurally independent units in the flow of discourse, "they operate . . . without commitment to what comes later." This is why a word-order approach to them, such as the sentence-based theory rejected in this study, is bound to miss the point.

Notes

1. This is a revised and much expanded version of a paper presented for the XVIII AEDEAN Conference (Alcalá de Henares, December 1994). I wish to thank Teresa Fanego for her helpful comments on a previous draft.

2. The base-generation theory originates in Chomsky (80ff.), where, unlike the accounts just

cited, LD and topicalization are believed to be the same kind of structure. In another respect, needless to say, not all generative grammarians uphold a sentence-based view of LD. See Maling and Zaenen (261ff.) and Bowers (271) for doubts concerning this view. See also Koster's analysis of LD as a "satellite" of S, and Authier's defence of the "old" theory of movement.

3. To be consistent with this point of stance, I will refrain from using certain kinds of evidence in favour of my analysis. For instance, the fact that quantificational NPs cannot be left-dislocated (**Every girl, I saw her at the party*) follows very naturally from the independence of the LD and the sentence, since QPs can only bind pronouns within their sentence. But since the line of argumentation chosen here lies outside the GB framework (where very precise formulations of such notions as "QP" and "binding" are relevant), this point loses its force in the present discussion (although it continues to be an interesting one for generativists).

4. A c-command condition on the "A' binding" of the co-referential copy (Haegeman 213) offers an initially plausible explanation for the structural liaison presumably existing between that copy and the LD. Indeed, however deeply embedded the co-indexed element is, the LDED constituent will still c-command it under (7) (and this is something desirable, in principle, for, if the LD is *John's sister*, the text cannot be a comment on *John*). If c-command could explain certain constraints on the form of the co-referential copy, then we would indeed have a strong purely structural argument for a sentential interpretation of LD. However, the structural requirement imposed by c-command cannot apply to whole texts and yet, anticipating a little, we may note from instances such as (29-31) and (29b)-(31b) below that texts impose exactly the same conditions on the form of co-indexed NPs as the LD sentences under scrutiny here. This means that c-command is not enough to account for the facts.

5. These features are not explicitly present as such in grammars, but they are nevertheless statistically observable in them.

6. The word *prototypicality* is here used in the sense of "LD typically found in grammar books." This does not mean that such LDs as (16) are the ones most typical of true informal English. In fact, in view of such frequent examples as (18)-(24), the opposite is very likely the case. See in this connection Geluykens.

7. In these, following Lambrecht (56), "the relationship between topic and comment (by which he means the LD and the clause) may be best described in terms of semantic frames or scenes."

8. See note 4 above.

9. Often, the "as far as" construction (as in *I informed the students that, as far as this book is concerned, they would definitely have to read it*, cited in Chomsky 91) is presented as evidence that LDs can embed after all. This view entails that the "as far as" sequence is a dislocation properly speaking, which is indeed questionable. It appears that what is similar about the two patterns is only their pragmatic function in speech, but this is surely no reason for giving them the same syntactic analysis. In the first place, the "as far as" construction can, and more often than not does, occur without the least trace of any anaphoric constituent appearing later in the clause (*As far as I am concerned, that car is plain red*), a possibility inherently precluded in LDs. In the second place, the fact that "as far as" sequences involve a different categorial constituency can hardly be insignificant: of all categories, LDs can only be NPs. Overall, it seems that this pattern is best analysed as a viewpoint subjunct, as Quirk et al. (568-9) propose. See also Pérez on this ("Topicalisation and Left-Dislocation").

10. Notice that the question is not whether the LD has abstract case (an issue to be decided only within a framework which makes use of such a notion), but whether it has overt case such as shown in *to Liz* in (48) (note **I spoke Liz*). These overt facts are not dependent on any particular

syntactic theory, but they must still be accounted for, especially in the light of the kind of contrast that emerges from (48)-(53).

11. Movement is here used in its non-technical, non-transformational interpretation.

12. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this point.

13. See Quirk et al.: "It is not uncommon for long noun phrases which are nonfocal to be thus treated in familiar speech, a convenience alike to hearer (in receiving an early statement of a complex item) and speaker (in not having to incorporate such an item in the grammatical organization of his utterance)" (1417).

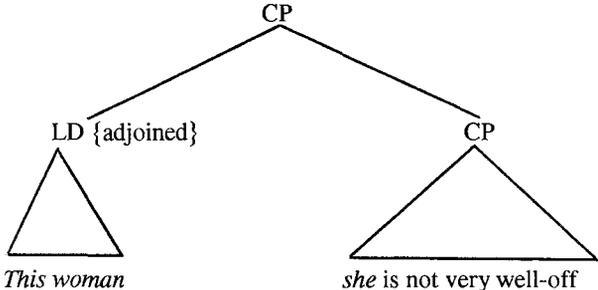
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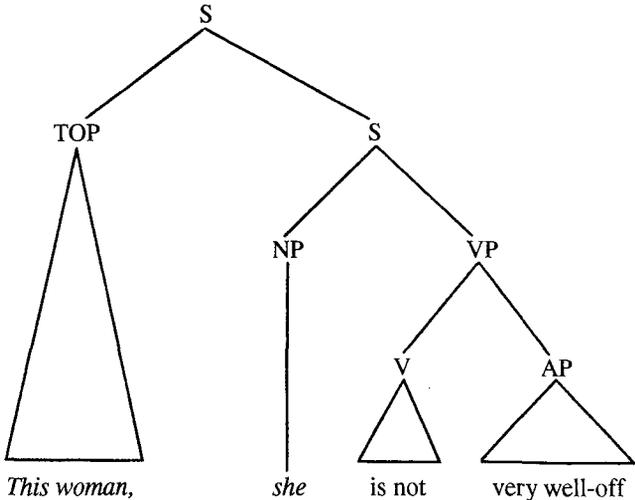
Appendix

Tree (6)



Tree (7)

(6)



Tree (39)

(39)

