Left Dislocations in Hebrew interaction – they are not sentence-level topic-marking constructions

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Left Dislocations (LD) and Hanging Topics (HT) are often considered to be classical IS-constructions that clearly delineate the topic of the proposition from the subsequent sentence (e.g. Kerr 2014). However, recent interactional analyses challenge this view, demonstrating how both constructions constitute routinised resources for the dynamic management of local interactional moves, such as floor accessing, sequence organization and summarizing assessments in French (Pekarek-Doehler et al. 2015).

The data for this study comes from the Corpus of Spontaneous Israeli Hebrew and the Haifa Corpus of Spoken Hebrew. I examine stand-alone NP's, i.e. bare NP's that occupy an own IU, using the theoretical framework of incremental-projecting online syntax (e.g. Auer 2005; Hopper 2011).

From this perspective, upon a production of a stand-alone NP, the speaker faces a variety of potential continuation trajectories (*projection* in the sense of Auer 2005). The NP can form a self-sufficient contribution, and/or to be optionally or necessarily continued by subsequent IU's. In the latter case it can be cross-referenced within the following IU's or left unmentioned. While around a fifth of the examined ca. 600 tokens of stand-alone NP's can be classified as LD/HT relative to the subsequent IU's, this would be an *a posteriori* analysis of the dynamically evolving structure. The contribution of the NP fulfills in each case a local action shared with other occurrences of stand-alone NP's which do not evolve into LD/HT. The contribution of each NP is achieved locally based on the context and prosody, irrespective of the continuation.

In particular, a prominent role typically attributed to LD/HT is that of introducing a new referent, with the proposition being construed as "about it". However, corpus data show that activation of a new referent is a self-sufficient interactional move, often aimed at the negotiation of its identification with the interlocutor (Geluykens 1992). In (1) the structure gradually develops from a stand-alone NP into its apparent LD-status and finally an apparent HT-status followed by an RD-construction. Yet, the initial announcement of the new referent (*the (2006) Lebanon war*) is structurally independent of and fully detached from the yet unplanned continuation. In (2), although the structure eventually develops into a LD, the actual introduction of the new referents (*Shir and Hagit Barkan*) fulfills the local speaker's goal of identifying the children responsible for a misdeed.

Another prominent source for LD outcomes is starting points followed by a modification of the chosen trajectory into constructions with their oblique cross-reference, particularly frequent with the Hebrew possessive construction [*NP/PRO.A, there.is to-PRO.A B*] (3) (Netz and Kuzar 2011). The online trajectory modification is evident in these cases from various planning difficulties that accompany the initial NP (cf. *my mother* in (3)). Moreover, opposite results can be obtained by the very same factors, namely where the initially chosen but later modified trajectory started with an oblique element (4). The apparent frequency of LD/HT in this case is the outcome of the more routinised usage of bare NP's as turn-taking devices, due to their very vague grammatical projection (i.e. multiple continuation possibilities).

(1) Sp1: Dan.

Sp2: Mhm.

Sp1: I have a question.

Sp2: Yes.

Sp1: …1655…

→ ***The (2006) Lebanon war.***

Sp2: OK?

Sp1: …1795…

What do you think, what percent of the population,

Sp2: What.

Sp1: somewhere deep inside them,

…1607…

Sp2: Mhm.

→ Sp1: think that, that ***it*** is cool.

That there is a war. (Haifa Corpus, Winds of War 21.5"-37.1")

(2) The speakers discuss an incident in the elementary school and argue who is responsible for that and what exactly happened. C is one of the pupils involved, A is his older sister, B is their mother.

A: 'Let me tell you what it is, I will tell you,'

C: 'It's Gal, it's not me!'

→ A: 'It's their club. Because **Shir**, and, **this Barkan, this Barkan**, ehm, [the one that]..'

B: '[Hagit?]'

→ A: '**Hagit, they** wrote a letter…' (CoSIH_C714_sp3_107-109, sp4_098-108, sp5_076-078)

(3) Discussion of coffee machines.

→ A: **My mother**,

I a--,

What I can tell you,

→ Is that **my mother**,

during all her life,

I think.

→ She had one of "SEB", (literally in Hebrew: *there was **to her** a SEB*) (C612_3 sp2 020–027)

(4)   *ha-e'met*   *ʃe = **l-a'xem*** *gam*   ***a'tem*** *jexo'l-im*   *la'kaxat*   *a'tar*

DEF-truth   that = **to-2PL** also   **2PL**   can.PRES-pl   to.take   site

me'od pa'ʃut ||

very   simple

 'In fact, **for you** – **you** can also choose a very simple resort.' (CoSIH D142_sp1_127)

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