

## 1. Introduction

“Left dislocation” is a common label<sup>1</sup> for structures whereby a discourse-prominent constituent in the preverbal field of a sentence is associated with a subsequent pronominal element. It is clear from the literature that at least two versions should be distinguished: a syntactically integrated and non-integrated, loosely attached type (I- and N-type, respectively, see e.g. Shaer (2009)).

In an LFG setting, Zaenen (1997) argued that Dutch and Icelandic “contrastive dislocation” is properly integrated into the host sentence. In particular, the pronoun is an adjunct of a topical constituent. By contrast, Dutch and Icelandic “left dislocation” is analyzed as involving a designated, a non-recursive initial E-node above the standard sentential domain.

I offer analyses in a similar spirit for left-dislocation structures in Hungarian. (1), labelled “Topic left dislocation” (TLD) is an I-type and (1b), labelled “Focus left-dislocation (FLD) is analyzed as an N-type structure.<sup>2</sup> Differences in pronominal distribution follow from general constraints on pronouns and from the way they are licensed.

- (1) *Jánost, azt láttuk.* TLD  
 John.ACC that.ACC saw.1PL  
 ‘As for John, we saw him.’
- (2) *A könyvet, AZT olvastam a szobában* FLD  
 the book.ACC that.ACC read.1SG the room.in  
 ‘The book, I read THAT in the room.’

## 2. Basic data

As shown in (1-2) above, the left-dislocation structures consist of a “left-dislocated” element and a pronoun associate, bearing the respective discourse function (for simplicity, contrastivity is set aside here). In TLD, the pronoun is usually a demonstrative, but with appropriate antecedents, a personal pronoun is also possible. In the FLD version of (3), the personal pronoun is strongly preferred. The left-dislocated entity and the pronoun are usually adjacent, but this is not obligatory.

- (3) *Jánost, tegnap [azt/ őt / #AZT / ŐT] láttuk a koncerten.*  
 John.ACC yesterday that.ACC him that.ACC him saw.3SG the concert.on  
 ‘As for John, we saw him at the concert.’

With regards to positioning, TLD is only subject to general constraints of Hungarian sentence structure: wherever topics can occur, TLD also can. FLD is more restricted. It degrades if the left-dislocated element is not string-initial.

- (4) *Szerintem Jánost, azt láttuk.* TLD  
 in.my.opinion John.ACC that.ACC saw.1PL.  
 ‘As for John, I think we invited him.’
- (5) *?Szerintem Jánost, ŐT láttuk.* FLD  
 in.my.opinion John.ACC him saw.1PL.  
 ‘John, I think we saw HIM.’

In TLD, the left-dislocated entity and the pronoun associate must have identical case, see (6). FLD on the other hand tolerates case mismatches, as in (7). Some remarks on other features will be made in section 3.3.

- (6) a. *\*A könyv, azt olvastam a szobában* TLD  
 the book.NOM that.ACC read.PAST.1SG the room.in
- b. *A könyvet, azt olvastam a szobában*  
 the book.ACC that.ACC read.PAST.1SG the room.in  
 ‘As for that book, I read it in the room.’
- (7) *A könyv, AZT olvastam a szobában* FLD  
 the book.NOM that.ACC read.PAST.1SG the room.in  
 ‘That book, I read THAT in the room.’

## 3. Discussion and analysis

### 3.1 Focus Left Dislocation

The properties of FLD straightforwardly follow if we assume that the “left-dislocated” element is not a proper part of the syntactic structure, but a loosely attached, extra-clausal appendix. In Shaer’s (2009) terminology, it is an N-type (“non-integrated”) left dislocation. The dependency between the “dislocatum” and the sentence-internal pronoun is a regular anaphoric dependency that may be established between discourse-entities.

<sup>1</sup> I use “left-dislocation” as a descriptive term, not as a commitment to a movement-like analysis in any sense.

<sup>2</sup> TLD was discussed by Lipták (2011, 2012) and den Dikken & Surányi (2017). FLD was mentioned by Kenesei et al. (1998).

As in normal (polite) discourse, reference to people is not established by demonstratives, the dispreferred (or more precisely, pragmatically deviant) character of the demonstrative in (3) straightforwardly follows.

The extra-sentential status also explains why a clause-internal position for the FLD-dislocatum results in a marked sentence. This is comparable to the status of left-dislocation in English. Though this is probably an oversimplification of the picture, English LD has to be string-initial and thus is restricted to main clauses, see (9).

Also, if the dependency between the antecedent and the pronoun is not syntactically enforced, case mismatches are also expected, as in (10). However, basic pragmatic constraints have to be observed, so widely conflicting formal features still result in ungrammaticality, especially if the features are semantic in nature (e.g. deixis, number, person).

The data in (8-10) is from Grohmann (2003: 139). Similar claims are made about dislocations in German by Shaer (2009).

- (8) a. *John<sub>i(LD)</sub>, Mary<sub>TOP</sub>, he<sub>i</sub> likes.* (a left dislocated entity precedes a topicalized one)  
 b. *?John<sub>TOP</sub>, Mary<sub>i(LD)</sub>, she<sub>i</sub> likes.* (a topicalized entity precedes a left dislocated one)
- (9) *I believe that this book, you should read (?it).*
- (10) *Me, I like beer.*

As noted in the introduction, the extra-clausal status of FLD is modelled with a special, non-recursive E-node in the account in Zaenen (1997). An alternative is offered by Shaer (2009), who argues that such loosely attached, “hanging” dislocations are “syntactic orphans”: they are completely unrelated to the host sentence at any syntactically relevant level. In other words, they form two independent utterances. The choice between the two approaches has to be established by further research. The fact that the sentences in (5), (8b) and the LD-version of (9) are not completely ungrammatical but only degraded seems to favor the latter, approach, as processing factors may be more naturally referred to.

### 3.2 Topic Left Dislocation

TLD is an I-type (“integrated”) dislocation, calling for a syntactic analysis. The dependency between the antecedent and the pronoun is licensed by the syntactic structure of the sentence. While the pronoun seems to have weaker referentiality (as shown by the ability of the demonstrative form to refer to people), it is not entirely devoid of meaning. Three considerations support this. The first one is that there is still a semantic motivation for the choice of the demonstrative. This may be seen from the fact that with places, apart from the case-marked form of the basic demonstrative *az* (that.NOM), a special spatial PP pro-form may also be used, see *ott* (‘there’) in (11a). With adverbs, this is the only choice. In (11b), the semantically matching *úgy* (‘so’) has to be used, and not the morphologically matching *azon* (‘that.on’).

- (11) a. *A házban, abban/ott senki nem volt.* b. *Szépen, \*azon/ úgy Kati dolgozik.*  
 the house.in that.in there nobody not was beautifully that.on so Kate works  
 ‘As for the house, nobody was there.’ ‘Beautifully, Kate works like that.’

Another other piece of evidence is that the presence/absence of the associate pronoun may have a semantic effect. In (12) the presence of the pronoun rules out the referentially unanchored interpretation of the indefinite pronoun. Conversely, (13) is fine, as the left-dislocation is associated with a given set.

- (12) *Elmondom mi történt tegnap. Valaki (\*az) bekopogott az ajtómon...*  
 tell.1SG what happened.3SG yesterday somebody that in.knocked the door.POSS.1SG.on  
 ‘I tell you what happened yesterday. Somebody knocked at my door...’
- (13) *Sok embert meghívtam. Valaki az eljött, valaki az nem.*  
 lot person.ACC invited.1SG somebody that came.3SG somebody that not  
 ‘I invited a lot of people. Some came, some didn’t.’

The third piece of evidence is that idiom chunks are impossible in the TLD construction. While (14) might be degraded since an idiom chunk is in a topic-position, the pronoun renders it completely unacceptable on the idiomatic interpretation. If the pronoun did not provide a semantic contribution, this would be unexplained.

- (14) *?A fene (\*az) megette ezt az ügyet.*  
 the heck that ate.3SG this the issue.ACC  
 ‘This issue is screwed up.’ (Lit.: ‘The heck ate this issue.’)

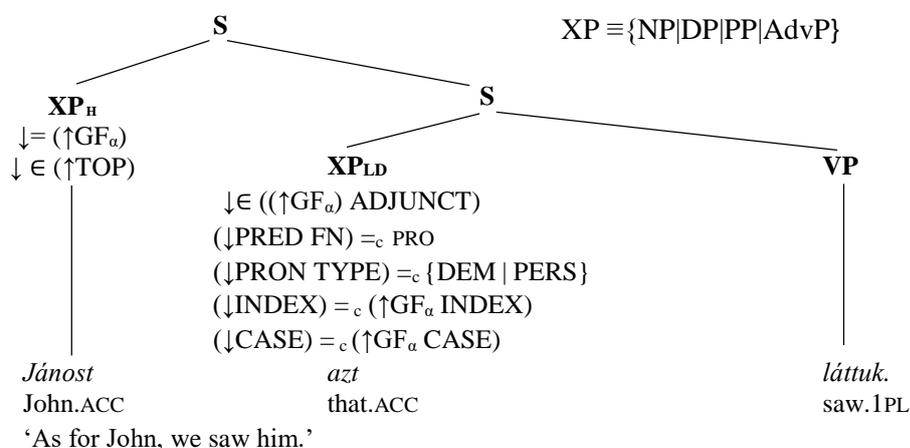
My proposal is shown in Figure 1. In the spirit of Zaenen (1997), I suggest that the TLD-pronoun is to be analyzed as an adjunct of its host. In particular, an annotation like the one in Figure 1 should be available in the topic-field of the Hungarian sentence. (I assume the basic analysis of Hungarian sentence structure as outlined in Laczkó (2014)). As the host (XP<sub>H</sub>) and the pronoun (XP<sub>LD</sub>) are separable (see (3) above) they do not form a constituent.

The demonstrative or personal pronoun is an adjunct to the topical entity, having an identical index. If the pronoun is a case marked DP (*az* (‘that’) and its various forms) this feature must match that of the host. This is ensured by the bottom constraining equation. If the pronoun not case-marked, (e.g. (11)), this requirement is vacuously satisfied.

In Zaenen’s (1997) account, the formal matching is assumed to follow from the general rule that adjuncts agree with their hosts with respect to morphosyntactic features. This is not motivated in Hungarian, so the case-correspondence is built into the annotation itself.

As a clause may contain several LDs (see (15), modelled after den Dikken & Surányi (2017: 566)), unique identification is needed for pairing the hosts and their pronominal adjuncts. This may be implemented with the the “GF<sub>α</sub>” annotation in Figure 1, which should be seen as a book-keeping device.

- (15) *Jánost azt Marinak annak nem mutattam még be.*  
 John.ACC that.ACC Mary.DAT that.DAT not introduced.1SG yet in  
 ‘As for John, it holds that to Mary, I haven’t introduced him.’



**Figure 1.**

Other restrictions should fall out from general lexical and compositional constraints on pronoun use. In fact, a strictly enforced number agreement would conflict with the naturally occurring example in (17) where a number mismatch occurs. The most likely explanation is that *azt* (‘that.ACC’) in these constructions is underspecified for number. Such mismatches occur with other Hungarian pronominal forms as well, see e.g. the relative pronoun *amit* (‘that<sub>rel pron-SG</sub>’) in (16), another naturally occurring piece of data.

- (16) *...jól van, az adatokat azt fölírom rendeléskor.*  
 right be.3SG the datum.PL.ACC that.ACC up.write.1SG order.at  
 ‘Right, I take a note of the data at the ordering.’

- (17) *Én azért másképpen látom azokat a dolgokat amit leírtál.*  
 I but other.way see.1SG those the things that<sub>rel pron-SG</sub> wrote.2SG  
 ‘The things that you wrote, I see them differently.’

Another issue is the dominance of the distal form of the demonstrative. The proximal form of the pronoun is only used if the antecedent is explicitly marked as proximal, as in (18). This follows the general pattern in Hungarian in that the distal form is the default choice and the proximal is marked in other contexts as well. For instance, the pronominal associate of subordinate clauses is also distal in most cases.

- (18) *Ezt a fiút, ezt Kati szereti.*  
 this.ACC the boy.ACC this.ACC Kate likes.3SG  
 Intended: ‘As for that boy, Kate likes him.’
- (19) *Azt/ ?Ezt mondtam, hogy láttuk Jánost.*  
 that.ACC this.ACC said.1SG COMP saw.1PL John.ACC  
 ‘I said that we had seen John.’

## References

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