

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1 Left Dislocation in Czech

This dissertation deals with the syntax and pragmatics of left dislocation in Czech. Czech has two main types of left dislocation which differ in their syntax, discourse function and prosody: Contrastive Left Dislocation (CLD) and Hanging Topic Left Dislocation (HTLD). I provide a unified syntactic account which is motivated by the pragmatics and prosody of these constructions.

In both types of left dislocation, there is a left dislocated constituent, separated from the following clause by an intonational break. As in left dislocation generally, this constituent binds a resumptive pronoun. One distinctive feature of left dislocation in Czech is that, when the resumptive is a full pronominal element, it obligatorily appears at the left edge of the clause and is associated with a gap somewhere within the clause. Czech left dislocation, then, involves three linked elements: the left dislocate, the resumptive and the gap. The examples in (1) and (2) illustrate the two types of left dislocation, with the left dislocate, the resumptive and the gap underlined.

In HTLD, there is no case matching between the left dislocate and the resumptive element: the dislocate is always in the nominative case, (1).

- (1) Anička<sub>i</sub>? Tě<sub>i</sub> se nic nestalo t<sub>i</sub>.  
*Anička.NOM that.DAT REFL-CL nothing NEG-happened*  
'Anička? Nothing happened to her.' (Czech National Corpus<sup>1</sup>)

In CLD, the left dislocate matches the resumptive element in case, see (2).

- (2) Ale tu dívku<sub>i</sub> ...tu<sub>i</sub> znám t<sub>i</sub> určitě.  
*but that girl.ACC that.ACC know.1SG for-sure*  
'But that girl...I know her for sure...'  
(<http://www.cswu.cz/jediland/ffcz/sunny/pochopitez11.htm>)

Research on left dislocation, beginning with Ross 1967, 1973; Rodman 1974/1997; and van Riemsdijk and Zwarts 1974/1997<sup>2</sup>, has focused on two questions: whether the left dislocate is base-generated at the left periphery or moves there and how the resumptive is introduced into the structure. Ross 1973 was among the first to note that left dislocation is not a unitary construction. In some cases, German left dislocation, for instance, there is evidence from case matching that a tight syntactic connection exists between the clause-internal gap and the left dislocate, but in others, such as English, there is no such evidence. To account for case matching in German, Ross suggested that the left dislocate moves from a clause-internal position to a position at the left edge of the clause. There is no such evidence of movement in English. Van Riemsdijk and Zwarts 1974/1997 discuss connectivity as another test

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<sup>1</sup> The Czech National Corpus is an online corpus of over 100 million words collected from online texts in a variety of styles (novels, newspaper articles, magazine articles, academic journals). It was developed and is managed by researchers at Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic). It can be found online at: <http://ucnk.ff.cuni.cz/>.

<sup>2</sup> Seminal papers on left dislocation from the 1970's and 1980's, as well as more recent work, are collected in *Materials on Left Dislocation* (eds. Elena Anagnostopoulou, Henk van Riemsdijk and Frans Zwarts: 1997).

for determining the appropriate analysis of left dislocation in Dutch (see also Cinque 1977 for Italian). In left dislocation constructions which exhibit connectivity, a movement analysis is warranted, in others, a base generation account is needed. In this dissertation, I provide evidence that Czech has both types of left dislocation: one involving movement of the dislocate to its surface position and one involving base-generation. In CLD, there is a close syntactic connection between the left dislocate and the clause-internal gap: this is evident in (2) which exhibits case matching. Such a connection is absent in HTLD, which exhibits no case-matching between the left dislocate and the resumptive or gap, see (1). I suggest that CLD is generated through movement, HTLD through base generation.

Resumption in left dislocation constructions involving movement is theoretically problematic. Resumptives were inserted transformationally in the early literature (Ross 1967, 1973; Emonds 1970; among others). In the 1990's, machinery available in Government and Binding, operator-variable chains in particular, motivated researchers to posit chain formation accounts of left dislocation. Wiltschko 1997 and Anagnostopoulou 1997 consider CLD in languages such as German and Dutch in which the resumptive element has moved to a position at the left edge of the clause and is related to a left peripheral constituent by an operator-variable chain (for other chain formation accounts see also Demirdar 1991, among others). Anagnostopoulou 1997, for example, suggests that the demonstrative pronoun is an operator which moves to the left edge of the clause and enters into a predication relationship with the left peripheral constituent in CLD constructions. The chain

formed between the left dislocate and the resumptive element licenses the connectivity effects found in CLD constructions.

With the advent of the Copy and Delete Theory of movement (Chomsky 1995), it became possible to account for these connectivity effects with movement, avoiding the machinery associated with chain formation. The most current work on left dislocation, Grohmann 2003, builds on previous work in Ross 1967, Cinque 1977 and Vat 1981/1997 and revives a movement analysis of left dislocation to account for the connectivity effects in German CLD. The left dislocate first moves to a position at the left edge of the clause, then this element undergoes a subsequent movement to a higher position in the left periphery. The possibility of reconstruction accounts for connectivity effects.

An analysis of this type, however, poses questions for resumption. Under a chain formation account, the resumptive is the head of a movement chain, and is pronounced for that reason. Under a movement account, though, the resumptive element is not the head of a movement chain. Rather, it is a movement copy which would be expected to remain unpronounced at PF. In my dissertation, I consider this question and provide an answer at the syntax-prosody interface.

## **2 Previous Research on Czech**

A central goal of researchers in the Praguean tradition is to investigate and describe the ways languages indicate information structure. For Czech, this involves both

word order and intonation. However, for languages which are not discourse configurational, such as English, intonation is the primary means of indicating discourse function. Work on Czech has principally focused on Topic Focus Articulation which has been implemented within the Functional Generative Description framework developed in the 1960's by Petr Sgall (for developments of this theory see Sgall, et al. 1973, 1980, 1986; Hajičová et al. 1998; among many others). The Topic Focus Articulation of the clause is indicated in tectogrammatical tree structures; dependency relations, morphological information and thematic roles are also annotated in the trees.

The point of intersection of my work on left dislocation and work within the Praguean tradition concerns the interpretation and syntactic representation of contrastive topic constructions in Czech. Hajičová et al. 2003; Hajičová and Sgall 2004; and Veselá et al. 2003 discuss the construction, illustrated in (3), in which an element with a contrastive topic interpretation appears at or near the left edge of the clause. Note that (3) contains no resumptive element, thus, is not an instance of left dislocation, but a simpler construction which I call 'contrastive topicalization'.

- (3) Domácím se dařilo ze začátku. Hostům se povedl  
*home-team REFL-CL succeeded from beginning visitors REFL-CL succeeded*  
 až druhý poločas.  
*only second half*  
 'The local team was successful at the beginning. The visitors succeeded only  
 in the second half.' (Hajičová and Sgall 2004: (31))

Hajičová et al. 2003 suggest that the discourse referent of a contrastive topic must be a member of a contextually salient set of alternatives in the discourse; they relate this

concept of alternatives to the “theme alternative set“ of Steedman 2002. This dissertation investigates a related construction which also exhibits a contrastive topic discourse function: CLD.

Though most contemporary work on Czech is within Functional Generative Description, several researchers have also considered Czech syntax from a derivational syntactic perspective, primarily within the Government and Binding framework (see Lenertová 2001, Veselovská 1995, among others). Veselovská’s 1995 dissertation considers issues in the clause structure of Czech, including the position of the lexical verb, the structure of the Czech DP, among other topics. I draw heavily from Veselovská’s work in chapter 2 when developing an analysis of Czech clausal structure. Lenertová 2001 considers the left periphery of the Czech clause and adopts a Rizzi 1997-style analysis with an ‘exploded’ CP domain. In chapter 2, I present evidence that a more economical view of the left periphery in Czech is possible and propose a structural analysis in which the central left peripheral position is not a position in the C-domain, but, rather, a specifier within the inflectional domain, [Spec, IP].

### **3 Organization of the Dissertation**

The first goal of the dissertation is to develop an understanding of Czech clause structure and the syntax of the left periphery. In chapter 2, I present evidence to support Veselovská’s 1995 claim that the lexical verb in Czech remains low within

the clause, raising from  $V^0$  to  $v^0$ , but no higher. The evidence comes from the position of VP adverbs and from VP Ellipsis. Under my account of the left periphery, it is unnecessary to posit an exploded CP (pace Lenertová 2001). In most cases, left peripheral positions are located exclusively in the inflectional domain, with [Spec, IP] functioning as the pivotal left-edge A-bar position. [Spec, IP] can be filled by XP's instantiating one of three discourse functions: topic, contrastive topic, or focus (foci or wh-phrases). One result of this chapter is a novel approach to positioning non-initial wh-phrases. In Czech, there is evidence that they appear, not in the IP domain, but in the vP domain.

In chapter 3, I turn my attention to the syntax of CLD and HTLD. I start by introducing a third left dislocation construction, HTLD II, which has a second position clitic resumptive. Connectivity evidence supports my claim that hanging topics are base generated in their left-peripheral position, while CLD'ed elements move to the left periphery from a clause-internal position. Additional evidence for the movement nature of CLD is found when the behavior of the resumptive element is considered. The resumptive in CLD is required to match the left dislocate in grammatical gender when there is a mismatch between the natural and grammatical gender of the dislocate. This is not the case with the non-movement HTLD constructions. Resumption in HTLD behaves like cross-sentential pronominalization; the resumptive can match the dislocate in either grammatical or natural gender.

In chapter 4, I establish that CLD instantiates a contrastive topic discourse function while HTLD I, II serve to promote a discourse referent to topic status. These

conclusions are based primarily on a corpus of approximately 100 attested textual examples of left dislocation collected from the Czech National Corpus and through Google searches, and secondarily on work with native speaker consultants. My analysis of CLD is framed within the Büring 2003 formal pragmatic analysis of contrastive topic. In the case of HTLD, I follow Gregory and Michaelis's 2001 methodology in identifying the discourse referents of hanging topics as promoted topics.

The necessary components are now in place to develop a syntactic analysis of resumption in CLD that links leftward movement of the dislocate in CLD to the pragmatics of the construction. In chapter 5, I develop an analysis in which the dislocated constituent moves first to [Spec, IP] and then onto a higher position in the left periphery, [Spec, TopP]. The copy of the dislocate in [Spec, IP] spells out as the resumptive element due to the prosodic requirements of the construction. Concluding remarks are found in chapter 6.