To the right of the clause

Right dislocation vs. afterthought*

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In my paper I will introduce two different, although apparently similar constructions at the right sentential edge in German: right dislocation (RD) and afterthought (AT). I show that RD is a discourse-structuring device: it marks the topic for the following discourse segment. AT, on the contrary, is a local repair strategy. I assume that a syntactically independent repair like AT and a syntactically adjoined discourse-structuring device like RD are cross-linguistically two options of the right sentential edge, and test this assumption for French and Russian.

Keywords: Right dislocation, discourse topic, afterthought, discourse relation

1. Introduction

'German right dislocation' is since Altmann (1981) a term for a construction consisting of an NP2 at the right edge of the clause (i.e., after the formal completion of the clause) and a coreferent intraclausal pro-form, as in (1):

(1) Hast Du ihm schon gesehen, (ich meine) den Karl? have you him, already seen, (I mean) the Karl,

(Schindler 1995: 44)

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1. Altmann (1981) also mentions PP- and CP-right dislocations; these are not considered in this paper. See, however, Averintseva-Klisch & Salifour (2007) for PP-RD.
Traditional analyses of the German right dislocation assume that this is a construction of spoken German that serves to resolve a potentially unclear pronominal reference (Altmann 1981; Auer 1991; Schindler 1995; Selting 1994; Uhnmann 1993; 1997). The speaker of (1) notices that the use of the pronoun ihn (him) is unclear in the context (it might be that there are either several referents that are equally suitable as an antecedent, or no referent is activated highly enough for the reference of the pronoun to be resolved effortlessly by the addressee). This observation causes the speaker to provide as an "afterthought" information that should make it easier to identify the intended referent.

However, there are abundant cases where a right dislocation cannot serve the reference clarification, as the reference is pretty clear, cf. (2):

(2) a. "Der Taifun" rief Lukas dem Kapitän zu.
The typhoon called Lukas the captain to
"Da ist er" ja, da war er, der Taifun.
There is he Yes there was he, the typhoon
(Michael Ende, Jim Knopf und die Wilde 13: 190)

b. (Den Tag, den vergest ich nicht.)
(That day, D-pron I forget)
Der war viel zu schön, der Tag.
D-pron, was much too wonderful the day
(Altmann 1981:129)

Here the right dislocation marks the referent of the NP (the typhoon in (2a) and the day in (2b)) as being especially important for the discourse. To be more exact, the referent is marked as the discourse topic in the sense of aboutness (see section 2.2.). I argue that (1) and (2) are instances of two functionally and formally different constructions that have been subsumed under the label of right dislocation. I name these constructions 'right dislocation proper' (RD), cf. (2), and 'afterthought' (AT), cf. (1), following the distinction made for other languages, e.g., in Ziv (1994) and Ward & Birner (1996) for English and Fretheim (1995) for Norwegian.

In this paper, I will first dwell upon the functional and formal differences between RD and AT in German. In section 2, I will briefly introduce prosodic and syntactic features of RD and AT (section 2.1.), and then turn to their respective discourse functions (section 2.2.). I will propose that AT is a syntactically independent 'orphan' (Hageman 1991), that gets introduced into the discourse via a discourse relation afterthought formulated for this case (section 2.3.). As for RD, it is syntactically integrated into its host sentence, and serves to mark the discourse topic for the following discourse segment. In section 3, I will address the general issue of the use of the right clausal edge. I will argue with data from German, Russian and French that RD (i.e., a syntactically integrated global discourse-structuring device) and AT (i.e., a syntactically non-integrated local repair) are two cross-linguistically possible options of the use of the right clausal edge. Finally, in section 4, I will sum up and draw some conclusions.

2. RD vs. AT: Form and function
In this section, I introduce the prosodic and syntactic differences between RD and AT. Many of the facts presented here have been already pointed out in the previous research, e.g., in Altmann (1981), but have mostly been done up with as exceptions from a certain pattern of a so-called "right dislocation." However, distinguishing between RD and AT allows to dispence with most exceptions, and to describe distinct patterns for RD and AT instead. The formal differences between RD and AT suggest that RD is prosodically and syntactically part of its host sentence, while AT is not. After describing these differences I will specify the discourse functions of RD and AT which have been mentioned above.

2.1. RD vs. AT: Prosodic and syntactic differences
RD is prosodically integrated into its host sentence (3a), i.e., it continues the tone movement of the host sentence and thus does not build a prosodic unit (an intonational phrase in terms of Selkirk (1978)) of its own, whereas AT builds an intonational phrase (optionally divided from the clause by a pause) with a tone movement and a clause-like accent of its own (cf. Uhmann 1997), (3b):

(3) a. [Ich MAG sie, nicht, die Brigitte.]
RD
like her not, the Brigitte.
(I don't like her, Brigitte.)

b. [Ich MAG sie, nicht. | [die Brigitte.]]
AT
like her not, the Brigitte.

Crucially, prosody is only one of several criteria for distinguishing between RD and AT. Prosodic differences go along with syntactic differences, which are briefly listed

tactically to the clause (being base-generated or moved right IP-adjuncts) or whether they are syntactically autonomous. That is why I do not use the term "right periphery" here, as this term implies that a right-peripheral construction belongs syntactically to its host sentence. "Right clausal edge" in this sense covers right peripheral items as well as autonomous afterthought additions, which are syntactically not part of the host sentence, as I argue below.

3. See Fretheim (1995) for a similar analysis for Norwegian; he shows that in Norwegian, as in German, prosodically integrated structures are RDs, and prosodically non-integrated ones ATs.
below; they all suggest that RD belongs in a much more straightforward way to its host sentence than AT.

1. Strict morphological agreement (in case, gender and number) between the clause-internal pro-form and the NP is necessary for RD, while at least gender agreement is only optional for AT, cf. (4) vs. (5):

(4) (Ach ja, mein Nachbar! Er hat gestern wieder einen Widerrall bekommen, nur weil die Kinder im Garten gespielt haben.)

(Oh yes, my neighbour! He went completely berserk yesterday, only because the children were playing in the garden.)

Ich kann ihn nur bedauern, den Mann /
1 can him only regret the man /
RD

*die Giftpistole, / *der Mann, *

*die giftpipe, / *the man,

*the spitfire, / *the man,

(Attested oral data)

(5) a. Es ist ein bisschen gleichmäßig. | deine Melodie, 

*the is a bit homogeneous *your melody,

AT

b. Und dann passierte das Unglück. | (ich meine) 

And then happened [the misfortune] (I mean)

AT

dieser schreckliche Autounfall. | ich meine 

this terrible traffic accident (I mean)

AT

diesen schrecklichen Autounfall. (I mean) 

This terrible traffic accident

AT

II. A subordinate clause between the clause-internal pro-form and the NP is not possible for RD and possible for AT, cf. (6):

(6) Ach, diese Münchner Stadtväter!

Ach, these Munich City fathers!

a. Es könnte ihnen, ja wirklich ausgelaufen sein, 

it could them, yes really standing out be

RD

b. Ich habe ihn gestern nur mit Mühe wiedererkannt. | ich

I have him yesterday only with effort recognized, I

mean the Peter

AT

c. Ich habe ihn, | ich meine den Peter. | gestern nur mit Mühe wiedererkannt.

I hardly recognized him yesterday, I mean Peter.
To summarize: there is ample evidence that RD belongs prosodically and syntactically in a much more straightforward way to its host sentence than AT. Prosodically, RD is a part of its host sentence’s tone contour. Considered syntactically, morphological agreement of the RD-NP with the clause-initial pro-form suggests that NP is part of the clause, as morphological agreement is a sentence-bound phenomenon. Moreover, RD occupies a fixed position in the host sentence (at its right periphery), and does not allow insertions (neither subordinate clause insertion nor optional additions of any kind) between the host sentence and the RD-NP. The former constraint, in other words, allows subordinate clause insertion, is since Ross’ (1967) known in the literature as “Right Roof Constraint.” Ross assumes rightward movement to be possible, but never across a sentence boundary. For reasons of length and thematic contiguity of this paper I am not going to discuss the issue whether RD is a product of syntactic movement or base-generated at the right periphery. I use the term ‘right dislocation’ without implying any syntactic analysis, but rather as it is the term generally accepted in the literature for this construction, cf. e.g., Ziv (1994), Fretheim (1995), Ward & Birner (1996), Lambrecht (2001).

However, RD in German seems to be island-sensitive, cf. (11), which might be considered an argument for the movement analysis:

(11) **Ueber Meyer, werden Öfters Gerüchte verbreitet. Mal soll er, Zustellungen zur Regierung haben, mal werden seine, Erfolge mit Kontakten zur Mafia erklärt.**

‘There are lots of rumours about Meyer. One hears that he is bound to have connections to the government, or even that his success is due to his contacts to the mafia.’

7. Consten (2004: 91) shows that intersentential anaphoric resolution is generally possible without gender agreement, whereas it is impossible for intrasentential anaphora.

8. I am not aware of any detailed syntactic analysis of German RD, but see Ross (1986/1967), Kayne (1994), and Culicover / Jackendoff (2005), to name but a few, for different possibilities of syntactic analysis of RD in general. Ross assumes that RD is a result of a rightward movement, whereas for Kayne RD emerges through the movement of the remaining clause to the left of the RD-NP. Villaflah (2000) modifies this analysis for RD in Catalan slightly, still assuming that RD involves the leftward movement of its host clause. In contrast, Culicover / Jackendoff (2005) advocate the base generation of the RD to the right of its host sentence.

9. As for rightward adjoinment there are no syntactic tests allowing to discern the exact functional layer that serves as the adjoinment site. I keep the notation "IP" to refer to the functional domain above VP. This does not mean that I theoretically disagree with the split IP assumption, but solely that there is virtually no possibility to account for the adjoinment site of the RD-NP in a more precise way.

10. In this respect German RD is expected to differ from clitic RD like in Catalan, Italian or Greek, where clitics are subject to structural constraints different from those on full pronouns.
independent from their host sentence and get integrated into it only at the level of the
discourse, as other utterances do. One illustration: according to Shaer (2003), certain
adverbials like with his X-ray vision in (13) are ‘orphans’ in this sense:

(13) With his X-ray vision, John located the files.  
    (Shaer 2003: 458)

Shaeer shows that the PP with his X-ray vision in (13) is syntactically independent. For
instance, it does not show any effects that a syntactic movement would produce (e.g., it
violates island constraint), so that a movement-based analysis of such adverbials fails.
Furthermore, this PP can occur parenthetically at different positions in the clause, as
in (14), which is expected if it does not have any syntactically determined position in
its host sentence:

(14) a. With his X-ray vision, John located the files.
    b. John, with his X-ray vision, located the files.
    c. John located the files, with his X-ray vision, etc.

Besides, an ‘orphan’ has to build a prosodic unit of its own. As I have argued above,
the same characteristics apply to AT: it does not show any features typical for ele-
ments syntactically dependent on its host sentence. Thus, AT allows morphological
non-agreement, and does not obey the island constraint. Prosodically, it also has to
build a unit of its own. In other words, AT appears to be a syntactic ‘orphan’. In terms
of Zifonun, Hoffmann & Stecker (1997) AT is a construction of the ‘rechtes Außenfeld’
(‘right outer field’) that embraces syntactically additional to the clause.

The assumption that AT is syntactically non-integrated can directly account for its
appearance after an explicit marking of the sentence boundary, the latter being either
marked graphically with an appropriate punctuation mark, e.g., a full stop, in the case of
written language, cf. (15a), or, in spoken language, by an intervention of another
speaker (so-called ‘alien-initiated repairs’ in terms of Uhmann (1993)), like in (15b):

(15) a. (Der Koch war schon an Bord, der Matrose ebenfalls.)
    The cook was already on board, the sailor too!
    Er aß die Fliegen. Der Koch, nicht der Matrose.
    He ate the flies. The cook not the sailor
    (Martel Yann, Schiffbruch mit Tiger: 364)

b. A: Ich weiß nicht, wann sie kommt. B: wer?
    A: I know not when she comes. B: who?
    A: na die Anna.
    B: DANN the Anna,
    (Attested oral data)

After showing how the formal differences between RD and AT correspond to func-
tional differences, I will turn to the issue of how the discourse integration of AT takes
place.

2.2 RD vs. AT: Functional differences

My proposal is that RD is used to mark the discourse topic. I understand discourse
topic informally as the discourse referent that is stably activated in the discourse repre-
sentation during the reception of a particular discourse segment,11 or, in other words,
the referent about which the current discourse segment is, cf. (16), where the old shoe-
maker is the discourse topic:12

(16) A broad ray of light fell into the corset, and showed the workman, with an
    unfinished shoe upon his lap, peasing in his labour. […] He had put up a hand
    between his eyes and the light, and the very bones of it seemed transparent. So he
    sat, with a steadfastly vacant gaze, peasing in his work. […]
    (Charles Dickens, The Tale of Two Cities, Ch. 6)

Each particular language has preferred options of referring to discourse topics. Thus,
personal pronouns are generally considered to be the cross-linguistically preferred
anaphorical means of reference to discourse topics (see e.g., Bosch et al. 2003). Also in
(16) the discourse topic referent is constantly referred to with the personal pronoun
he. Besides, the so-called Left Dislocation in English, the construction consisting of an
NP to the left of a clause and a coreferent pro-form inside it as in (17), has been argued to
set the current discourse topic (e.g., Frey 2004):13

11. I understand discourse segment intuitively as a relatively small span of a discourse (mini-
nally one utterance) that is characterized through a fairly tight thematic contiguity. In written
language a discourse segment mostly corresponds to a paragraph.

12. The problem of the status of discourse topic has been extensively and controversially dis-
cussed in literature (see Büring (2003); Asher (2004a) and (2004b); Kehler (2004); Oberlander
(2004); Stede (2004) and Zeevat (2004), to name just a few). However, in spite of theoretical con-
versories and uncertainties concerning the exact definition of the discourse topic, the existence
of some kind of entity that is most salient at a given stage of the discourse and that is relevant
for establishing coherence seems to be uncontroversial. This is the intuition shared by the papers
in the recent issue of Theoretical Linguistics dedicated to discourse topics, although the authors use
different terms for the same intuition of “the thing” that “chunks of text are about” (Asher 2004b:
255). My understanding of the discourse topic as being valid on the local level of a discourse
segment corresponds more or less to the concept of ‘local topic within discourse segments’ in

13. Generally a comparison of the left and right dislocation seems promising, even if it is out
of reasons of space impossible in this paper. In short, both dislocation constructions are topic-
related devices, although there are differences. In general, LD seems cross-linguistically to be
functionally more tightly connected with its host sentence than RD. Due to the linear order of
the discourse, LD is bound to set the topic for the discourse segment including its host sentence,
whereas RD is more important for the segment following its host sentence. In German, a spe-
cial variant of left dislocation, the so-called ‘Hanging topic’ like in (a), has been argued to be a
Similarly, RD in German serves to mark the discourse topic, but is has the peculiarity that the topic is marked not only to be the current one, but also as the topic for the discourse segment following the RD. In (18), Madame Dutitre is set as "what is being talked about" for the segment following the host sentence of the RD:

(18) Und als der König seine Frau verloren hatte, bedauerte ihn die Dutitre: "Ach ja, für Ihnen ist es schön sich so leicht [...]."

'And when the king lost his wife, Dutitre pitied him: "Dear me, I should say, for you things aren't that easy either [...]"'

Sie, war ein Original, die Madame Dutitre,
she, was an original the Madame Dutitre,
Sie verstand nie, warum man über ihre Aussprüche lachte. Sie war eben echt und lebte, wie alle wirklich originalen Menschen, aus dem Unbewussten. Kein falscher Ton kam deshalb bei ihr auf.

'She, never understood why everybody always laughed at her, remarks. She, was genuine and lived unconsciously, as all unique people do. She, never came across as being artificial.'

(Siegfried Fischer-Fabian. Berlin-Evergreen: 125)

Thus, RD in German is a global discourse strategy in the sense that it helps to structure a whole discourse segment by marking its topic. More specifically, RD can either promote a discourse-old referent to the discourse topic, or to signal maintenance of the old discourse topic (especially after a change of the narration perspective). Importantly, it is a forward-looking strategy, as it structures the segment following the host sentence. RD being situated at the right periphery of the sentence predestines it to influence the subsequent segment. This means that in the default case the referent of the RD-NP is the discourse topic for the following segment, as in (19a). Interestingly, RD is also possible at the very end of a discourse like in (19b). This only seems to contradict my claim: the crucial point is that no other discourse referent is available as topic as long as the discourse continues, cf. (19c), which is a pragmatically unsuitable continuation in the context of the RD (marked with "#`). This means that even in (19b) the referent of the RD-NP remains the only discourse topic that is hypothetically possible:

(19) a. Sie, war ein Original, die Madame Dutitre,

she, was an original the Madame Dutitre,

Sie verstand nie, warum man über ihre Aussprüche lachte. 'She, never understood why everybody laughed at her, remarks.'

b. Ja, sie, war ein Original, die Madame Dutitre,

yes she, was an original the Madame Dutitre,

'she was unique, that Madame Dutitre (context: e.g., as the last sentence of the chapter about Madame Dutitre.)


'Monsieur, and Madame, Dutitre were rather famous at that time, she, in particular for her, bon-mots, and he, for his, race horses. She, was unique, that Madame D., *he, had the best race horses of Berlin in his stables.'

As for AT, it is a repair strategy used to resolve a potentially unclear reference in the host sentence, as in (20):

(20) (Sie [Die Mutter] hat den Wohnzimmerschrank aber auch nicht leiden können [...], aber mein Vater hat sich auf keine billigen Sachen mehr eingelassen.)

'Mother hated the wardrobes, [...], but my father didn't want to have any more cheap things around.'

er ist ihr auch zu dunkel gewesen, der Wohnzimmerschrank [...]

he, is for her also too dark been the wardrobe,

(Birgit Vanderbeke. Das Muschelens)

Contrary to RD, AT is a local strategy, as it is used to repair its host sentence and does not have any impact on the global discourse structure. In this sense it is backward-looking, as it refers back to its host sentence and does not influence the following discourse segment. In the next section, I will introduce my proposal for the integration of syntactically independent AT into its host sentence.

2.3 Syntax-discourse asymmetry with AT

Being detached syntactically, an orphan gets attached to its host sentence at the level of the discourse (cf. Haegeman 1991). This attachment occurs for orphans in a regular way used for discourse units (cf. Shaer 2003). I assume with Asher & Lascarides (2003) that discourse units get attached to each other via discourse relations. In Averintseva-Klisch (forthc.), I have argued that a special discourse relation Afterthought has to be formulated for the attachment of AT. What is relevant for the present issue is that
Afterthought is argued to be a subordinating discourse relation in terms of Asher & Vieu (2005). Asher and Vieu put forward four tests to distinguish between subordinating and coordinating discourse relations, cf. (21):

(21) Given are two constituents, α and β, a relation R (α, β), and a possible extension with a constituent γ; the nature of R is to be tested:
1. Attachment Test: If it is possible to attach γ to α, then R is subordinating; if attachment is possible only to β, then R is coordinating.
2. Continuation Test: If γ continues β in its relation to α, then R is subordinating; if it is impossible, then R is coordinating.
3. Anaphora Test: If for any γ attached to β no prenominal element in γ can be bound by referents in α, then R is coordinating; if some can, then R is subordinating.
4. Prototype Test: If R can co-occur with Narration (as prototypical coordinating relation), then R is coordinating; if R can co-occur with Elaboration (prototypical subordinating relation), then R is subordinating.

(Summied up from Asher & Vieu 2005)

Test 4 is not applicable to Afterthought, as the semantics of Afterthought is not compatible with Elaboration. In short: firstly, Afterthought differs crucially from Elaboration in its impact on the truth conditions of the whole sentence: AT first makes the establishing of the truth conditions for an utterance possible; due to the lack of referential clarity, it is not possible before the adding of the AT takes place. Secondly, Elaboration and Afterthought are different kinds of discourse relations. Asher & Lascarides (2003) distinguish between 'content-level' discourse relations and 'cognitive-level' discourse relations. For the former, it is only the content of the utterances building up a discourse that matters; this is the case with Elaboration. For the latter not only the content of the utterances, but also the intentions of the speaker and the addressee are important for defining their semantics. This seems for me to be the case with Afterthought (see also Averintseva-Klish (forthc.)). Because of these differences between Elaboration and Afterthought Test 4 cannot be applied to Afterthought. The applicable tests all yield the same results: Afterthought is subordinating, cf. (22)-(24):

(22) Attachment Test:
- a. Dann ist sie weggefahren, (α) a
- b. (ich meine) die Serena. (β) β
- c. Das macht sie immer wenn sie wütend ist. (γ) γ

"Then she ran away (α), (I mean) Serena (β). That's what she always does when she is angry (γ)."

According to the Attachment-Test, the relation R (α, β) is bound to be subordinating, because γ gets attached to α (and not to β) via discourse relation Explanation: the last constituent explains the first one.

(23) Continuation Test
- a. Dann ist sie weggefahren,
- b. (ich meine) die Serena.
- c. Also die Kleine mit blonden Zöpfchen. (γ) γ

"Then she ran away (α), (I mean) Serena (β). That is the little one with blonde pigtails (γ)."

Here, it is possible to proceed with a constituent that continues β in its Afterthought relation to α; thus, R again fulfills the conditions for subordination.

(24) Anaphora Test
- a. Dann ist sie weggefahren (α) attachment site
- b. (ich meine) die Serena. (β)
- c. Das war nicht besonders schlaue. (γ) γ, das...

"Then she ran away (α), (I mean) Serena (β). That was not very clever (γ)."

That's what she always does when she is angry (γ)."

It is possible to resume the event token (24c) as well as the event type (cf. Asher 1993) of the constituent α (24c) with the pronoun das (‘that’) in γ. To sum up: the tests 1–3 all show that Afterthought is a subordinating discourse relation.

According to the analysis presented here, corrections like (25) are a subtype of afterthoughts:

(25) A: John failed his exams. B: No, he didn't, he got 60%. A: I meant John SMITH.

(Asher & Lascarides 2003:305)

Asher and Lascarides (2003) do not consider in detail cases like (25), but they seem tactily to handle them in a similar way as the instances of the discourse relation Correction, cf. (26):

(26) A: John distributed the copies. B: No, it was Sue who distributed the copies.

(Asher & Lascarides 2003:470)

However, for Correction the constituents involved are per definition required to be inconsistent with each other (Asher & Lascarides 2003:469). This is not the case in (25), where the constituent With “John” I mean John Smith is in no way inconsistent with the constituent John failed his exams. Besides, with respect to their function corrections like (25) are exactly like ‘alien-initiated repairs’ (Uehmann 1999), where the hearer explicitly signals his inability to resolve the pro-form, like in (27) (cf. also example (15b)).

That is why I propose to subsume corrections like (25) under afterthoughts. Reflecting the character of AT as described above, the discourse relation Afterthought can be informally stated as in (28):

(28) Afterthought is a subordinating discourse relation, which holds whenever the speaker of the host sentence and the AT supplies the AT with the intention of clearing the reference of a discourse referent x that has been introduced in the host sentence by establishing a relation x=x, where x is a discourse referent introduced in the AT, and the reference of x in the discourse representation is assumed to be unambiguous.

A point that I would like to make here is the following: syntax and discourse attachment do not mirror each other in the case of AT: syntactically, AT is an orphan, i.e., not attached at all. At the level of the discourse structure, however, it gets attached via a subordinating discourse relation. This supports the widely assumed hypothesis that generally the symmetry of syntactic relations and discourse relations between two discourse units is not necessarily required (see e.g., Bühldorff in this volume and Holler in this volume), although in some cases syntactic and discourse relations might go hand in hand.

As for RD, I assume that it does not constitute a separate discourse unit, but is a part of the unit containing the host sentence. In Averintseva-Klisch (2006) I show how exactly RD contributes to the semantics of its host sentence.

Summing up this section one might say that the right clausal edge in German holds two options: it is either used for syntactically integrated RD, or for syntactically non-integrated AT repairing some intraclausal reference.15 The former is a global discourse-structuring device, in particular concerning the immediately following discourse segment. The latter, on the contrary, is a local (i.e., related to the host sentence) repair strategy. In the next section I will argue that these are cross-linguistically two options the right clausal edge might have.

3. Right periphery in the discourse: an outlook

The issue of interest now is whether the usage of the right clausal edge for backward-looking local repairs and for forward-looking discourse topic marking is a peculiarity of German or whether these two options (local repair and global discourse structuring) are used cross-linguistically. The following is to be understood as an outlook for further research. My hypothesis is that local repair and discourse topic marking are cross-linguistically available due to the general properties of the right clausal edge. This position is on the one hand the last possibility to add locally to the clause or to comment on some information within it. On the other hand, by virtue of its placement it relates the clause to the following discourse. As the first step to test this hypothesis I will in this paper very briefly compare German to French and Russian with respect to the use of RD and AT. I will begin with AT.

3.1 Afterthought in Russian and French

AT is expected to be cross-linguistically generally available (primarily as an option of the spoken language). Not being syntactically attached at all, ATs do not depend on the syntactic characteristics of a language, and in fact nothing should prevent the possibility of adding repairs after the actual end of the clause. As expected, ATs are possible in Russian, cf. (29), as well as in French, cf. (30):

(29) Ego žena rozmist ego k Teresa Lido. (Attested oral data)
   'His wife is jealous of Teresa Lido.'
   Ona poznaješa za nim v pogonju, | ego žena.
   She starts for him in pursuit his wife,
   'She, pursues him, his wife,'

Here, the speaker relates the contents of a movie, and the sentence preceding the clause with the pronominal reference ona 'she' introduces two female referents, "his wife" and "Teresa Lido." The speaker uses a personal pronoun to refer to the wife, but then believes it might be unclear to the hearer whom she actually means, and she adds an explicit reference resolution device. Similarly in (30), where the reference of the pronoun il 'he' is unclear in the context, it is resolved explicitly with an afterthought NP:

(30) (context: Jean and Jacques are eating.)
   Il a déjà mangé la soupe, | Jean.
   he has already eaten the soup Jean

As in German, the AT-NPs in Russian are those constructions involving NPs to the right of the clause that have been investigated most often.16 Now, I will turn to the less clear and more interesting issue of RD proper in Russian and French.

3.2 Right dislocation in Russian and French

RDs in Russian have to my knowledge barely been considered in the literature. The only analysis I am aware of distinguishing between a repair and another kind of

15. Strictly speaking, RD and AT hold two different positions: while I assume that RD being part of the sentence is located at its right periphery, AT comes after the sentence boundary; being syntactically fully independent, it cannot be analysed as a right-peripheral construction. Zifonun, Hoffmann & Steckler (1997) introduced the term rechtes Außenspiel ("right outer field") for non-integrated phrases at the right edge of the clause (as compared to Nächsfeld ("afterfield") for syntactically integrated ones).

16. Lapteva (1976) assumes that adding a NP having a coreferent pro-form inside the clause after a syntactically complete clause has a function of "explanation". Cf. also Zemskaja (1973) and Svedova et al. (1982) who are talking about the function of "specification of the pronoun" for the added NP.
right-peripheral NP is given in Lapteva (1976). She assumes that besides AT there is another kind of added NPs with a coreferent pro-form, which seems "not to have any function at all" (Lapteva 1976: 267). In (31), however, one could hardly assume that the right-peripheral NP does not have any function; it is clearly used to enhance the intended meaning of the passage in that the wall is marked as the discourse topic:

(31) Meier Wolf vjemo šešir kopil deneg, čebov videt! Stena Ploča.
'MW saved money his whole life long to see the Wailing Wall'
On vido vol tečer, če vrtnu.
he saw her, now this wall.
Ona našodila za liniji tečenje deneg [...]. Eto prostaja požarnaja stena [...] 'Now he has seen it, this wall. It is situated behind the railways [...]. It is a simple fire protection wall [...].'

(Aleksandr Galić, Matroškačja Tilina)

Characteristically, the reference of the pronoun in RD is often quite clear in the context, as in (31) and (32). That is why I argue that both are cases of RD proper.

(32) A: A Petrova ušla čto-li?
A: and Petrova, is.gone INTERRFON
B: Net, ona po-emojenu ne biyla Petrova
B: no she, I.believe not was Petrova
A: Is Petrova already gone? B: No, I believe she has not been here at all, Petrova.'

(Lapteva 1976: 267)

In (32) the referent of Petrova is clearly the discourse topic, so that (31) and (32) are similar and in both the right-peripheral NP is an RD in the sense of a right-peripheral discourse topic marking construction.17

RD is also attested for French (Lambrecht 1981, 1987), e.g., (33):18

(33) a. Il a mangé la soupe, Jean.
he, has eaten the soup Jean,
Il est beau, ce tableau!
he, is beautiful, this picture.MASK

(Lambrecht 1981: 80)

Formally, RD is prosodically and syntactically integrated in Russian as well as in French, (see Lapteva (1976) resp. Lambrecht (1981)). For example, morphological agreement is required for Russian RD (Zemskaja 1973), cf. (34) as well as for French RD (35):

(34) Mne eje podarili nedavno, étu knigu / To-me he ACC presented.J.PL.PLUR recently this.ACC book.ACC / 'I recently got it as a present, this book.'

(Zemskaja 1973: 166)

In (34), the default nominative case is not available for the RD-NP if the intraclausal pro-form is in the accusative. In (35) RD-phrase has to preserve the morphological marking which an argument phrase would have in its canonical position (Lambrecht 1981: 79). This suggests that RD in Russian and French is syntactically integrated in the same way as RD in German.

As for the function of RD, I argue for Russian as well as for French that in these languages RD serves in a way similar to German RD to mark the discourse topic. Observations made in the previous research on French RD are compatible with my analysis of RD as a discourse topic marking device. Lambrecht argues that RD is used to refer to the "previously established topic" (Lambrecht 1987: 237). Asby (1988) claims that at least sometimes the referent of the RD "continue[s] to be talked about in succeeding sentences" (Asby 1988: 216), which would correspond to its being the discourse topic for the following segment, cf. (36):

(36) Et puis ils étaient méchants, les Allemands. A la fin, quand
then they, were angry the Germans, at the end when
ils ont vu que la situation était perdue [...] they, have seen that the situation was lost [...]

(Asby 1988: 214)

Here the speaker tells about the end of World War II in France and introduces the new discourse topic, the Germans, with the help of the RD. Generally, Asby (1988) differentiates between 6 pragmatic functions of French RD: turn closing, filler,

17. In (32) the discourse topic is similarly to (18) marked as maintained over the change of a perspective (here the change of the speaker).

18. The French data presented in section 3 are taken from Lambrecht (1981), (1987) and Asby (1988); the glosses are mine.
clarification, topic shift, contrast and epithet. However, these, with possible exception of clarification, appear to me to be secondary functions accompanying the discourse topic marking. Thus, turn closing, which Ashby claims to be the most important function of RD, seems to me to be a special case of the discourse topic marking: the discourse topic gets "passed on" to the next speaker, so to speak: the first speaker wants to get sure that his communication partner continues to talk about the same entity as he did. So, in (37) "his son" is the discourse topic for both speakers:

(37) A: Il est en dernière année, son fils.
    A: he is in last year his son.
B: Ah mais, oui, c'est en dernière année.
B: Ah but yes it's in last year.

(Ashby 1988: 222)

As for the cases analysed as clarification in Ashby, these cases I expect to be ATs. This is however, an issue I cannot decide upon, as Ashby introduces only one example of clarification, and it does not have enough context for me to be able to decide on this issue.

In other words, an informal cross-linguistic comparison supports the claim that RD marks the discourse topic. An important additional evidence for this claim coming from French are the pronominal RDs like in (38a), cf. Ashby (1988); these also occur in Norwegian (Fretheim 1995, 2001), cf. (38b).21

(38) a. Madame X, elle est la mère de X.
    Mrs. X, she is born here she
b. Scott heter Glenn til etternavn, han.
    Scott, is named Glenn as surname he

(Ashby 1988: 204)

(Fretheim 2001: 62)

Pronominal RDs seem to me to be the clearest case of a discourse topic marking function of the RD. Firstly, adding a pronominal reference definitely cannot be a reference clarification. Secondly, personal pronouns are traditionally assumed to be the preferred means for referring to discourse topics (e.g., Zifonun, Hoffmann & Stecker 1997), Bosch et al. (2003), Consten & Schwarz-Friesel (forthc.), so it is to expect that also right dislocated personal pronouns refer to discourse topics.

This cross-linguistic affinity of the discourse topics to the right periphery might seem unexpected, as especially in the conversation analysis the right clausal edge is usually seen as the position used for turn taking or for delaying of turn taking (cf. e.g., Auer 1991)). In accordance with this analysis information coming at the right periphery is not important, so that its potential loss through a turn-taking is not problematic. However, it seems to me that the repetition of information that is already given and is thus seemingly "unnecessary" must be something more than just a strategy to retain turn-taking. Rather with this repetition the importance of the corresponding referent for the discourse is made clear, i.e., the referent is explicitly set as the current discourse topic.

3.3 Discussion: RD vs. AT cross-linguistically

A comparison of German, Russian and French with respect to their use of RD and AT shows that these languages have AT and RD as the options of the use of the right clausal edge. These two uses of the right clausal edge are due to its twofold character. On the one hand, for reasons of linearity the right periphery constitutes a point of intersection with the following discourse. As such it is predestined to host NPs referring to the discourse topics that pertain in the following discourse segment. On the other hand, the position immediately after a clause is the last possibility to add something locally to this clause; that is why afterthought NPs are possible. Moreover, in all three languages observed RD is syntactically integrated. A similar observation was made in Lambrecht (2001: 1068), who stated that RD is cross-linguistically "more tightly connected with the predicate-argument structure of the clause" than left-dislocated elements. In the languages under discussion AT is syntactically non-integrated. That is to be expected, as a speaker adds AT as a repair device when he has already completed the clause and only after that notices that the clause might be unclear. The question that remains is: Why is RD cross-linguistically prosodically and syntactically integrated? Why a forward-looking discourse topic marking prefers a realization through a syntactically integrated NP at the right periphery is a challenging question for further research. It would be especially interesting to compare in a systematic way RD in languages featuring clitic RD (like e.g., Catalan or Greek) with RD in languages having only full pronouns like German. It seems that clitic RD differs from non-clitic RD in that multiple dislocation is non-restrictively allowed (Valduví 1992: 85 for Catalan). As for Left dislocation, Grohmann (2003) proposes different syntactic analyses for non-clitic and clitic left dislocation. For Romance languages it is often assumed that RD is either derived from left dislocation (e.g., Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007) for Italian) or that both constructions are symmetrical (Benincà & Poletto 2003 for Italian and Valduví (1992) for Catalan), which would imply also different analyses for clitic and non-clitic RD. If the syntax of the clitic and non-clitic RD also differs, then one would expect functional differences, too. Still, it seems that also clitic RD is a topic-marking construction, cf. Villalba (2000: 20), Lambrecht (2001: 1072), so that the generalization made above, viz. that the right periphery is a position designated for hosting expressions referring to discourse topics, still holds.

4. Summing up and conclusions

In my paper, I first introduced two prima facie similar, but formal and functionally different constructions of German, right dislocation and afterthought. I argued that

21 Note that my analysis with respect to the function of RD differs from the actual proposals in Ashby (1988) and Fretheim (2001).
whilst AT is a local reference repair strategy, RD is an important discourse-structuring device used to mark the discourse topic for the segment following RD. At the level of syntax, RD is part of its host sentence, presumably a right IP-adjunct. AT, on the contrary, is syntactically independent from its host sentence, and gets integrated into it only at the level of the discourse via a special discourse relation. Thus, AT might be seen as an illustration of the general asymmetry of syntactic and discourse relations: AT is added via a subordinating discourse relation, although there is no subordination on the level of syntax, AT being syntactically not attached at all.

I assume that local repair and global discourse-structuring devices are cross-linguistically two options of the use of the right clausal edge, and put forward the question whether AT is always syntactically detached, whereas RD is always syntactically integrated. To follow up this point, I compared German to Russian and French with respect to the use and characteristics of RD and AT.

I found that all three languages feature AT as an 'orphans' and RD as a syntactically integrated construction used to mark the discourse topic for the following segment. The former is due to the character of AT as a local repair.

As for RD, this discourse-topic marking device at the right clausal periphery seems to be available cross-linguistically in a similar way. Discourse topic, contrary to sentence topic, is not a sentence-bound notion and thus also not a syntactic, but a pragmatic category. Accordingly, there cannot be an exact position for discourse topic inside the clause. However, it seems that right periphery, being a syntactically unnecessary and thus entirely pragmatically ruled position, is cross-linguistically preferred for the placement of NPs referring to discourse topics. This leads to the hypothesis that there is a cross-linguistic interdependence of the discourse function and the syntax. I assume that RD is cross-linguistically part of its host sentence, situated at the right periphery. Respectively, AT and other kinds of repair constructions are cross-linguistically 'orphans', i.e., syntactically independent units generated after a sentence is completed. Testing of this assumption for more languages with different syntactic character would be a challenging task for further research.

References


