

# Cambridge, I've been there - on the extrasententiality of left dislocations

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# Topicalisation vs. Left Dislocation (Ross 1967 et seq.)

(1) a. *That promise of lifelong service* I renew \_\_\_  
to all today.

(King Charles III, 9 September 2022)

b. I wanted to utter a word, but *that word*, I  
cannot remember \_\_\_.

(Mandelstam, Russian poet; translation cited in  
Aitchison 2012: 13)

**Topicalisation**

# Topicalisation vs. Left Dislocation (Ross 1967 et seq.)

(2) a. *Star Wars*, yeah, that was my first big mistake.

(attributed to Al Pacino)

b. *Girls*, they wanna have fun.

(‘Girls just wanna have fun’,

Cyndi Lauper, 1983)

**Hanging Topic Left Dislocation (HTLD)**



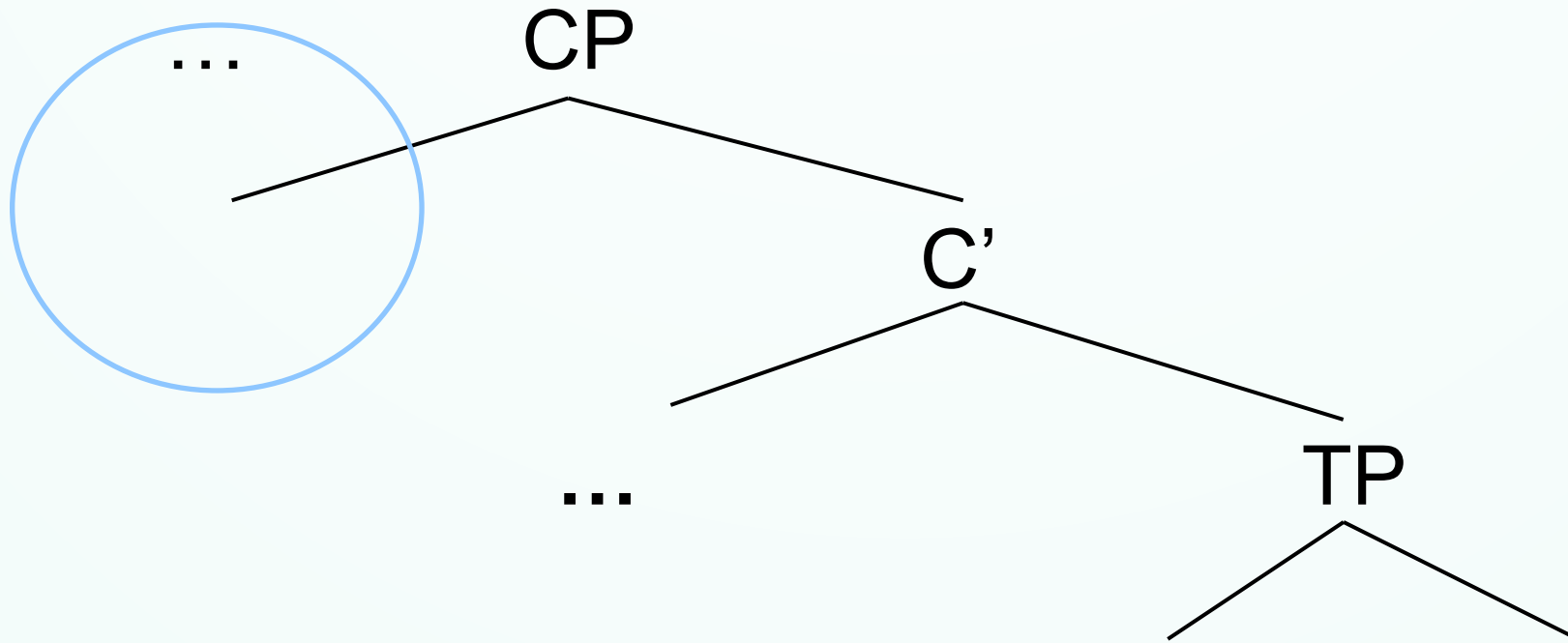
# Romance: Asturian

(3) *A la mio hermana* lleváronla a la boda.  
acc cl my sister took-cl to the wedding  
(CILD)

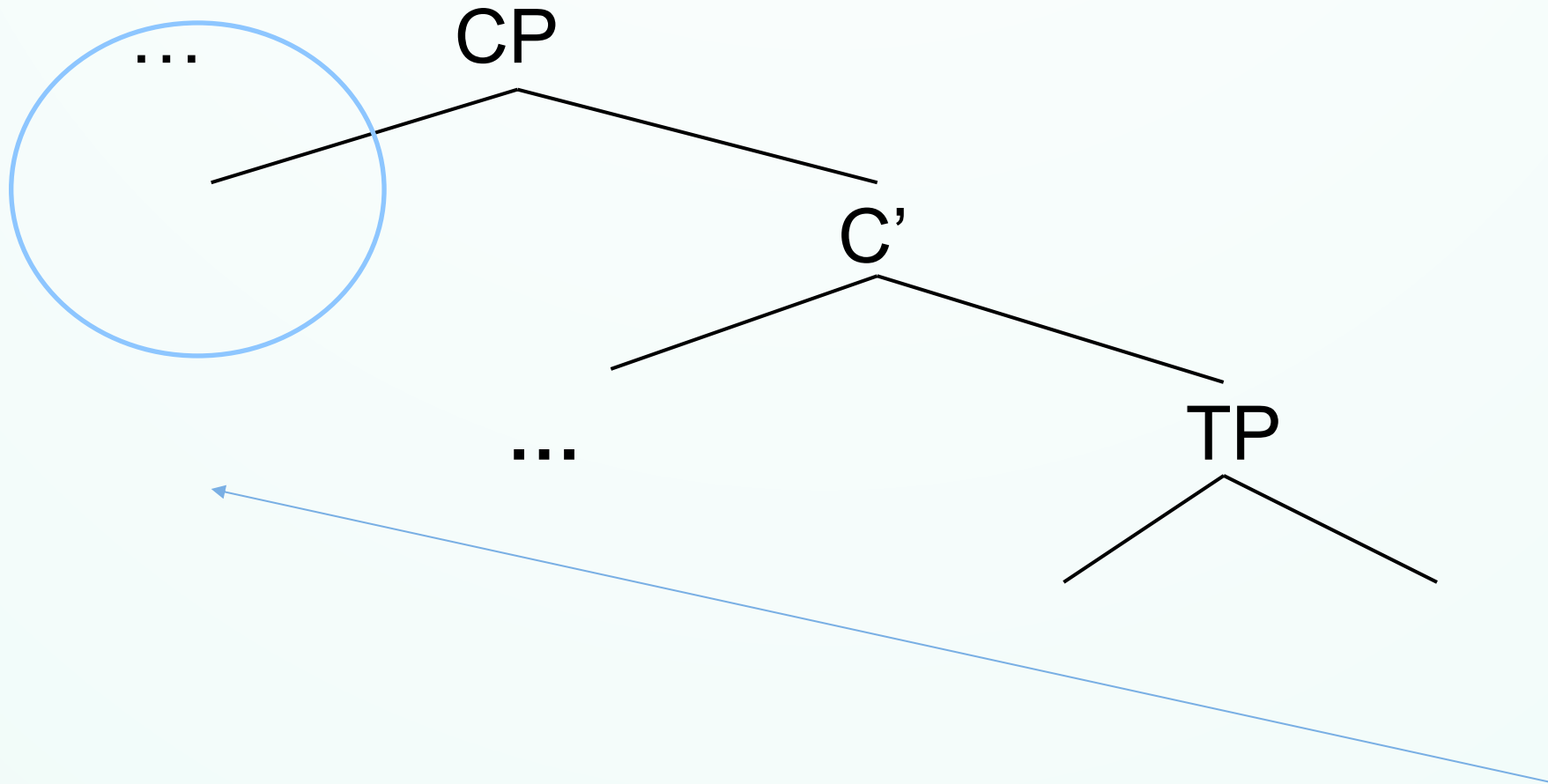
(4) *La mio hermana*, nun la llevaron a la  
the my sister not cl took acc the  
boda (a la probe).  
wedding acc the poor-thing  
(HTLD)



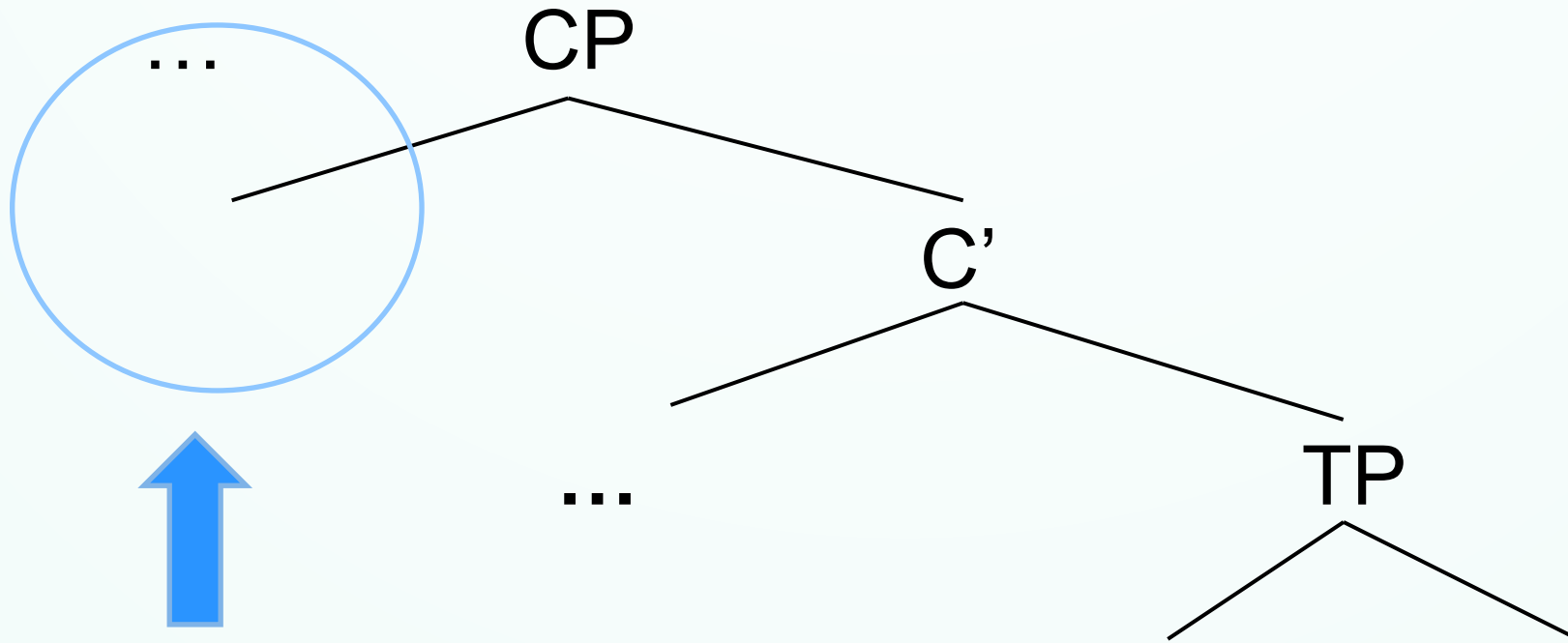
# Hanging Topics: theoretical treatment in the Chomskyan tradition



# Hanging Topics: movement?



# Hanging Topics: direct merge in the left periphery?



Emonds 2004; Cinque 2008; Krapova & Cinque 2008;  
Haegeman & Greco 2016; Radford 2018, *i.a.*





## Proposal: neither nor<sup>46</sup>

- HTLDs are **extra-sentential** elements located outside their host sentence.
- Therefore, they are neither generated in situ nor moved into the left periphery/left edge/CP of the host sentence: the HT is in a previous sentence, adjacent to the host sentence.

# Proposal: extra-sentential element

Cinque 1983/1997; Ziv 1994; Acuña-Fariña 1995; Dik 1997; Valmala 2007; López 2009; Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010 (for English); Ott 2015; Fernández-Sánchez & Ott 2020; Keizer 2020, amongst others

# Proposal: parataxis – two juxtaposed sentences

[CP<sub>1</sub>... HT]

[CP<sub>2</sub> host sentence]

# Proposal: parataxis – two juxtaposed sentences

[<sub>CP1</sub>... *la mio hermana*]

[<sub>CP2</sub> *nun la llevaron a la boda (a la probe)*]

# Proposal: parataxis – two juxtaposed sentences

[<sub>CP1</sub>... *la mio hermana*]

[<sub>CP2</sub> *nun la llevaron a la boda (a la probe)*]

# Proposal:

## parataxis – two juxtaposed sentences

HTs tell us about the general **topic/theme** of the sentence (though see Tizón Couto 2008b, a.o., for a refinement; López 2009: 19: “...shift-topic or it can be anaphoric, contrastive or not”)

I propose that HTs are fragments that are part of an elliptical copular sentence (**CP1**) + a syntactically complete sentence (**CP2**):

[**CP1** ~~el tema es~~ *la mio hermana*]

[**CP2** *nun la llevaron a la boda (a a la probe)*]

# Proposal:

## parataxis – two juxtaposed sentences

That CP2 is syntactically complete is highlighted by the following contrast (from Villa-García 2019 and Villa-García & Ott 2023):

- (5) a. They told me that Kyle, that they don't like him.  
b. \*They told me that Kyle, that they don't like \_\_\_\_\_.

(cf. [<sub>CP1</sub> ~~the topic/theme is girls~~]

[<sub>CP2</sub> *they wanna have fun*])

# Proposal: parataxis – two juxtaposed sentences

CP1 + CP2 are not transformationally related; they are independently generated root clauses (linked via parataxis)

[<sub>CP1</sub> ~~el tema es~~ la mio hermana]

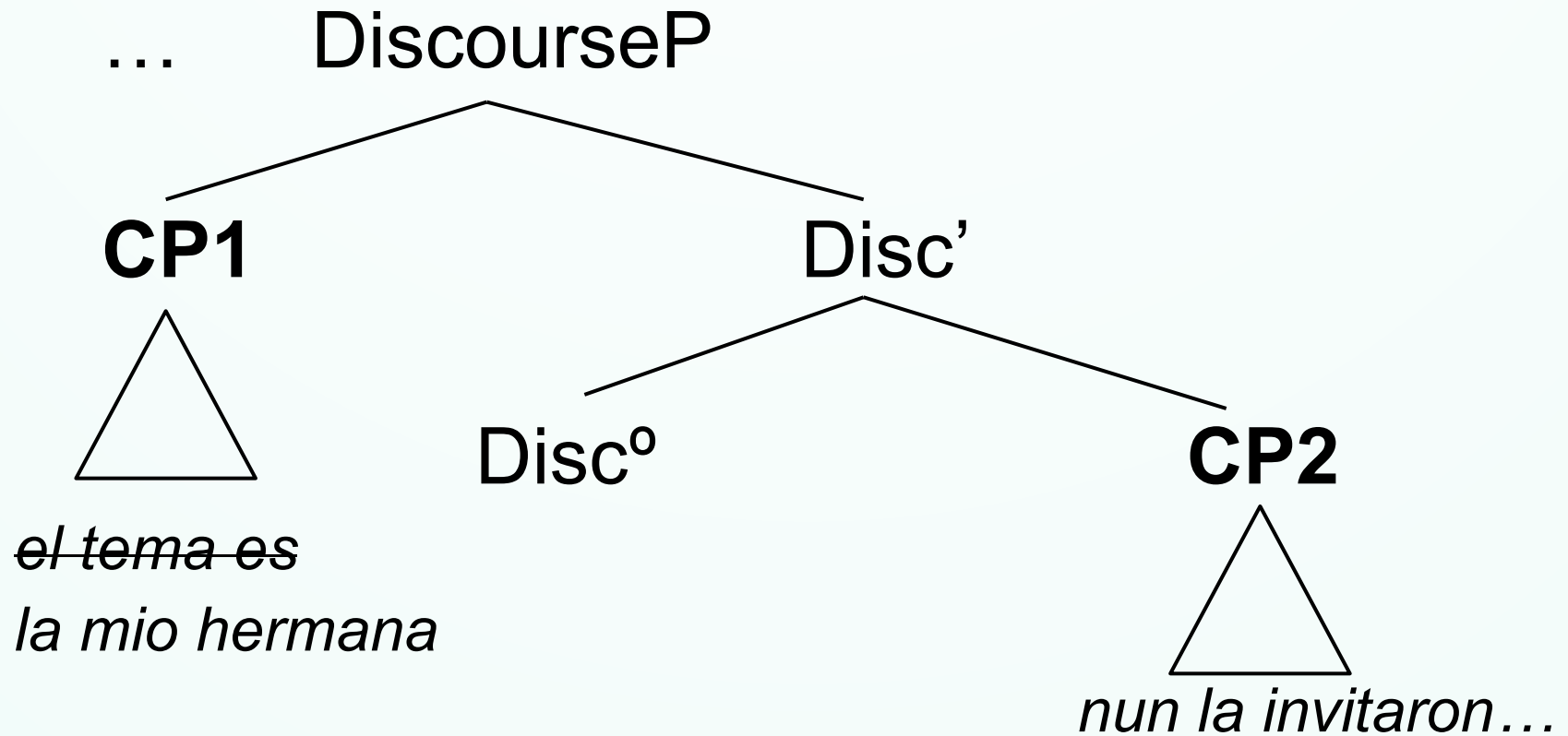
[<sub>CP2</sub> *nun la invitaron a la boda*]



# Proposal: parataxis

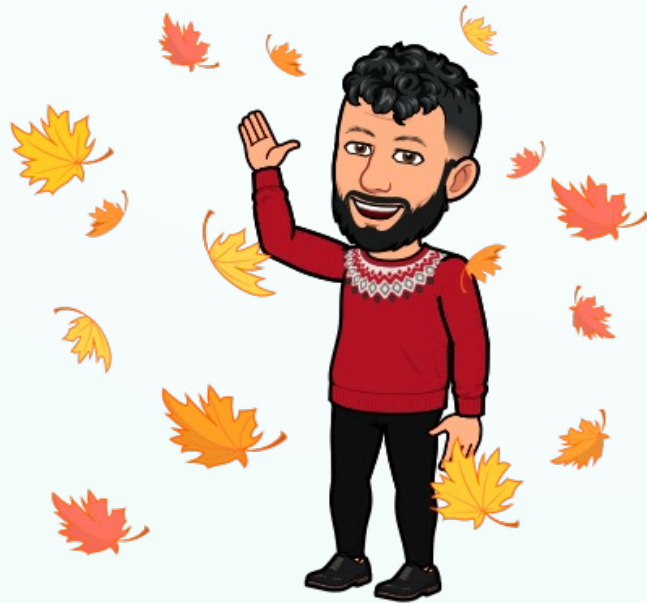
- Syntactically disconnected CP1 and CP2
  - Relation between the two sentences?
    - Just parataxis? Juxtaposed?
- ❖ Suggestion by an anonymous reviewer:

# Potential connection between the two sentences



# Proposal: how about ellipsis?

This ellipsis operation would be akin to **limited ellipsis** in the spirit of Merchant 2004 and Ott 2016. NB: contextual ellipsis, not requiring an antecedent/postcedent for parallelism.



*¡Yo!*

me

~~este soy yo~~

this is me

~~soy yo~~

*is me*

# Proposal:

## parataxis – two juxtaposed sentences

- Indirect evidence:

(6) A: ¿Qué pasa?  
what's wrong

B: Na, **el tema/el problema/la cosa** **ye** la  
nothing, the topic/issue/thing is the  
mio hermana; nun la invitaron...  
my sister not cl invited



(A subset of the) **empirical arguments**  
militating in favour of a paratactic analysis  
of hanging topics, using evidence mostly  
from Asturian

## Arg 1: any function in the host sentence (+ epithetic correlate)<sup>46</sup>

- (7) a. *Pedro, el mui tontu nun sabe facer la o...*
- b. *Rapiegas... nun trago esos bichos.*  
(spontaneous speech; Grao, 2022)
- c. *Quesos, probé tolos que m'apetecieron.*  
(Alonso Megido 1993: 98)
- d. *Yo, la verdad ye que nunca me dieron nada.*
- e. *Mon, nun fala naide d'esi manguán.*  
(Fernández-Rubiera 2009: 33)
- f. *Chueca, ¡vaya chigres más chulos tienen n'esi barriu!*
- g. *1992, esi año marchara yo de turné a Sevilla y a Barcelona.*

## Arg 2.1: Binding possibilities – Condition B

(8)  $Xurde_k$  nun cuenta con  $él_{*k/j}$ .  
Xurde not s/he-counts with him

(9)  $Xurde_k$ , nun cuento con  $él_k$ .  
Xurde not I-count with him

(10) Atopamos a  $Xurde_k$ . Nun contamos con  $él_k$ .  
we-bumped acc Xurde not count with him

independent  
sentences



- Coreference (e.g.,  $Xurde_k$  –  $con\ él_k$ ) is ensured by textual/discourse coherence (= independent sentences)



## Arg 2.2: Binding possibilities – Condition C

(11)  $Xurde_k$  nun cuenta con esi folganzán $_{*k/j}$ .  
Xurde not s/he-counts with that lazy bastard

(12)  $Xurde_k$ , nun cuento con esi folganzán.

(13) Atopamos a  $Xurde_k$ .  
Nun contamos con esi folganzán $_k$ .

independent  
sentences

## Arg 2.3: Binding possibilities – Condition A

- (14) a. Xurde nun cuenta consigo mesmu / con él  
Xurde not counts with himself with he  
mesmu.  
himself
- b. Consigo mesmu / con él mesmu Xurde nun  
cuenta.
- (15) \**Él mesmu*<sub>k</sub>, Xurde<sub>k</sub> mándase<sub>k</sub> coses pol ordenador.  
himself Xurde sends-cl things with computer

## Arg 3: Agreement mismatches

- (16) a. Claro, *les colches* ye distintu.  
clear the dubets is different
- b. Yo ayer díbamos quedar pol  
I yesterday we-were-going meet for+the  
día de la Hispanidá, pero al final na...  
Columbus Day, but at+the end nothing

## Arg 4: HTs with different illocutionary force from that of their hosts

- (17) a. *¿Les míos lentes? Nun sé ónde tan.*  
the my glasses not know where are
- b. *¿Esa? Pásan-ylo too a la gũa esa.*  
that pass-cl-cl all acc the kid that

[**o1/sc1** [+Interrogativa] ~~*¿el tema ye esa?*~~]  
[**o2/sc2** [-Interrogativa] *pásan-ylo too a la gũa esa*]

- See Tizón-Couto 2008a,b for English data.

## Arg 5: orphaned HTs or 'unlinked' topics

- (18) a. *Boris Johnson*, por Dios, ¡nun me fales de política!  
BJ for God not cl talk of politics
- b. *The Crown*, la mio prima échame llágrimes tol  
The Crown the my cousing throws tears all+the  
tiempu con Diana.  
time with Lady Di.

[<sub>CP1</sub> ~~el tema ye~~ Boris Johnson] ...

[<sub>CP2</sub> *nun me fales de política*]



## Arg 6: hyperdetached HTs

(Acuña-Fariña 1995: 10)

(19) *La tu collacia Xuana<sub>k</sub>*, el otro día llegó mi pa a Londres, a Stansted. Pegose una ducha, que taba agotao, y tiró pa Camdem. Bueno, ¿pues pues creer que fue pa onde el mercáu y atopose un grabáu fecho por ella<sub>k</sub>?

‘*Your friend Xuana<sub>k</sub>*, the other day my dad got to Stansted Airport. He has a shower, as we was exhausted, and went to Candem Town. Well, can you believe that he went to the market and found an engraving done by her<sub>k</sub>?’

## Arg 7: enclisis

- (20) a. *Les madreñas, paezme a mí que esa*  
the shoes seems-**cl** dat me that...  
*mierda va mancame.*  
shit is-going hurt-cl
- b. \**Les madreñas, me paez a mí que esa*  
**cl-seems**  
*mierda va mancame.*



## Arg 7: enclisis

In Asturian finite contexts, the clitic must be an enclitic in its intonational phrase; a HT, which is outside the host sentence, cannot prosodically support the clitic (as in Bulgarian):

[ $o_1/sc_1$  ~~el tema son~~ *les madreñes*]



[ $o_2/sc_2$  *paezme*]

- CLLD, preverbal subjects that are not focussed, and non-focal adverbs: enclisis –an account along these lines?

## Additional arguments (1 of 3)

- Case: the case of predicates, nom in Asturian, Spanish, etc. (~~*el tema soy yo*~~/*\*mí*) vs. acc in English, French, etc. (~~*the topic/theme is me*~~/*\*I*).
- HTs are insensitive to islands/barriers (i.e., they are outside of the structure in the first place).
- HTs themselves are islands (i.e., extraction across clauses occurs in hypotaxis, *not* across sentences under parataxis).
- HTs cannot occur as right-dislocated topics (topic presentation occurs first): *\*Tocome la llotería, yo* (lit. touched-me the lottery, I)
- Repetition of the pronoun in Brazilian Portuguese: *A gente, a gente fala...* (lit. the people<sub>sg</sub> 'we', the people<sub>sg</sub> speaks).

## Additional arguments (2 of 3)

- Seemingly doubled subjects in Caribbean (e.g., Dominican) Spanish, where preverbal overt subjects abound: *María<sub>k</sub>, ella<sub>k</sub> cocina muy bien.*
- V3 orders in German (verb in third position) with HTs: V2 in CP2 but superficially V3: [<sub>CP1</sub> HT] [<sub>CP2</sub> XP V ...]
- Plural agreement with *la gente* in Spanish (expected if two separate sentences): *la gente de mi clase, buf, vaya mierda, lo mal que me lo hicieron pasar los muy cabritos* ‘the people<sub>sg-k</sub> ... the bastards<sub>k</sub>’.
- Compatibility with fragments, rather than sentences (hence without a periphery capable of hosting CP material): *Esi, tando too según ta, ¡vaya porvenir!* (lit. That one, all being the way it is, what a future!)

## Additional arguments (3 of 3)

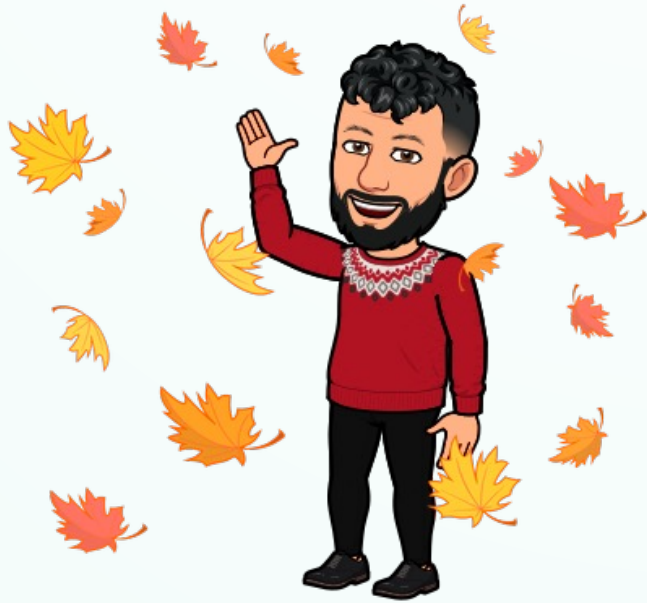
- HTs before *que* in Spanish (and Italian): A: *¿Qué te pasa?* – B: *Mi madre, que depende todo el mundo de ella* – B': ?\**De mi madre, que depende todo el mundo* (Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010; Villa-García 2015): HT + Comp vs. \*CLLD + Comp.
- Mandatory double *que* with embedded HTs in Spanish (Extepare & Grohmann 2003, *i.a.*): restart/reformulation (*Dicen que Juan, \*(que) con el pobre no cuenta nadie* - Villa-García 2015; Villa-García & Ott 2023).
- Comma intonation (,)/pause potential (...) à la Emonds 2004 alongside different intonational patterns (*Mary? Don't call her!*)
- Intercalated interjections in non-null-subject languages like English (i.e., CP2 must be syntactically complete): *The Queen Consort, well/oops, she/\*∅ fell down.*

## Conclusions

- HTs appear to the left of their host sentences.
- Since Rizzi (1997 et seq.), HTs have by and large been analysed as intrasentential constituents in the left periphery (cf. cartography). Analyses assume either base-generation (direct merge) or movement.
- However, there are a host of empirical arguments from a number of languages arguing for an account of HTs as fragments in a different sentence juxtaposed to the host one.
  - It follows, then, that HTs precede left-peripheral constituents such as topicalizations, wh-phrases, etc.
- The HT and the host sentence display the behaviour of independent root clauses, linked paratactically:

[<sub>CP</sub><sub>1</sub>... HT]

[<sub>CP</sub><sub>2</sub> host sentence]



**Thank you!**  
**¡Gracias!**  
**¡Gracias!**

# Selected references

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