

Left-dislocation (LFD) is a common structure cross-linguistically, though it is an 'understudied area in Old English' (Taylor 2014: 416). In the literature it falls into two major types: contrastive left-dislocation (CLD) and hanging topic left-dislocation (HTLD) (cf. Boeckx and Grohmann 2005, Grohmann 2003, Sturgeon 2008, Taylor 2014, among others). Traditionally, it is argued that each type has the following defining properties:¹

- A. The resumptive must be a weak demonstrative pronoun in CLD; in HTLD the resumptive is typically a personal pronoun.
- B. The dislocated phrase must have the same case as the resumptive in CLD; in HTLD case matching is not obligatory.
- C. The resumptive demonstrative must occur in a high position the clause in CLD; in HTLD the resumptive personal pronoun tends to appear lower in the clause.

Given the above, OE CLD is illustrated in (1), whereas (2) is an example of OE HTLD:

- (1) *ac þone deað þe he scencte þam frumsceapenum mannum, þone he dranc ærrest*
 but-the-ACC death-ACC that he proffered the first-created men that-ACC he drank first
him sylfum to bealowe
 him self to harm
 'but the death which he proffered to the first-created men, that [death] he himself drank first to his harm'
 YCOE, (coaelive, ÆLS_[Vincent]:86.7845)

- (2) *Se ðe God ne ongit, ne ongit God hine*
 He-NOM that God not knows not know God him-ACC
 'he who does not know God, God does not know him'
 YCOE, (cocura, CP:1.29.2.112)

The problem with the syntactic criteria presented above is that they are not precise with respect to HTLD because they show strong tendencies rather than absolute requirements (cf. also den Dikken and Surányi 2017, Traugott 2007). Consequently, a HTLD structure can theoretically exhibit some properties typical of CLD structures like case matching or a high position of the resumptive. Taylor (2014: 418), for instance, analyses example (3) as HTLD despite the fact that the two properties fulfil the CLD criteria. Consider:

- (3) *Sathana urne cyning, hine gewræc Drihten of paradises myrhpe*
 Satan our king-ACC him-ACC drove Lord from paradise joy
 'Satan our king, the Lord drove him from the joy of paradise'
 YCOE, (comargaC, LS_14_[MargaretCCCC_303]:16.7.261)

In (3) the resumptive pronoun *hine* lands high and its case agrees with the case of the fronted constituent. Only property A — the resumptive as a personal pronoun — suggests HTLD. This means that a given construction must meet *all* the criteria to be classified as CLD or some conditions like criterion A are more important than others.

Taken these problems into account, the aim of this paper is two-fold. First, it aims at giving a corpus account of the two LFD subtypes. Second, it tries to sharpen the distinction between CLD and HTLD in OE by determining which conditions are crucial in delineating the distinction between them.

¹ Other properties like reference to prosody or LD stacking will not be considered here, as it is hard to verify them empirically in Old English (cf. Grohmann's works).

References

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