Dislocation in Nakh-Daghestanian languages

Diana Forker  
(University of Bamberg)  
forker@uni-bamberg.de

Oleg Belyaev  
(Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow)  
belyaev@iling-ran.ru

Zaira Khalilova  
(Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig)  
khalilova@eva.mpg.de

1. Word order in Nakh-Daghestanian languages: dislocation vs. scrambling

Nakh-Daghestanian languages are mostly spoken in the North Caucasus, in the Republics of Daghestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia (all part of Russia). Some Nakh-Daghestanian languages are also spoken in Transcaucasia: in Azerbaijan and Georgia. The typical characteristics of Nakh-Daghestanian languages are ergative alignment, an abundance of nominal cases (especially locative ones) and rich verbal morphology.

The unmarked word order in Nakh-Daghestanian languages is SOV:

(1) AVAR
  wasː-asː t’ex cː’al-ana
  boy-ERG book read-AOR
  ‘The boy read the book’ (Testelec 1998: 259)

However, in general, any other ordering of the constituents is possible. Although in some languages (e.g. Lezgian) non-verb-final order is quite rare, for the most part these alternative orders, including verb-initial ones, often do not display any kind of special prosodic markedness:

(2) QUNQI DARGWA (VSO)
  ka-d-čː-ib-le, atrezat d-arq’-ib-le gu-r-he-b-ertː-ib-le
  DOWN-NPL-cut.PFV-PRET-CVB cut NPL-do.PFV-PRET-CVB SUB-EL-UP-N-tear-PRET-CVB
  qːaʔaq-a-d bandit-a-d tilipunni svʔaz, tilipun
  telephone-ERG bandit-PL-ERG telephone connection telephone
  {Context: Bandits have attacked Qunqi. The telephone in Qunqi stopped working.} ‘The bandits have cut, torn out the telephone connection, the telephone’

(3) TSAKHUR (OVS)
  dars hiwo-jn nuriː maʔallim-eː
  lesson give.PFV-ATTR Nuri teacher-ERG
  ‘The teacher Nuri gave the lesson’ (Testelec 1999: 294)

In general, there is no convincing evidence for any asymmetry between the arguments in terms of constituent structure (i.e. standard constituency tests do not demonstrate the existence of a VP, cf. e.g. the data of Tsakhur in (Kazenin, Testelec 1999: 325-328)), and most Nakh-Daghestanian languages are usually considered to be non-configurational.

In light of these facts, and in the absence of tests that clearly indicate the clause boundary, in most sentences it is impossible to distinguish left/right dislocation (in the understanding of (Lambrecht 2001), i.e. the placement of an NP/adverb outside of the clause) from simple word order

1 Dargi examples without special references are from texts analyzed by Belyaev. All Hinuq examples are from texts analyzed by Forker.
permutation. There are only three cases when it is clear that we deal with a dislocation construction:

- When the dislocated NP is doubled by a pronoun or a full NP:

  (4) **HINUQ**
  [While the seven borthers went to the forest, a girl entered their house.]
  hoboži b-aq’e-n hagbe [...] [oƛno=n essu]
  now HPL-come-UWPST 3PL seven=ADD brother
  ‘Then they came, the seven brothers.’ (otl’no_essu.010)

  This situation is by far the most frequent, and most discussion will be centered around examples of this type.

- When the dislocated NP is separated from its *in situ* position by another clause where it is not an argument:

  (5) **HINUQ**
  [A man was told to kill a mouse in order to become rich.]
  hibayru goɬa, haɬoy b-uher-no haw, xemu=n caƛi-n,
  so be.PTCP 3SG.M.ERG III-kill-UWPST 3SG.N stone=ADD throw-CVB
  [aq’we]
  mouse(III)
  ‘Being like this, he killed it, throwing a stone, the mouse.’ Nasrudin_Maga.023

- When the dislocated NP corresponds to no argument or adjunct of the clause (= is unlinked):

  (6) **QUNQI DARGWA**
  [lal gali], it.-a-lla paltar če-r-ha-d-t-ur zamana,
  DemMed boy DEMDIST:PL-OBL-GEN clothes SUPER-EL-UP-NPL-leave.PFV-PRET time
  q:uka-ce rirs.-be b-uj-ib-le=q’ale il-ti.
  beautiful-ATTR girl-PL HPL-be.IPFW-PRET-CVB=PTCL DemMed-PL
  ‘This boy, when they removed their clothes, they became beautiful girls.’ (from a spoken text analyzed by D. Ganenkov, p.c.)

In addition, it is possible to identify dislocation when there is a clear intonation break preceding or following it, but this criterion can be problematic, as its application depends in large part on the speaker and on the linguist’s interpretation of a particular sentence (e.g. some speakers make large pauses in all sentences, so it would be awkward to treat everything as dislocation).

While examples of left- and right-dislocation of the types exemplified above are found in many Nakh-Daghestanian languages, the frequency of these constructions and their general acceptability vary significantly. We have therefore decided to focus on dislocation in those languages with which the authors have close familiarity: Hinuq (Forker) and the Dargi language group² (Belyaev).

2. **Dislocation in Hinuq**

   Both left and right dislocation of the kind specified above are possible in Hinuq, although their functions and properties are somewhat different.

2.1. **Left dislocation (LD)**

   - LD in Hinuq is used for topical constituents, often in the context of an enumeration:

² Dargwa is actually a group of closely related languages rather than a single language with many dialects, as traditionally believed (Koryakov, Sumbatova 2007). We avoid using the data of literary Dargwa, as it is an artificial language that is not widely used outside of literature and the media. In addition, dislocation constructions are a feature that is characteristic of spoken language and is rarely (if ever) encountered in written Dargi texts. Therefore, the Dargi data we cite is taken from various (closely related) idioms spoken in the southern part of the Dargi area (Qunqi, Xuduc, Ashti, Shiri).
7) {The dying father gives each of his three sons’ advices what they should do after his death}
q’wena eƛa’ ywedƛ’o, [O-ołodemuni uži], haylov=no r-uw-a
two.OBL ORD day.SPR i-middle boy(I) he.ERG=and v-do-INF
gol axranli q’arƛ’os q’arƛ’or
be guarding(v) from.morning till.morning
‘On the second day the middle son, he will also guard (the grave) from morning till morning’
miskin_rek’we.012

- There is often no clear accent on the LD element, and no pause between it and the clause.
- The pronoun or zero can have various functions in its clause: S (8), A (7, 10, 11), P (13),
  oblique, adjunct (12), complement clause (9).

8) [gwan], se hag? rheumatism what DEMDIST
‘Gwan, what is that?’ Nabi.talk.007

9) [A man from Hinuq went abroad and accidentally he came to a village where Hinuq speakers
  lived, and he worked as imam there for some years.]
išƛa pačaliq-mo-ɬ, išƛa provinciya golšo], hâg eluz
which state-OBL-CONT which province.IN being that 1PL.DAT
r-eq’i-yo gom
v-know-PRS be.NEG
‘In which state (he/that) was, in which province (he/that) was, that we don’t know’ Ali.331

- The case marking of the dislocated element is most often (though not always) absolutive,
  regardless of the case marking of the in situ pronoun (which is ergative in (10)).

10) {The mullah is always looking and whistling at a young woman. Finally she talks about this
to her husband.}
pulanaw hibago dibir] ywédes de le-y-ɬ’o y-ɬ̌’-ali,
certain that mullah daily 1SG water-OBL-SPR II-go-SIM
hibayɬi maždik-ho igo de bito y-ɬ̌’-i-yá, neten diqo
there mosque-ILOC near 1SG there II-go-PTCP.LOC always 1SG.AT
haylov šaɬu y-ikk-o
he.ERG whistle(IV) IV-beat-PRS
‘A certain mullah, daily when I go for water, when I pass there near the mosque, he always
whistles at me’ Mulla.009

However, in those (rare) cases where an analysis in terms of dislocation is plausible in spite of
the absence of a resumptive pronoun, the case marking of the LD NP corresponds to its role in
the clause.

11) [There lived a husband and his wife. The husband had a mother.]
halu aqila-ɬ. [...] [haylu baru-ɬ.], dečė halt’i
this.OBL woman.OBL-ERG that.OBL wife-ERG how.much work(III)
b-uː-yan, haw razi y-iq-o zoq’wen gom
III-do-CONC 3SG.F happy II-happen-ICVB be-UWPSF be.NEG
‘This woman, the wife, how much ever (she) was working, she (i.e. the husband’s mother)
was not content’ XoddonBarun.003

- In most of the examples, LD is linked to the clause (i.e. there is a pronoun or a zero
coreferential with the LD NP). In only one example one of the dislocated NPs may be
analyzed as being unlinked:

12) [The speaker is talking about the hard life in former times.]
[kapek-moza-ɬ’o] [hay bet’erbaqi], somodi ɬebu
From kopeks, such a life, (we) spent several years like that. Ayshat.bio.019

- The LD element may be a coordinated NP such that only one of the conjuncts has an antecedent in the clause:

(13) [haw c’uduk’a gulu=no hago uži=n] xan-i Ø-ašir-no hago?
that red horse=ADD that boy=ADD king-ERG I-catch-UWPST 3SG.M
‘That red horse and that boy, did the king catch him?’ miskin_rek’we.202

2.2. Right dislocation

- Unlike LD, the intonational break is often quite prominent and clear, the construction is thus identifiable even without pronominal resumption.
- All corpus examples are NPs.
- The pronoun or zero can have various functions in its clause: S (4, 18), A (14, 15), P (16, 17), benefactive (14), oblique, adjunct (15).
- The case marking of the RD NP is always appropriate to the role of the pronoun or zero in the clause.
- There can be more than one RD:

(14) [The poor girl did everything as she was supposed to do.]
 hoboži haytel _ _ b-uː-n b-ēži izdaniya [hayɬuz] [Allahli]
 now there III-do-UWPST III-big building 3SG.DAT Allah.ERG
‘Now there he built a big house, for her, Allah.’ Besdal.026

(15) [A dragon appeared in the house where the bad girl lived.]
 hoboži sasaqo-ƛ’o haw ked=no y-ac’-no hayɬuy,
 now in.the.morning-SPR DEMDIST girl(II)=ADD II-eat-UWPST 3SG.N.ERG
 [aždaħ-i]. hoboy haw ked-lun b-iči-n hayteɬ, [xižina-ma]
dragon-ERG then that girl-AS III-become-UWPST there hut-IN
‘In the morning it ate the girl, the dragon. Then it turned into that girl there, in the hut.’ besdal.050

- RD can be separated from the clause by more than one clause boundary (5) [contrary to (Lambrecht 2001)].
- Like LD, RD may be a coordinated NP such that only one of the conjuncts is coreferential with an argument/adjunct of the clause:

(16) [The young man tries to find the dying girl.]
ywadi-y Ø-iţi-š gol hago [gulu=n hago=n]
crow-ERG I-take-RES be 3SG.M horse=ADD 3SG.M=ADD
‘The crow has taken him, the horse and him.’ otl'no_essu.044

- In RD constructions, the resumptive element is often a full NP. This is typically encountered in afterthoughts extending the NP encountered in the clause:

(17) di mus b-et’er-o, [hes mus=no dižo λ’oq’wa-s]
1SG.GEN1 hair(III) III-tear-IMP one hair=ADD 1SG.GEN2 forehead.IN-ABL1
‘Take my hair, one hair from my forehead!’ miskin_rek’we.178

- The same NP can be both LD and RD at the same time:
[The mullah was caught naked in a basket, and then flew from that basket]

Hado Ø-Et’en.k’oƛe-n [hado dibir] hado zoq’we-n [...] adaru
3SG.M i-jump-UWPST that mullah 3SG.M be-UWPST naked

‘He jumped, this mullah, he was naked.’ Mulla.049

3. Dislocation in Dargi languages

Dargi languages also exhibit both left and right dislocation, although RD is encountered much more often than LD. Unlike Hinuq, there is no clear intonation break in neither LD nor RD, therefore, we will only analyze examples where there is resumption with a pronoun or a full NP.

3.1. Left dislocation

• Clear examples of LD in Dargi texts that have been analyzed are relatively infrequent. The only positions where LD has been found are A (21), S (20), adjunct (19), and possessor (22), but this does not rule out the possibility of LD in other positions.

• An interesting phenomenon may occur when adjuncts are left-dislocated. Essive NPs and adverbs in Dargi languages must agree with the absolutive NP, yet, when dislocated, they may agree with the default (neuter) class, even when the absolutive NP belongs to a different class:

(19) XUDUC DARGWA
il-tːi... [mašil-c:i-b] at:a-la hamma-la miren b-ik’-u-l xunul
DEMMED-ADV Mashil-IN-N[ESS] father-GEN Hamma-GEN Miren HPL-say-PRS-CVB wife
kelg-un-ni ca-r hel-tːu-r
DOWN:remain.PFV-PRET-CVB COP-F DEMMED-LOC-F

‘So... in Mashil, there was a woman called Miren, daughter of Hamma’ (from a spoken text analyzed by N. Serdobolskaya, p.c.)

• Resumption can be both by a demonstrative pronoun (of any deictic type) and by a full NP (21), but apparently not by a reflexive/anaphoric pronoun (no examples are found in the texts).

(20) SHIRI DARGWA
A: di-la at:a li-w ʕaˁ-w-irγʷ-i=w hel zamana?
1SG-GEN father EXSTPROX-M NEG-M-be.IPFV-PAST.3=Q DEMMED time

‘Wasn’t my father there at that time?’

B: [atːa ʕaˁ-la], hu’sen-acːi icː-u-l, sa-kejg-ib-li
father 2SG-GEN Hussein-uncle3 be_ill.IPFV-PRS-CVB ANTE[LAT]-DOWN:M:sit.IPFV-PRET-CVB
irγʷ-i atːa
[M]be.IPFV-PAST.3 father

‘Your father, Hussein-acci was ill, and father was looking after him’

(Shiri_07.08.2012_OB_001_02)

• LD can be used for the topicalization of an NP (), but often the reason for its use appears to be the heaviness of the NP:

(21) SHIRI DARGWA
[het-ti sirajudd:in-na xunul, ʕuza-la mahamma-la pat’imat-li]
DEMDIST-PL Sirajuddin-GEN wife Haji-GEN Muhammad-GEN Patimat-ERG
it-ta-a-d-dil wa’q’-b-irγ~arg-i [it-ti]
DEMDIST-PL-OBL-OBL2-ERG ST-HPL-LV-NEG-PAST.3 DEMDIST-PL

‘These, the wife of Sirajuddin, Patimat, (the wife) of Magomed Gadzhiiev, they didn’t look’

(Shiri_07.08.2012_OB_001_02)

Due to the fact that itti at the right edge of the sentence bears absolutive case marking, it can

3 In Dargi languages, ac:i ‘uncle’ and azaj ‘aunt’ are used as honorifics attached to names of elderly persons.
be considered to be a right-dislocated pronoun, so this sentence exhibits LD and RD at the same time.

(22) **Ashti Dargwa**

\[\text{[ye kubači-la, χe bid-allaj, kubači, ʔanč:iβač′i, s:an... si,]}

DEM:SUB Kubachi-GEN DEM:SUB THITHER-area Kubachi Anchibachi (Sanzhi) what:Q

š.i:la... suleči-la, urasi-la, c:elебка], [χe kat:allaj-žu-d le<il
Shiri-GEN Sulevkent-GEN Uragi-GEN Dzilebki DEM:SUB DOWN-area-ATTR.PL-NPL all(NPL)
š.i-m-alla], ŋi-t-a-la ʔanžibej b-uk′u arc′mac:i-w
settlement-PL-OBL-GEN DEM:SUB-PL-OBL-GEN Anchibey HPL-say.IPFF-PTCP Kala_Koreysh-[ESS]
\čan sa-w
khan COP-M

‘Of that Kubachi, down there, (of) Kubachi, (of) Anchibachi, (of) Sanzhi, (of) Shiri, (of) Sulevkent, of Uragi, (of) Dzilebki, of all the settlements down there, their (ruler) called Anchibey is (was) khan at Kala-Koreysh’ (from a story about the founding of Ashti)

This example also demonstrates that case marking need not be consistently preserved in LD constructions (i.e. some of the dislocated NPs have absolutive marking).

- Unlinked LD, although rare, is also encountered (see (6) above).

3.2. **Right dislocation**

- RD in Dargi languages is very frequent and can occur with both pronominal and full NP resumption. Its use is most often in afterthoughts involving additional specification of the main clause NP/pronoun for its correct identification by the hearer.

(23) **Shiri Dargwa**

\[\text{immec:i-la-zaia-l} χula-zi-b kumek b-irq′aj dam, [jaˁħjaˁ-la aba-dil]}

Immecci-GEN-aunt-ERG big-ATTR-N help N-do.IPFF-PAST.3 1SG.DAT Yahya-GEN mother-ERG

‘Immecci’s (=Ibrahim-acci’s) wife helped me a lot, the mother of Yahya’

(Shiri_07.08.2012_OB_001_02)

- The positions where RD is encountered are S (27), A (23, 26), P (25), oblique, adjunct (24), and possessor (28).

(24) **Xuduc Dargwa**

\[\text{na ag-ur-ri kajž-ib-li ca-w il-tu [q′ari]}

now go.PFV-PRET-CVBJ DOWN:M-sit.PFV-PRET-CVBJ COP-M DEM:MED-LOC[LAT] pasture.in[LAT]

‘Then he went and sat there, at the pasture’ (from a text analyzed by Natalia Serdobolskaya, p.c.)

(25) **Xuduc Dargwa**

\[\text{di-la juldaš-uni hana ca kulči-la ʔabar b-urs-an-da}

1SG-GEN friend-PL now one thief-GEN story N-say.IPFF-POT=1

[malenkij ʔabar]

small story

‘My friends, I will now tell (you) a short story about one thief.’

- Like in Hinuq, and contrary to Lambrecht, more than one clause boundary may stand between the resumptive and the RD:

(26) **Shiri Dargwa**

\[\text{Ø waq kax-ub-li, qil bank′a haq:i-d-dil, hiba=ra}

plate DOWN:fill.PFV-PRET-CVBJ house.in[LAT] jar UP:bring.IPFF-TR-1-COND then=ADD

hatir=ra kam-li d-irx′-i neg, [aba-dil kuš dus-m-al]a
yet=ADD few-ADV NPL-be.PFV-PAST.3 milk mother-ERG hungry year-PL-OBL-GEN

{During the war the speaker exchanged a jar of corn for milk. The milk woman’s daughter}
advised him to bring a plate instead of a jar, so that more would fit. ‘When (she) filled the plate, it turned out less than when I brought a jar home, (her) mother, during the hungry years’ (Shiri_07.08.2012_OB_001_01)

- RD may be represented by a coordinated NP, where only one of the conjuncts is an argument/adjunct of the clause:

(27) **XUDUC DARGWA**

w-ebč’-ib-li  x:at:aj  at:aha  pastux-li  kelg-un-ci  
M-die.PFV-pret-cvb  grandfather  grandmother  shepherd-erg  down:remain.pfv-pret-attr

c-a-r  adm:daq’li  [gul:i=ra  ca-r=ra]  
COP-F  man  as  child=ADD  refl-F=ADD

‘The grandfather died, and the grandmother started herding like a man, she and her children’

(28) **ASHTI DARGWA**

ajjubχan-na  waladenija-l-c:i-b  mišajt-b-uk’-ul  k’i-t:i  
Ayyubkhan-gen  holdings-obl-inter-hpl[ess]  hinder-hpl-lv-prs[3]{hinder}  demsuper-pl

qilgʷ-ni,  har  baj  či-b-d-uq-un  u:či  d-a’ilʔ-un-ni,  
thief-pl  every  day  super[lat]-hpl-thither-attack.ipfv-cvb  horse  npl-steal.ipfv-prs-3

mac:a  d-a’ilʔ-un-ni,  ha’wa’na-ti  d-a’ilʔ-un-ni,  [li-t:-a-lla]  
sheep  npl-steal.ipfv-prs-3  cattle-pl  npl-steal.ipfv-prs-3  demmed-pl-obl-gen

[li-t’:-a-d-ij]  
demmed-pl-obl-obl2-dat

‘In the lands of Ayyubkhan these thieves cause problems, attacking every day (they) steal horses, (they) steal sheep, (they) steal cattle, their (possessions) from them’

This example may be considered to be an example of unlinked RD (and thus contrary to Lambrecht (2001)) since the RD elements are not coindexed with overt pronominals and it is not even clear which positions they occupy in the clause.

4. Concluding remarks

- Even though Nakh-Daghestanian languages are non-configurational and exhibit free word order, dislocation constructions are quite often encountered in the texts and serve different functions than simple fronting or postverbal positioning of an NP.

- Dislocation constructions in at least Hinuq and Dargwa are apparently not fully grammaticalized, and as such there are very few constraints on their use: there can be partial coreference between the pronoun and the dislocated NP; dislocated constituents may be unlinked; no particular demonstrative pronoun is grammaticalized in the function of resumptive; there can be more than one clause boundary between the dislocated NP and its canonical position.

- RD in Nakh-Daghestanian languages contradicts several of the properties specified for such constructions in (Lambrecht 2001): there can be more than one clause boundary between an RD element and the clause it belongs to; the RD element may bear absolutive case in spite of the in situ pronoun bearing different case; unlinked RD may also be possible if such an analysis of (21) is accepted.

- These unusual properties of dislocation constructions signify that dislocated NPs are highly
detached from the clauses they belong to. Dislocation in Nakh-Daghestanian languages should probably be treated as a discourse-level phenomenon not directly related to syntax; syntactic dislocation may be considered the next logical diachronical stage in the evolution of such constructions.

References