

# Left-Dislocations and their Contribution to Information Structure

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## 1. Traditional explanations

Left-dislocations have been referred to by NT grammarians using various terms, among them cleft constructions,<sup>1</sup> hanging nominatives,<sup>2</sup> pendent nominatives,<sup>3</sup> *casus pendens*,<sup>4</sup> or independent nominatives.<sup>5</sup> There have also been various claims made about their function:

- Wallace: either emotion or emphasis<sup>6</sup>
- Young: emphasis<sup>7</sup>
- Porter: highlighting<sup>8</sup> or a topic shifter<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Linguistic Explanation

There is a significant cognitive constraint on the introduction of new entities to the discourse, posited by Wallace Chafe.<sup>10</sup> He claims that there is a cross-linguistic preference to only introduce “one new concept at a time”, which has been confirmed by several other linguists.<sup>11</sup>

### Example 1

#### Presentational clause

*There is a guy from the office. He asked me...*

#### Topic/Comment clause

*I know a guy from the office. He asked me...*

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<sup>1</sup> Richard A. Young, *Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 52.

<sup>4</sup> Friedrich Blass et al., *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 244.

<sup>5</sup> Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1999), 85.

<sup>6</sup> Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 52.

<sup>7</sup> “A cleft construction is a focusing device that highlights information at the beginning of a sentence that is repeated later in the same sentence.” Young, *Intermediate New Testament Greek*, 15.

<sup>8</sup> He states, “this construction quite possibly is used to draw attention to an item in the main clause which would be otherwise overlooked.” Porter, *Idioms*, 85.

<sup>9</sup> It “may also serve as a topic marker or shifter which does not become grammatically entangled in the main construction.” *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Wallace L. Chafe, “Cognitive Constraints on Information Flow,” in *Coherence and Grounding in Discourse* (ed. Russel S. Tomlin. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1987), 21-51. For a more complete overview of the constraints on introducing new participants to the discourse, cf. Runge, *Discourse Functional*, 35-44, 109-112.

<sup>11</sup> Lambrecht’s (*Information Structure*, 184-191) discussion of PSRR, Chafe’s (“Cognitive Constraints,” 31-32) “activate only one new concept at a time,” and Givón’s “one new unit per proposition,” Talmy T. Givón, *Syntax: A Functional-Typological Introduction, Volume 1* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1984) 258-263.

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In both instances, the brand new entity is introduced as the complement of the predicator. The presentational clause uses a “dummy subject” *there* to predicate the existence of the new entity; hence the whole clause presents new information. The subject of the topic/comment clause is by definition at least cognitively accessible, if not discourse active.

Languages tend to be very efficient. As with most constraints, there are usually shortcuts whereby speakers may more efficiently accomplish their objectives. This holds true for the introduction of brand new participants. One such shortcut is to syntactically detach the new entity from the main part of the clause. With the new entity being introduced outside the main clause, it can function as the topic while still honoring Chafe’s “one new concept” constraint. In order to help the reader make the connection between the dislocated entity and its function in the main clause that follows, the detached element is reiterated in the main clause using a pronoun of some kind that refers back to the detached element. Prototypically the pronominal trace is placed in the canonical position in the clause of the dislocated component, i.e. its ‘normal’ position.

This detachment construction is typically referred to by linguists as a *dislocation*, and by grammarians as a *pendens* construction. This paper focuses on *left* dislocations, where the new entity is dislocated to the beginning of the clause, and then resumed in the main clause using a pronominal trace of some kind.

Foley and Van Valin state, “The primary functions of these constructions are to introduce new participants into a discourse or to reintroduce a referent which was previously introduced but which has not been mentioned in the immediately preceding discourse.”<sup>12</sup> One example they cite includes a list of items, one of which is resumed as the topic after the list is introduced. The effect is to promote one of the previously mentioned entities to the primary topic of the discourse.

Lambrecht offers a similar analysis. While noting that presentational constructions are the standard means of promoting a topic from non-active (brand-new, unused, or accessible) to active in the hearer’s mental representation of the discourse,<sup>13</sup> left-dislocation constructions are reserved for topic-announcing or topic-shifting contexts.<sup>14</sup>

### Example 2

#### Left-dislocation

“This guy from the office, he asked...”

#### Rhetorical question

“Remember the guy from the office? He asked...”

Generally speaking, left-dislocations serve to streamline the introduction of an entity to the discourse. English allows left-dislocations, but seems to prefer other devices like rhetorical question to accomplish the same discourse task. Both have the effect of either

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<sup>12</sup> Foley, William A., and Robert D. Van Valin, “Information Packaging in the Clause,” in *Language Typology and Syntactic Description Volume 1: Clause Structure* (ed. Timothy Shopen; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 356.

<sup>13</sup> Lambrecht, *Information Structure*, 176.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.

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announcing or shifting the topic of the clause that follows. They also attract more attention to the topic than it would have received being introduced using one of the more conventional methods. Where the topic would not otherwise have been cognitively accessible, left-dislocations serve a necessary function, activating the entity into the discourse.

There are two significant departures from the expected linguistic norms observed in the usage of left-dislocations in the Greek NT. First, the construction is used for entities that are most likely cognitively accessible to the reader. In other words, it is used to introduce entities that are simple enough to introduce using simple topicalization or what I refer to as a frame of reference. Use of the left dislocation represents overkill, resulting in a rhetorical use of left-dislocations to promote an entity for a specific discourse purpose.

The second departure from the expected norm is related to the first. In roughly three-quarters of the instances of left-dislocation in the GNT, the pronominal trace is placed in a marked position at the beginning of the clause. The reason for this is either to place the new entity in *marked focus* for emphasis' sake, or to create a frame of reference for the clause that follows (i.e. topicalization), according to the perspective of Functional Grammar.<sup>15</sup>

### 3. Unmarked Resumption of the Dislocated Element

This section presents examples of left-dislocations whose pronominal trace occurs in an unmarked position of the clause. These examples illustrate the basic linguistic function of left-dislocations to streamline the introduction of a new entity into the discourse.

#### Example 3 Matthew 18:6

In this first example, “the one who causes one of these little ones...” is activated in the left-dislocation, and a comment is made about this entity in the main clause. The bracketed, superscripted *LD* denotes the beginning and end of the left dislocation (e.g. <sup>[LD</sup> Sample <sup>LD]</sup>).

SENTENCE

<sup>6</sup><sup>[LD</sup> ὅς δ ἄν σκανδαλίση ἓνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων  
whoever but — to sin [causes] one of little ones these

τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ <sup>LD]</sup> συμφέρει αὐτῷ  
— who believe in me it would be better for him

SUB-POINT

ἵνα κρεμασθῇ μύλος ὄνικος περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ  
that be hung the millstone of a donkey around — neck his

SUB-POINT

καὶ καταποντισθῇ ἐν τῷ πελάγει τῆς θαλάσσης  
and he be drowned in the depths of the sea

In the synoptic parallel from Luke 17:1-2, the same propositional content is conveyed using two clauses, without the use of left-dislocation.

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<sup>15</sup> In other words, the pronominal trace either occurs in Dik's Position 1 (i.e. topicalization, contextualizing constituent, or point of departure), or in Position 2 (i.e. emphasis, or marked focus). Cf. discussion at the end of this section.

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SENTENCE	<sup>1</sup> Εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ he said and to — disciples his
SENTENCE	Ἄνένδεκτόν ἐστιν τοῦ <sup>[TP τὰ σκάνδαλα <sup>TP]</sup></sup> μὴ ἔλθεῖν impossible it is for — causes for stumbling not to come
PRINCIPLE	πλὴν οὐαὶ δὶ οὓ ἔρχεται but woe [to him] through whom they come
SENTENCE	<sup>2</sup> λυσιτελεῖ αὐτῷ it would be better for him
SUB-POINT	εἰ <sup>[TP λίθος μυλικὸς <sup>TP]</sup></sup> περὶ τὸν if a stone belonging to a mill is placed around — τράχηλον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔρριπται εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν neck his and he is thrown into the sea
SUB-POINT	ἢ ἵνα σκανδαλίση τῶν μικρῶν τούτων ἓνα than that he causes to sin of little ones these one

The second clause of v. 1 introduces the ones causing others to stumble, stating that it is impossible for them not to come. The statement about it “being better for them” begins in v. 2. There are definitely some differences in the content between Luke and Matthew, most notably Luke’s comment about the impossibility of avoiding their coming. Matthew’s briefer account uses a shortcut to introduce an entity comparable to that in Luke, thereby avoiding the need for multiple clauses. Both versions communicate largely the same propositional content, but get there using different strategies.

### Example 4 Mark 11:23

The left-dislocated entity in the next example is introduced in a rather complex relative clause, and then reiterated in the main clause using a personal pronoun in an unmarked position following the verb. This hypothetical person has not previously been mentioned in the discourse.

COMPLEX	<sup>23</sup> ! ἀμὴν ! <□ λέγω ὑμῖν □> ὅτι <sup>[LD ὃς ἂν εἴπη</sup> truly I say to you that whoever — says τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ to mountain this
SENTENCE	Ἄρθητι καὶ βλήθητι εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν be lifted up and thrown into the sea
SUB-POINT	καὶ <× μὴ διακριθῆ ἔν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ ×> and [does] not doubt in — heart his
SUB-POINT	ἀλλὰ <✓ πιστεύη ὅτι ὃ λαλεῖ γίνεται ✓ <sup>[LD]</sup> > but believes that what he says will happen
SENTENCE	ἔσται αὐτῷ it will be [done] for him

In the synoptic version of this saying from Mt. 21:21, the same propositional content is presented using a fronted conditional clause as a frame of reference for the clause that

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follows. Rather than predicating the existence of a hypothetical entity, the same propositional content is communicated in the second person, with the disciples as the subject.

SENTENCE	<sup>21</sup> ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς answering and — Jesus said to them
SENTENCE	“ ⚡ Ἀμήν ⚡ ⚡ λέγω ὑμῖν ⚡ ⚡ ἐὰν ἔχητε πίστιν truly I say to you if you have faith καὶ μὴ διακριθῆτε ⚡ ⚡ οὐ μόνον τὸ and not doubt not only [what was done to] τῆς συκῆς ποιήσετε ⚡ ⚡ the fig tree you will do
SENTENCE	ἀλλὰ ⚡ ⚡ κἂν ⚡ τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ εἴπητε Ἄρθητι καὶ but even if to mountain this you say be lifted up and βλήθητι εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν ⚡ ⚡ γενήσεται ⚡ ⚡ thrown into the sea it will happen

Again, we see the same propositional content presented in two different ways. The choice to apply the saying to a hypothetical entity necessitates the introduction of that entity. The left-dislocation provides an efficient means of making such an introduction in a single clause. In contrast, the choice to apply the saying to the listeners in the second person alleviates the need of introducing the

Other examples of left-dislocations which place the pronominal trace in an unmarked position following the verb are Matthew 4:16; 10:11; 12:18, 36; 20:23; 21:41, 44; 27:40; Mark 3:17; 4:25a, 25b; 8:38; 9:42; 15:29; Luke 6:31, 47; 8:18a, 18b; 12:10, 48; 20:18; John 1:12; 7:38; 15:2; 17:2; Acts 7:40; 11:29; 15:38; Romans 4:5; 1 Corinthians 7:8; 13; 11:14, 15; 2 Corinthians 7:6; Galatians 6:7; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Timothy 6:17; James 3:13; 2 Peter 3:16; 1 John 2:5, 24, 27; 3:17; Revelation 2:7, 17, 26; 3:12; 6:4; 6:8. In each case, a new entity is introduced into the discourse using a dislocation construction. This construction provides an efficient means of introducing a new or complex entity into the discourse.

The instances where the pronominal trace is in an unmarked position in the clause represent the *minority* of left-dislocations found in the Greek NT. Far more frequently the resumptive pronoun is observed in a marked position at the beginning of the clause.

Simon Dik has claimed that there are two basic marked syntactic positions at the beginning of the clause of a clause across languages. The first position he refers to as P1, which I will refer to as a frame of reference.<sup>16</sup> These elements create an explicit *frame of reference* in which the clause that follows is to be processed. It is not just topical elements that can create a frame of reference. Subordinate clauses and adverbial elements can have the same effect of establishing an explicit frame of reference.

<sup>16</sup> Frames of reference correspond to what has traditionally been referred to as *topicalization* in NT studies, or as a *contextualizing constituent* by Randall Buth, or as a *point of departure* by Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*.

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The second position Dik calls P2, which corresponds to what is technically called “marked focus,” but will be referred to as *emphasis*. By definition, the information in P2 is what was already the most important part of the utterance, or the *focus* of the utterance. Placing this information in a marked position has the effect of attracting more attention to it, placing it in *marked focus*. In other words, this information would have been the most salient part of the utterance regardless of its location. Emphasis, as used here, involves placing what was already the most important part of the utterance in a marked position in order to attract even more attention to it.

To summarize the model used here, placing information either in a frame of reference or emphasizing it has the effect of attracting extra attention to it compared to placing it in an unmarked position. The difference in the effects achieved by frames of reference versus emphasis is based upon the cognitive status of the information at the time of the utterance. Information that is either cognitively presupposed or accessible has the effect of creating a frame of reference for the clause that follows. Information that is newly asserted or *focal* in the utterance, and placed in a marked position at the beginning of the utterance, has the pragmatic effect of *emphasizing* the information. It is beyond the scope of this paper to outline Dik’s system in more detail, and it is not necessary for the analysis that follows. One need only understand the distinction I am making between frames of reference and emphasis.<sup>17</sup>

### 4. Marked Resumption using a frame of reference

This next section describes the placement of the resumptive pronoun in the marked P1 position. The effect of placing the element in this position is to create an explicit frame of reference for the clause that follows. There are two primary reasons for such a marked resumption. The first is to promote the topic in the reader’s mental representation by reiterating it in a marked position. The second is more practical: to signal the end of the complex dislocation and the beginning of the main clause. Had the pronominal trace been placed in the default position following the verb, the reader would have no clear indication of where the main clause begins other than the content. One or both of these reasons may be operative in any given context.

#### 4.1 *Topical frames of reference*

Left-dislocations are most often used in the Greek NT to introduce new topics. 85 of the 185 topical left-dislocations that I have identified are resumed in the main clause using a frame of reference instead of placing the pronominal trace in an unmarked position in the main clause.

#### **Example 5 James 1:25**

Another very complex entity that also includes point-counterpoint sets is found in James 1:25. The writer is not just interested in the one that looks intently at the law, but in the one that responds to it in a specific way.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Steven Runge, “Relative Saliency and Information Structure in Mark’s Account of the Parable of the Sower” *Journal of the Linguistics Institute of Ancient and Biblical Greek* 1 (2007):1-15. Cf. Steven Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, forthcoming), or Levinsohn *Discourse Features* for more detailed introductions to information structure.

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COMPLEX	<sup>25</sup> <sub>LD</sub> ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς the but one who looks into law the perfect — of ἐλευθερίας καὶ παραμείνας liberty and continues [to do it]
CIRCUMSTANCE	<× οὐκ ἀκροατῆς ἐπιλησμονῆς ×> γενόμενος not hearer a forgetful being
BULLET	ἀλλὰ <✓ ποιητῆς ἔργου ✓> <sup>LD</sup> but a doer who acts
SENTENCE	<sup>[TP]</sup> οὗτος <sup>[TP]</sup> μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται this one blessed in — doing his will be

The entity introduced in v. 25 stands in juxtaposition with one introduced more simply in vv. 23-24. There a left-dislocation is used as well, but the “looking into the law” and “the response” are part of the comment made about the dislocated entity, rather than being part of the introduction.

SUB-POINT	<sup>23</sup> ὅτι <sup>LD</sup> εἴ τις ἀκροατῆς λόγου ἐστὶν καὶ οὐ ποιητῆς <sup>LD</sup> because if anyone a hearer of the message is and not a doer <sup>[TP]</sup> οὗτος <sup>[TP]</sup> ἔοικεν ἀνδρὶ κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον this one is like someone staring at the face τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ of existence his in a mirror
SUPPORT	<sup>24</sup> κατενόησεν γὰρ ἑαυτὸν looks at for himself
SENTENCE	καὶ ἀπελήλυθεν and goes away
SENTENCE	καὶ εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο ὁποῖος ἦν and immediately forgets what sort [of person] he was

The complexity of the dislocation in v. 25 is deemed permissible ostensibly because so much of the content has already familiar from the discourse. The entity v. 25 represents a repackaging of the same information from vv. 23-24, creating a contrastive counterpart to vv. 23-24. The most important part of v. 25 is not the complex entity, but that comment that is made about him. The one that meets these criteria is **blessed in his activity**, which receives emphasis in the main clause. The left-dislocation provides an efficient introduction to a complex entity, and the resumption of the entity in a frame of reference explicitly marks the end of the dislocation and the beginning of the main clause.

### Example 6 Romans 8:30

Not every dislocation that is reiterated in a frame of reference is complex enough to necessitate a marked resumption. In cases like Romans 8:30, the dislocated entities are straightforward enough to introduce using a simple topical frame of reference instead of left-dislocation. In these cases, dislocation and the marked resumption serve to highlight the topic, ensuring that the reader properly tracks the rapid changes. The new entity is simple enough that the pronominal trace could easily be omitted without causing

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confusion. The inclusion provides the reader an explicit break that makes the rapid changes easier to process.

SENTENCE	<sup>30</sup> [LD] οὐς	δὲ	προώρισεν	[LD]	[TP] τούτους	[TP]	<+ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν +>
	whom	and	he predestined		these		also he called
SENTENCE	καὶ	[LD] οὐς	ἐκάλεσεν	[LD]	[TP] τούτους	[TP]	<+ καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν +>
	and	whom	he called		these		also he justified
SENTENCE	[LD] οὐς	δὲ	ἐδικαίωσεν	[LD]	[TP] τούτους	[TP]	<+ καὶ ἐδόξασεν +>
	whom	and	he justified		these		also he glorified

Note that the clauses follow the natural flow of information, whereby the object of one clause becomes the topic of the following clause. Such changes are easily processed. The dislocation creates a break in the flow of the discourse at the beginning of each new clause, slowing the pace a bit before each comment. The + symbols signify what I refer to as *thematic addition*. Thematic addition is the use of καὶ or other additive adverbs to explicitly link discourse entities that would otherwise only be implicitly linked on the basis of content.<sup>18</sup> The pragmatic effect here is to closely link this series of actions to one another using adverbial καὶ, e.g. προώρισεν with ἐκάλεσεν, ἐκάλεσεν with ἐδικαίωσεν, and ἐδικαίωσεν with ἐδόξασεν. The clauses are not only parallel in their syntax and semantics, but also in the use of an additive to more closely link the actions together.

### 4.2 Spatial frames of reference

Of the eight spatial entities that are introduced to the discourse using left-dislocation, all but two use an adverbial καὶ to thematically connect the most important information of the main clause to the dislocated element. In other words, the left-dislocation becomes the basis against which the newly asserted information of the main clause is highlighted by creating a thematic connection using an additive καὶ.

#### Example 7 James 3:16

This first example does not utilize thematic addition in the NA<sup>27</sup> reading, though it is included in some manuscripts.<sup>19</sup> The spatial entity that is activated in the dislocation is alluded to in v. 14. The dislocation reactivates the specific state of affairs in order for the writer to make a comment about it.

<sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup> This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic (ESV).

SUPPORT	<sup>16</sup> [LD] ὅπου	γὰρ	ζήλος	καὶ	ἐριθεία	[LD]	[SP] ἐκεῖ	[SP]	ἀκαταστασία
	where	for	jealousy	and	selfish ambition,		there		[is] disorder
	καὶ	πᾶν	φᾶλον	πραγμα					
	and	every	evil	practice					

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, chapter 13.

<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, NA<sup>27</sup> list a variant reading that adds καὶ in κ A 33. 81 pc sy<sup>p</sup>. If this reading were accepted, then every instance of a spatial dislocation that is not emphasized uses thematic addition. Thematic addition quite possibly serves as a means of disambiguating the information status of the dislocated information. The use of ascensive καὶ is often associated with focal constituents.





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utilize a left-dislocation. The same two motivating factors are in play here: topic promotion, signaling the end of the dislocation, or both.

### Example 9 Colossians 3:4

This left-dislocation introduces a specific time when believers will be revealed in glory with Jesus. The time is not the most important information in the clause; *who* is revealed with him is most important.

SENTENCE	<sup>4</sup> LD	ὅταν	[TP	ὁ Χριστός	[TP]	φανερωθῆ	ἡ	ζωὴ ὑμῶν	LD]	[TM	τότε	TM]
		when	—	Christ		is revealed	—	life your			then	
		<+ καὶ ὑμεῖς +> σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ also you with him will be revealed in glory										

Due to the complexity of the temporal frame, and perhaps because of the fronted subject pronoun, the resumptive pro-adverb explicitly marks the end of the dislocation and the beginning of the main clause. The redundant subject pronoun is necessary both for emphasis and for thematic addition. The explicit subject pronoun receives emphasis based on it being part of the new information, and based on its marked position. The adverbial καὶ creates a thematic connection between *Christ* being revealed and *our* being revealed.

### Example 10 Matthew 21:1 (Mark 11:1, Luke 19:29)

This last example of a left-dislocated temporal frame has synoptic parallels that use a simple frame of reference, without dislocation.

COMPLEX	<sup>1</sup> Καὶ	[LD	ὅτε	ἤγγισαν	εἰς	Ἱεροσόλυμα						
	and		when they drew near to			Jerusalem						
SUB-POINT			καὶ	ἦλθον	εἰς	Βηθφαγή	εἰς	τὸ	ὄρος	τῶν	Ἐλαιῶν	LD]
			and	came to		Bethphage	at the	Mount	of		Olives	
SENTENCE		[TM	τότε	[TP	Ἰησοῦς	[TP]	ἀπέστειλεν	δύο	μαθητὰς	λέγων	αὐτοῖς	
			then		Jesus		sent	two	disciples	saying	to them	

This temporal frame is fairly complex with two clauses and prepositional phrases, so one might claim that use of the left-dislocation here is motivated by cognitive constraints. The pro-adverb explicitly signals the end of the dislocation and the beginning of the main clause. There is also a fronted topical frame of reference, which may be another factor influencing the choice to use the left dislocation. In Mark 11:1, a slightly less complex temporal frame is used to communicate the same content, but without resorting to a dislocation.

COMPLEX	<sup>1</sup> Καὶ	[TM	ὅτε	ἐγγίζουσιν		
	and		when they came near			
BULLET			εἰς	Ἱεροσόλυμα		
			to	Jerusalem		
BULLET			εἰς	Βηθφαγή	καὶ	Βηθανίαν
			to	Bethphage	and	Bethany

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BULLET

πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν <sup>TM</sup>  
 at the Mount of Olives

SENTENCE

ἀποστέλλει δύο τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ  
 he sent two of disciples his

Mark's version lacks the second verb of motion ἦλθον, and uses an historical present both in the temporal frame and in the main clause. There is also no fronted topical frame of reference in the main clause, though there are three prepositional adjuncts compared to Matthew's two. This appears to be a judgment call by the writer that the construction did not warrant the extra processing aid of a resumptive pro-adverb. Luke's version in 19:29 uses καὶ ἐγένετο to introduce the temporal frame, which I understand to be introducing the entire complex clause.

SENTENCE

<sup>29</sup>Καὶ ἐγένετο <sup>TM</sup> ὡς ἤγγισεν εἰς Βηθφαγή καὶ Βηθανίαν  
 and it happened when he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany

πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τὸ καλούμενον Ἐλαιῶν <sup>TM</sup> ἀπέστειλεν  
 to the hill — called of Olives he sent

δύο τῶν μαθητῶν λέγων  
 two of the disciples saying

As in Mark's version, there are no frames of reference at the beginning of the main clause, and there is only one main verb in the dislocation. There is one fewer prepositional adjunct in Luke compared to Mark, another simplification. The lack of fronted items in the main clause and the lack of a resumptive pro-adverb make for an uninterrupted flow in the text. This results in the temporal frame receiving less prominence than in Matthew's version. Other examples of temporal left-dislocations include Matthew 13:26; 24:15 (// Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20-21); Luke 13:25; John 7:10; 11:6; 13:27; 15:26; Acts 12:6; 1 Corinthians 15:28, 54; 16:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

### 4.4 Comparative frames of reference

Of the more than 180 comparative frames of reference in the NT, only 40 of them utilize left-dislocation. Twenty nine of these resume the dislocated information using a pro-adverb as a frame of reference.

#### Example 11 Romans 11:30

This first example comes where Paul describes the partial hardening Israel experiences for the benefit of the Gentiles (v. 25). The previous section discussed the salvation of the Gentiles (vv. 17 ff). Verse 30 uses a left-dislocation to introduce a basis of comparison between the Gentiles and Israel.

SUPPORT

<sup>30</sup><sub>[LD]</sub> ὡςπερ γὰρ <sup>[TP]</sup> ὑμεῖς <sup>[TM]</sup> ποτε <sup>[TM]</sup> ἠπειθήσατε τῷ θεῷ  
 just as for you formerly were disobedient to God

<sup>[TM]</sup> νῦν <sup>[TM]</sup> δὲ ἠλεήθητε τῇ τούτων ἀπειθείᾳ <sup>[LD]</sup>  
 now but have been shown mercy the of these disobedience

<sup>[CP]</sup> οὕτως <sup>[CP]</sup> + καὶ οὗτοι + νῦν ἠπειθήσαν τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐλέει  
 so also these now been disobedient for your mercy

The dislocated information has already been discussed in the preceding section. It is reiterated here to draw a specific comparison between the similarity of the situations, lest

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the Gentiles view themselves too highly. The dislocated information is not the most important, the thematically added καὶ οὗτοι is. The dislocated information provides the frame of reference for the clause that follows, with the pro-adverb signaling the end of the dislocation and highlighting the information.

As was observed with other dislocations, the complexity of the dislocated information likely necessitated a resumptive element to signal the end of the dislocation. There are also several pre-verbal elements that further complicate the main clause. It likely would have necessitated two clauses to convey the same information if a dislocation had not been utilized. The dislocation allows the writer to hold up a particular quality of the Jews in order to make a poignant connection to the Gentiles in the main clause. Thematic addition strengthens this connection even more.

### Example 12 Matthew 7:12 (Luke 6:31)

The two versions of the “golden rule” illustrate the default versus marked structuring of the same propositional content. Matthew’s version is structure to promote the topic by placing the pro-adverb in position P1, and emphasizing the most salient part of the newly asserted information.

PRINCIPLE

<sup>12</sup><sub>LD</sub> Πάντα οὖν ὅσα ἐὰν θέλητε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν  
all things therefore whatever - you want that should do to you  
οἱ ἄνθρωποι <sup>LD</sup> [CM οὕτως <sup>CM</sup> <+ καὶ ὑμεῖς +> ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς  
-- men thus also you do to them

In the synoptic parallel in Luke 6:31, the dislocated information is introduced using a simple comparative frame of reference, and the newly asserted information is placed in its default position following the verb.

SENTENCE

<sup>31</sup>καὶ [CM καθὼς θέλετε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι <sup>CM</sup>  
and just as you want that would do to you -- men  
ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς ὁμοίως  
you do to them likewise

## 5. Marked Resumption using Emphasis (marked focus)

Section 4 considered instances where left-dislocations were reiterated in the main clause by placing the pronominal element in the marked position of a frame of reference. The left dislocation has creates a frame of reference for the clause that follows, but sometimes the information that it introduces is the most important part of the clause.

There comes a point where an entity is too complex to be emphasized in position P2. In such cases, a left dislocation is often used. The entity is introduced outside the main clause, and the simple pronominal form is placed in position P2 to assign emphasis. In this way the “one new thing at a time” constraint is honored, as is the limitation on how complex an entity can be emphasized in position P2.

The left-dislocation and the pronominal trace still serve the same tasks as seen above. The only difference is that in the following instances it is the most important information in the main clause.

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### 5.1 Topical frames of reference

There are over 3600 topical frames of reference in the Greek NT, though only a small portion of them utilize left dislocation. Of the 185 that do use dislocation, only 46 of them place emphasis on the pronominal trace. This section illustrates instances where emphasis is applied.

#### Example 13 Matthew 26:23 (Mark 14:20, Luke 22:21)

In the upper room scene just before Jesus is betrayed, the synoptic gospels differ in exactly what information is provided about the betrayer. They also differ in the context in which the betrayer is mentioned. In Matthew's version, Jesus declares in 26:21 that he will be betrayed by one of those present. The same holds true in Mark's version, with a statement in 14:18. Luke's version does not contain such a disclosure.

In Matthew and Mark, the disclosure precipitates questions from the disciples about which of them is the betrayer. Matthew provides the answer to this question in 26:23. Since it fills in the blank of the question, it is the most important part of the proposition, i.e. focal. The answer is "the one who dips his hand with me in the bowl," which is far too complex to be emphasized in position P2. It would likely be mistaken as a topical frame of reference.

Matthew introduces the answer to the question using a left-dislocation, placing the pronominal trace in position P2 for emphasis' sake.

SENTENCE

<sup>[LD]</sup> Ὁ ἐμβάψας μετ' ἐμοῦ τὴν χεῖρα ἐν τῷ τρυβλίῳ <sup>[LD]</sup>  
the one who dips with me the hand in the bowl  
**οὗτός με παραδώσει**  
this one me will betray

The effect of using the left-dislocation is to provide something of a build up. "The one who dips..." is introduced, but it is unclear how this entity relates to the proposition under consideration until it is reiterated in the main clause. The use of emphasis by Matthew says something about the importance he places on this information.

In Luke's version in 22:21, Jesus does not state that he will be betrayed. There is no question being answered, he simply makes the declaration that the betrayer is present at the table.

πλὴν ἰδοὺ ἡ χεὶρ τοῦ παραδιδόντος με μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης  
but behold the hand of the one who is betraying me with me on the table

A verbless clause is used to state that the betrayer is present, but his identity is not connected to the one the dipping the bread. Verse 23 states that the disciples were discussing who the betrayer might be, but there is no identification of the betrayer until Judas arrives in Gethsemane.

The content and structure of Mark's version in 14:20 has the same kind of context as Matthew's, where questions have been asked about the identity of the betrayer. Unlike Matthew's version, the question is answered using a simple verbless clause. There is no main clause that follows.

Εἷς τῶν δώδεκα ὁ ἐμβαπτόμενος μετ' ἐμοῦ εἰς τὸ τρύβλιον  
one of the twelve — who dips [bread] with me into the bowl

## Left-Dislocations and their Contribution to Information Structure

So while Matthew and Mark both have the same propositional context of a question being asked, Matthew’s version uses the left dislocation to create a dramatic build-up to the answer, emphasizing it by placing the pronominal trace in a marked position. Mark’s version represents the expected default, to simply answer the question without the rhetorical build up.

### 5.2 Spatial frames of reference

There are only a handful of NT examples where the dislocated spatial information is reiterated with emphasis. In each case, the dislocated information is emphasized because it is the most important part of the utterance, e.g. it provides the answer to a question.

#### Example 14 Mark 6:10 (Luke 9:4, Matthew 10:11)

In Mark 6 and its synoptic parallels, Jesus gives instructions to the disciples before sending them out for ministry. Part of the instruction concerns selecting a place to lodge. He intends them to stay in a particular place that has yet to be mentioned. The dislocated information introduces this location.

SENTENCE <sup>[LD]</sup> Ὅπου ἂν εἰσέλθητε εἰς οἰκίαν <sup>[LD]</sup> ἐκεῖ μένετε ἕως ἂν  
whenever — you enter into a house there stay until —  
ἐξέλθητε ἐκεῖθεν  
you depart from there

It is presupposed that the disciples are to stay *somewhere*, it is just a matter of *where*. The left-dislocation provides the answer to this question, but it is too complex to be emphasized. The pro-adverb provides a simplified reference to the dislocated location, and ἐκεῖ can manageably be emphasized.

Luke’s version of this saying in 9:4 is quite similar, using a spatial left-dislocation with ἐκεῖ placed in marked focus for emphasis’ sake.<sup>23</sup> Matthew’s version in 10:11 has a noteworthy difference. The location still receives emphasis, but it is introduced using the standard ‘two-clause’ activation-then-comment strategy instead of doing both using a left dislocation.

SENTENCE <sup>[1SP]</sup> εἰς ἣν δ ἂν πόλιν ἢ κώμην εἰσέλθητε <sup>[SP]</sup> ἐξετάσατε  
into whatever and — town or village you enter inquire  
τίς ἐν αὐτῇ ἄξιός ἐστιν  
who in it worthy is  
SENTENCE **κακεῖ** μέναιτε ἕως ἂν ἐξέλθητε  
and there stay until — you depart

The “town or village” is introduced in the first clause of the verse, and the comment about it is to *inquire* in it. Within the embedded clause τίς ἐν αὐτῇ ἄξιός ἐστιν that functions as a complement, and ἄξιός is emphasized. The same location from the first main clause of the verse is reiterated in the second main clause. Since it is already activated, it may be referred to using the pro-adverb κακεῖ. It is placed in marked focus in

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<sup>23</sup> The left-dislocation differs slightly, reading εἰς ἣν ἂν οἰκίαν εἰσέλθητε.

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Matthew’s version for the same reason as in Mark’s and Luke’s: **this** is where they were to stay, as opposed to somewhere else.

These examples illustrate the kind of variation that is possible while at the same time maintaining consistency in the propositional content. Mark and Luke use left-dislocations to introduce an entity and emphasize it in the same clause. Matthew also uses a left-dislocation, but the location is not emphasized until the following clause. The added instruction to inquire who is worthy in the place solidly grounds the location in the reader’s mental representation, allowing it to be referred to using the pro-adverb in the following clause.

### 5.3 Temporal frames of reference

As with the other dislocated elements, temporal information can be dislocated in order to introduce a complex entity that receives emphasis in the main clause, or simply to highlight the information that is emphasized. Its status as new information and the placement of the resumptive pro-adverb in the marked P2 position bring about the emphasis.

#### Example 15 Luke 5:35 (Matthew 9:15)

The final example provides the answer to the disciples of the Pharisees when they ask why it is that Jesus’ disciples do not fast. Jesus answers using the analogy of the bridegroom and the wedding feast. It presupposes that there will be fasting at some point, it is just a question of *when*. The answer to this question is provided in the left-dislocation. Verse 34 is supplied for context.

<sup>34</sup> And Jesus said to them, “Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?” (ESV)

SENTENCE <sup>35</sup> ἔλεύσονται δὲ ἡμέραι  
will come but days

SENTENCE καὶ <sup>[LD]</sup> ὅταν ἀπαρθῇ ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ὁ νυμφίος <sup>[DP]</sup> τότε  
and when is taken away from them the bridegroom then  
νηστεύουσιν < Ⓜ ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις Ⓜ >  
they will fast in those — days

The temporal dislocation is not only resumed by the pro-adverb τότε, which receives emphasis. It is also referenced in the prepositional phrase ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις using at the end of the clause. Using the far demonstrative ἐκείναις has the effect of recharacterizing the time as still remote. The content of vv. 34-35 is combined in Matthew’s version in 9:15.

SENTENCE < × Μὴ δύνανται οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος πενθεῖν × >  
not able the sons of the bridal chamber to mourn

SUB-POINT < ✓ ἐφ’ ὅσον μετ’ αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ὁ νυμφίος ✓ >  
— as long as with them is the bridegroom

SENTENCE ἔλεύσονται δὲ ἡμέραι  
are coming but days

SUB-POINT ὅταν ἀπαρθῇ ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ὁ νυμφίος  
when is taken away from them the bridegroom

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SENTENCE

καὶ τότε νηστεύσουσιν  
and then they will fast

Matthew's version does not include the καὶ to introduce the temporal information as in Luke, changing the left-dislocation into a simple subordinate clause.<sup>24</sup> Placing the καὶ before the pro-adverb that reiterates it renders what had been the main clause in Luke into a coordinated clause in Matthew. The result is to accomplish in two clauses what Luke accomplishes in one using the dislocation. The parallel in Mark 2:20 also uses two clauses instead of left-dislocation, paralleling Matthew.

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<sup>24</sup> The Old Latin witnesses the omission of καὶ before v. 35b in Luke.



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