Prominence differences between Right Dislocations and Afterthoughts in German

Janina Kalbertodt & Stefan Baumann

I*f*L Phonetik, University of Cologne

In this study, we are interested in the impact of prosodic cues on perceived prominence in two types of construction – Right Dislocation (RD), as *Peter* in (1B), and Afterthought (AT), as *Peter* in (2B):

(1)	A: I heard you like Peter a lot.	B: I do. I met him recently, Peter.	(RD)
(2)	A: Do you know Jake and Peter?	B: I met him recently. Peter, I mean.	(AT)

These structures are claimed to differ in terms of phrasing and accent pattern (with RDs being deaccented in contrast to ATs), but also in pitch range [6]. Here, we investigate the relation between these parameters in spontaneous corpus data.

On the basis of observations from a previous reading experiment [5] (slightly deviating from the claims made in the literature), we hypothesize that RD constituents are produced in a separate intermediate phrase (weak boundary) requiring a separate nuclear pitch accent. AT constituents are expected to be separated from the matrix clause by a (stronger) intonation phrase boundary. Second, and accordingly, we hypothesize that the difference in prominence between RD and AT does *not* lie in the presence or absence of an accent (both should be accented) but instead in pitch range reduction of RD constituents.

To test our hypotheses, the database *Fokus-DB* [3], containing 100 RDs and 55 ATs in (semi-)spontaneous speech, was labelled for accent and boundary strength, following GToBI [4]. Additionally, pitch range was calculated and extracted.

Results show some variation but partly confirm our hypotheses: ATs and RDs show different patterns for boundary strength (stronger before ATs; Fig.1) and a similar amount of nuclear accents (Fig.2). However, pitch range is reduced for both construction types and even slightly more for ATs (Fig.3), contrary to our expectations derived from the read data.

References:

[1] Averintseva-Klisch, M. (2009): *Rechte Satzperipherie im Diskurs*. Die NP-Rechtsversetzung im Deutschen. Tübingen: Stauffenburg.
[2] Dewald, A. (2014): *Versetzungsstrukturen im Deutschen*. Zu ihrer Syntax, Prosodie und Diskursfunktion. PhD thesis, University of Cologne.
[3] Fokus-DB: focus-db.net
[4] Grice, M. and Baumann, S. (2002): Deutsche Intonation und GToBI. *Linguistische Berichte* 191, 267-298.
[5] Kalbertodt, J. (submitted): Right Dislocation and Afterthought in Novels: An empirical Study on German. *Linguistische Berichte*.
[6] Lambrecht, K. (2001): Dislocation. In: *Language Typology and Language Universals*, eds. Haspelmath, M. et al. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1050-1078.
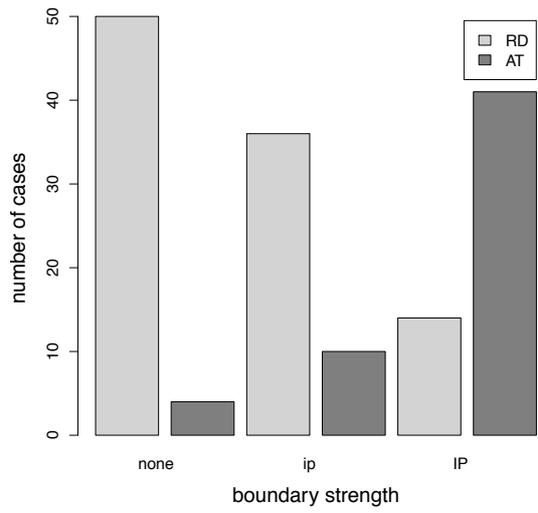
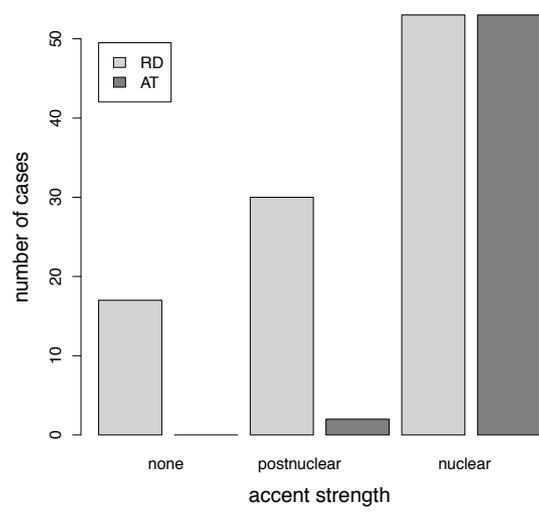Figure 1: Distribution of boundary strength per construction type.

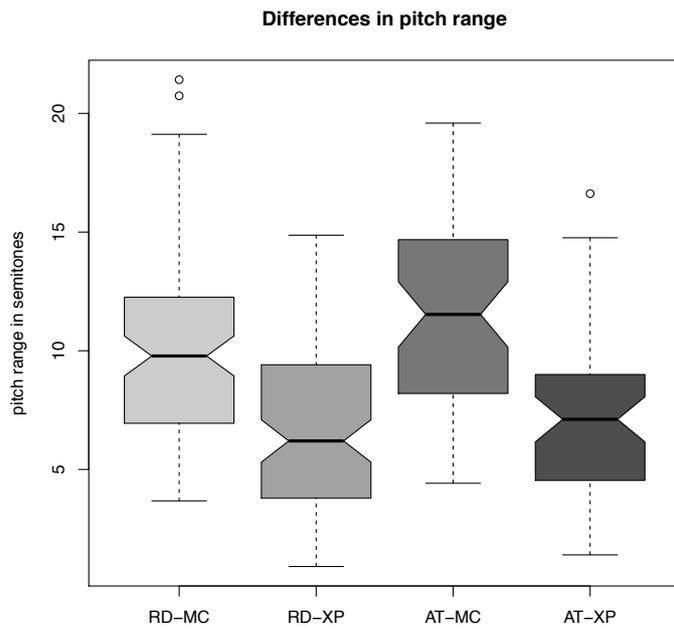Figure 2: Distribution of accent strength per construction type.

Figure 3: Pitch range differences between matrix clause (MC) and target clause (XP) per construction type (RD, AT).