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## ROSEMARIE LÜHR

### Discontinuous Syntax: Hyperbaton in Older Indo-European Languages

#### 1. Preliminaries

The hyperbaton, as a subtype of discontinuous syntax, is a figure of speech in which words that naturally belong together are separated from each other for emphasis or effect. For example, in Latin, an adverb can be placed between two syntactically related words. One of these parts is highlighted, in (1) the possessive pronoun *tuis* 'your':

(1) Cicero, *fam.* 3,9,3

*Tuis            incredibiliter       studiis            delector*  
your: ABL    incredibly: ADV    studies: ABL    I'm made happy

"I'm made incredibly happy by your studies."

literally: "By your incredibly studies I'm made happy."

In this way, we arrive in English at sentences with discontinuous syntax such as:

(2) (a) \*Which has he invited friend to dinner?,

which go against Ross's<sup>1</sup> Left Branch Condition. In focus constructions in English, moreover, the right branch of a noun phrase cannot remain *in situ*:

(2) (b) \*The RED he bought car last week, the BLUE he has had car for years.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the hyperbaton has been called "perhaps the most distinctively alien feature of Latin word order"<sup>3</sup>.

Generally, the separation of words that belong together within a NP is supposed to be a feature of inflecting languages, where sentence meaning does not depend closely on word order. In fact, this phenomenon occurs in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin.

But in Classical Latin, the hyperbaton is considered grammatical if that kind of separation is possible in an elevated prose style "without creating the impression of artificiality"<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, one of our questions is whether there

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<sup>1</sup> Ross 1967.

<sup>2</sup> Devine/Stephens 2000, 4 f.

<sup>3</sup> Devine/Stephens 2006, 524.

<sup>4</sup> Menge 2000, 581 f.

are rules in Latin, Sanskrit, and Greek applying to the syntax of this figure of speech. The question arises then, to what extent information structure, the focus – background and the topic – comment distinction, comes into play.

In addition, the following questions have to be clarified. For Latin and Greek it is assumed that the effect of a hyperbaton is utilized to place emphasis on the first part of it. Therefore, we wish to scrutinize the position of the emphasized part of a hyperbaton. Our second question asks whether there are words which cannot – for grammatical reasons – be separated from the nouns to which they belong. Thirdly, as the bulk of Wackernagel particles is characteristic of the older Indo-European languages, we want to know how the Wackernagel position interacts in the case of discontinuous NP syntax. And lastly, why does Hittite make use of the hyperbaton only in a very restricted way? Hittite is an inflecting language like Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit.

The analysis will be conducted using methods of corpus linguistics, thus delivering data that are statistically reliable. The material is taken from annotated corpora of the DFG projects *Information Structure in the Older Indo-European Languages* (2009-2013) and *Information Structure in Complex Sentences – Synchronic and Diachronic* (2011-2016), both of which can be searched in the ANNIS data base.

## 2. Hittite

First, I want to address the last question that only one hyperbaton-like structure could be found in our Hittite corpus:

(3) Muwatalli (93)3, 34-35

*nu I]Š-TU EME-IA ku-i-e-eš DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup> ḫal-zi-iḫ-ḫu-un n[u A-N]A*

*DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup> ar-ku-wa-nu-un nu-mu-kán*

*DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-aš ú-wa-ia-nu-ut da-pí-aš*

god: DAT.PL      make pitiable: PRS.IMP.ACT2SG      all: DAT.PL

"To the gods which I called from my tongue and to the gods to which I pray, make me pitiable to the gods, to all of them!"

The verb *ú-wa-ia-nu-ut* 'make pitiable' separates the noun phrase *DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-aš da-pí-aš*, literally 'gods all', 'all gods'. But as the German translation shows ('... mache mich den Göttern bemitleidenswert, allen!'), the adjective *all* can also be separated from its related noun; hence, there is no proper hyperbaton.

Kozianka/Zeilfelder<sup>5</sup> explain why this figure of speech is so rarely documented in Hittite: in this language, noun phrase boundaries may have to be observed so that extraction out of such a phrase is forbidden. Consequently, there are grammatical reasons for the absence of the hyperbaton in Hittite.

### 3. Contrastive Focus

To answer our first question – whether it is always the first part of a hyperbaton which is emphasized – we will assume different subtypes of the contrastive focus: an identificational focus and an emphatic focus.<sup>6</sup> According to Kiss<sup>7</sup>, the identificational focus represents "a subset of [a] set of contextually or situationally given elements", whereas the emphatic focus is indicated when no such subset is evoked but another kind of emphasis becomes effective. In the Greek example (4), the first part of the hyperbaton is highlighted by left dislocation of the adjective *pollèn* 'much'; it is an identificational focus:

(4) Isocrates, *Euagoras* 10

*kai pollèn autoĩs échō*  
also much: ACC.SG.F them: DAT.PL.M have: PRS.IND.ACT1SG

*suggnōmēn*  
forbearance: ACC.SG.F

"I also have much forbearance for them."

But also the second part of a hyperbaton can be stressed, as in the case of the emphatic focus *okseĩa* 'keen' in another Greek example – note the particles *mèn* 'but' and *oĩn* 'now' which we will address later:

(5) Plutarch 28

*phugē mèn oĩn ěn euthūs*  
flight: NOM.SG.F. but now be: IPF.IND.ACT3SG ad once

*okseĩa pántōn*  
keen: NOM.SG.F all: GEN.PL.M

"At once a keen flight took place of all (enemies) ..."

<sup>5</sup> Kozianka/Zeilfelder 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Krisch 1998; Marcovic 2006; Lühr 2010; de Kuthy 1999. Krifka 2007 explains structures like [*Wild HORses*]<sub>F</sub> *wouldn't drag me there*. as emphatic focus. The alternatives build an ordered set.

<sup>7</sup> Kiss 1998, 245.



In Vedic, too, such hyperbata are documented, cf. with a genitive as emphatic focus behind an interrogative adverb and the verb in a sentence-middle position:

## (6) Sarama 4

*kathám rasāyāḥ ataraḥ páyāṃsi*  
 how Rasā: GEN.SG.F get over: IPF.IND.ACT2SG floods: ACC.PL.N  
 "How did you cross the Rasā floods?"

As usual, the genitive, the name *rasāyā*, is placed before the noun, *páyāṃsi* 'floods'. It creates a functional concept in the sense of Löbner<sup>8</sup> and is so more emphasized than the related noun.

On the other hand, see (7) with an emphasized adjective at the end of the sentence and with a verb in a middle position as well:

## (7) Agni 1

*sugān patháḥ kṛṇuhi*  
 easy to traverse: ACC.PL.M path: ACC.PL.M make: PRS.IMP.ACT2SG  
*devayāna*  
 leading to the gods: ACC.PL.M  
 "Make the paths leading to the gods easy to traverse."

The fact that not only the beginning but also the end of the sentence is really a slot for the contrastive focus shows (8) very clearly. The words *táva* 'your' and *ahám* 'I' at the end are strongly stressed:

## (8) Urvaśi 3

*kím etā vācā kṛṇavā*  
 why this: ACC.PL.N speech: INSTR.SG.F make: PRS.SUBJ.ACT1SG  
*táva ahám*  
 you: GEN I: NOM  
 "Why should I do these due to your speech?"

Up to now, we can establish that in Vedic and Greek there are two positions for the contrastive focus: near the beginning and near the end of the sentence. The verb takes a middle position, as required by rule in Greek, while for Vedic an underlying SOV structure is postulated. But it is noticeable, as we have already said, that in the case of discontinuous syntax the Vedic verb often is located in the middle of the sentence. A second difference compared to Greek lies in the fact that the verb is stressed in Greek, while in Vedic it is unstressed

<sup>8</sup> Löbner 1979.

in the main clause. The position of the verb in Vedic is described when sentence structure is discussed more detailed (4.).

#### 4. Other Types of Discontinuous Syntax

##### 4.1 Sentences with Predicatives

A more grammar driven phenomenon in discontinuous syntax is sentences with predicatives. In (9) the anaphoric topicalized pronoun *téṣām* 'of them' is designed to create a clause linking with the preceding sentence. The related noun *devayájanam* 'place for the divine sacrifice', however, is separated from the pronoun by the predicative noun *kurukṣetrám* 'Kurukṣetra'. Complying with the rules, the predicative *kurukṣetrám* appears in front of the subject.<sup>9</sup> It is the new information focus. But as a topical possessive element, *téṣām*, is affected by separation – the whole topic of the sentence is *téṣām devayájanam* 'their place for the divine sacrifice' – information structure interacts with a grammatical word order rule.

##### (9) Kopf 2

<i>téṣām</i>	<i>kurukṣetrám</i>	
this: GEN.PL.M	Kurukṣetra: NOM.SG.N	
<i>devayájanam</i>		<i>āsa</i>
place for the divine sacrifice: NOM.SG.N		be: PF.IND.ACT3SG

"Their place for the divine sacrifice was Kurukṣetra."

##### 4.2 Discontinuous Syntax by Wackernagel Particles

###### 4.2.1 Latin Proper Names

Our next question is whether there are words which cannot, for grammatical reasons, be disconnected from the nouns they belong to in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin? To answer this question we are going to look at fixed word connections. Whichever connection it might be, it can be separated. One example is Roman proper names<sup>10</sup>:

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<sup>9</sup> Delbrück 1888.

<sup>10</sup> Menge 2000, 582, 614.

As (10) shows, actually those connections can be torn apart:

(10) (a) Latin: Cicero, *Brutus* 12

*Populus se Romanus erexit*  
 people themselves Roman raised  
 "The Roman people made an uprising."

(10) (b) Cicero, *Brutus* 10

*Marcus ad me Brutus venerat*  
 Marcus to me Brutus came  
 "Marcus Brutus did come to me"

Obviously, the Wackernagel position is occupied by an enclitic pronoun or an enclitic pronominal phrase. Also, enclitic conjunctions such as *autem*, *enim*, *igitur*, *quoque*, *-ne* in the second position in the sentence appear between proper names:

(10) (c) Latin: Cicero, *Brutus* 96

*Q. enim Pompeius*  
 Quintus in fact Pompeius  
 "Quintus Pompeius in fact"

We will see below (4.3) that two proper types of Wackernagel elements have to be distinguished: Wackernagel clitics of type one, like *se*, and Wackernagel clitics of type two, the mentioned Latin conjunctions in the second sentence position. A third type is enclitic to the constituent which it emphasizes. It appears in the second position of the sentence if the emphasized word is at the beginning of the sentence<sup>11</sup> and not elsewhere. Examples are given below (4.2.2).

#### 4.2.2 Greek Article Phrase

Another close word connection is the determiner phrase (DP) with a definite article in Greek. Here, too, Wackernagel particles are to be found. The particle *dé* never appears in the first sentence position. It is a Wackernagel particle of type two, which appears, as mentioned (4.2.1), always behind the first word of the sentence – the stress on Greek *dé* is secondary<sup>12</sup>:

<sup>11</sup> Krisch 1990, 65; Hale 1987, 45.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Schwyzer 1953, 388.

(11) Xenophon, *Anabasis* II, 4

*tē*                      *dè*    *áll*                                      *apiénai*  
 the: DAT.SG.F    but    following: DAT.SG.F    to go away: INF.PRES.ACT

*phaiē*                                      *epì*    *Iōnías*  
 say: PRS.OPT.ACT3SG    to    Ionia: GEN.SG.F

*hóthenper*    *ēlthe*  
 from whence    come: AOR.IND.ACT3SG

"He would say that on the following (day) he would return to Ionia, from whence he came."

Dover<sup>13</sup> already saw that particles are "in second position ... within one of the word-groups which constitute the clause", a "word-group" being indicated "by the pauses of the voice which precede and follow it"<sup>14</sup>. So by Wackernagel particles "a binary scheme [emerges] that divides the sentence into two phrases only, i. e., a nominal one and a verbal one"<sup>15</sup>.

As this description is generally true, Wackernagel particles of type two fulfill a grammatical function. Thus, no separation of words in terms of the hyperbaton is present.

#### 4.3 Sentences with a Wh-Word

A further grammatical rule that determines discontinuous syntax concerns sentences with a Wh-word. But here also information structure is effective, cf. (12). While the interrogative pronoun *yáthā* 'how' is the focus – interrogative pronouns correspond to a focalized element in the answer<sup>16</sup> – covert 'we' and overt *te* 'your' are topics. In the speaking situation, speaker and addressee are known. However, *te* 'your' appears in front of the Wh-word and is separated from *mánaḥ* 'thinking'. It is a Wackernagel enclitic of type one. According to Keydana<sup>17</sup>, those enclitics stand to the right of the left periphery in Vedic, whereby their host is phrasal. In (12) the host is the accented causative conjunction *hí*.

<sup>13</sup> Dover 1960, 17; cf. Fraenkel 1933; Krisch 1998.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Devine/Stephend 1994, 422: "In Greek ... certain structures can remain outside the domain over which second position is computed and consequently may be interpreted as separate major phrases ...".

<sup>15</sup> Ivanov 1999.

<sup>16</sup> Rooth 1992.

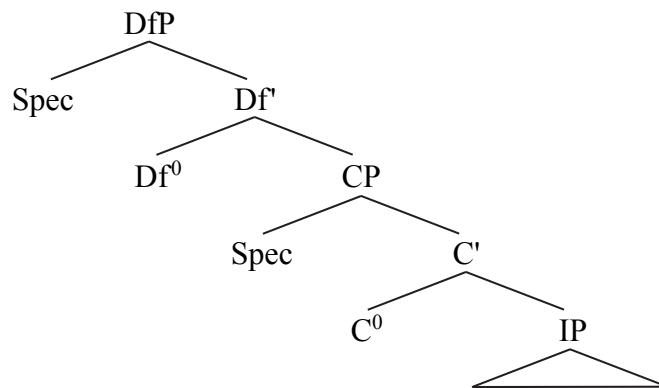
<sup>17</sup> Keydana 2011.

(12) Agastya IO

*vidmā́ hí te yáthā́ mánah*  
 know: PF.IND.ACT1PL for you: GEN how thinking: NOM.SG.N  
 "We surely know what your thinking is like."

It is widely accepted that the position in front of the type one Wackernagel particle is a discourse functional slot (Df-slot). It is situated to the left of [Spec,CP] and can be occupied both by topics and foci.<sup>18</sup> Compare, for example, the following representation of a Vedic sentence with a fully extended left periphery:

(13)



This Df-slot is distinct from the position of Wh-words. It appears also in subordinated clauses.

An example of a focalized constituent in the Df-position is found in (14): the connected word occurs behind the relative pronoun. The personal pronoun is accented and thus a contrastive focus.

(14) RV 10.103.11

*asmā́kaṃ yá iṣavas tá́ yayantu*  
 our: GEN which arrows: NOM.PL.M this: NOM.PL.M shall win: IMP.PRS.ACT3PL  
 "Let our arrows win!"<sup>19</sup>

In (13) and (14) only one word fills the Df-position, therefore NPs must be separated if the speaker wants to topicalize into the left periphery for reasons of information structure.

<sup>18</sup> However, Kiparsky 1995, 153 proposes two distinct discourse functional slots: a topic position and a focus-position that could be filled with Wh-words.

<sup>19</sup> Keydana 2011, 5; 2015.

But the left periphery can also be occupied by more than one word even if they do not belong to the same constituent<sup>20</sup>, as in (15): the adjective *viśvāḥ* 'all', the verb *apaśyat* 'he saw' and the adverb *bahudhā* 'manifold' precede *te* 'your'. Again, a Wackernagel enclitic of type one appears in the right edge of the left periphery. The related noun *tan(ū)vāḥ* follows at the end of the sentence.

(15) Agni 2

*viśvāḥ*            *apaśyat*                            *bahudhā*  
all: ACC.PL.F    see: IPF.IND.ACT3SG    manifold  
*te*            *agne*            *jātavedaḥ*            *tan(ū)vāḥ*  
you: GEN    Agni: VOC.M    Jātavedas:VOC.M    manifestation: ACC.PL.F

"All your manifestations, Agni Jātavedas, saw manifold (a single god)."

Contrary to Wackernagel particles of type one, the particles of type two appear always behind the first word of the sentences (4.2.1). Cf. the example with the enclitic *ha* in (16), where the first word, *tāsya* 'his', provides a link with the preceding sentence:

(16) Cyavana 26

*tāsya*            *ha*    *tātaḥ*    *evā*    *grāmaḥ*  
he: GEN.SG.M    PART thereupon PART clan: NOM.SG.M  
*sámjajñe*  
reconcile: PF.IND.MED3SG

"Thereupon his clan was reconciled."

Wackernagel particles of type two also attach to material already containing particles, as with the Wackernagel particle of type three, *cid* 'even':

(17) Vedic: RV 8.33.17

*indraś*            *cid*            *ghā*    *tád*                            *abravīt*  
Indra: NOM.SG.M    WL3            WL2    this: ACC.SG.N    say: IMP.IND.ACT3SG

"Even Indra did say this."

But connections with Wackernagel particles of type three can also appear in the middle of the sentence if its host is placed there, as *aparám caná* 'even in the future'. Cf. (18) with *asyāḥ* 'her' as Wackernagel particle of type one:

(18) Affe 21

*nahí*            *asyāḥ*                            *aparám*            *caná*            *jarásā*  
for not    this: GEN.SG.F    later            PART            the becoming old: INSTR.SG.M

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Hale 1996, 170; Hock 1996, 218 n. 18.

*márate**pátiḥ*

die: AOR.SUBJ.MED3SG husband: NOM.SG.M

"Because not even in the future her husband dies of old age."

In conclusion, while in (10) to (18) Wackernagel particles organize the Vedic sentence by separating words belonging together, the structure of sentences without such particles is difficult to recognize.

#### 4. Discontinuous Syntax without Wackernagel Particles

But perhaps the determination of the verb position will help to answer the question about how discontinuous syntax behaves without Wackernagel particles. As mentioned in section 3, generally SOV order is valid in Vedic. Therefore, in sentences with the verb in a middle position, verb movement to the left must have taken place. Because in Vedic, as we have pointed out before (3.), the verb is unstressed in main sentences, it can be attracted by a strongly emphasized word. This could be a highlighted first part of two words belonging together. In (19) the normal word order is reversed<sup>21</sup>: the related word of the attributive genitive *j(i)yáyāḥ* 'bowstring', the noun *kṣepnóḥ* 'springing', is moved to the left, a process which entailed movement of the unstressed verb *avije* 'fled' out of its basis position at the end of the sentence.

(19) Agni 18

*gauráḥ**ná**kṣepnóḥ**avije*

buffalo: NOM.SG.M

as

springing: ABL.SG.M

flee: IPF.IND.MED1SG

*j(i)yáyāḥ*

bowstring: GEN.SG.F

"Like a buffalo from the springing of a bowstring I fled."

Another example with an unstressed verb between the two parts of a word connection is (20):

(20) König 2

*krátum**sacante**váruṇasya*

power of will: ACC.SG.M

follow: PRS.IND.MED3PL

Varuṇa: GEN.SG.M

*deváḥ*

god: NOM.PL.M

"The gods follow the willpower of Varuna."

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<sup>21</sup> Delbrück 1878, 42.

But in Vedic, movement of the verb into a sentence middle position is only an option, e. g., (21) where a preverb holds the first position and the related verb the last one:

(21) Agni 37

*ā* *bāh(u)vóḥ* *vájram* *índrasya*  
 into arm: LOC.DU.M Vajra: ACC.SG.M Indra: GEN.SG.M  
*dheyām*  
 lay: AOR.OPT.ACT1SG

"I want to lay Vajra into both arms of Indra."

But let us stay with the verb in the middle position. Here also vocatives are to be found. In the middle of the sentence vocatives are unstressed, whereby in connection with the unstressed verb an unstressed domain, quasi-functioning as middle-field, arises (cf. with a Wackernagel particle of type one behind a preverb:

(22) Fluß 28

*ā* *te* *kāro* *śṛṇavāma*  
 PFX you: GEN.SG poet: VOC.SG.M hear: PRS.SUBJ.ACT1PL  
*vácāṃsi*  
 song: ACC.PL.N

"We want to listen to your songs, poet."

After such a word sequence, however, the following word can get more stress, as if it would appear behind a stressed word. This is exactly the case with a second part of a discontinuous syntax near the end of the sentence. As we have already seen, also contrastive foci appear in this position. Owing to the verb position, not only the sentence beginning but also the end of it are places where items of the sentence can bear emphasis in Vedic.

## 5. Conclusion

The hyperbaton, a kind of discontinuous syntax which is assumed to be a characteristic of the older and hence inflecting Indo-European languages, is only hardly documented in Hittite, because phrase boundaries must be observed strictly. However, the hyperbaton in Sanskrit, Greek, and Hittite is no device creating an incomprehensible mixture of words or "word salad", as it looks like for speakers of English or German today, but rather certain sentence organizing rules are recognizable. Apart from word order rules concerning the position of the predicative, these rules are mainly prosody



driven. The Wackernagel particles are most important here<sup>22</sup>. They allow sequences of stressed and unstressed words, so that every word group can be separated by them. But as unstressed possessive pronouns belong to the set of Wackernagel particles of type one, the impression of a hyperbaton, with the first part being such an unstressed pronoun, often imposes itself. As to the position of the highlighted part of the hyperbaton, positioning both near the beginning and near the end of a sentence is found. Another finding concerns the position of the verb. In Vedic, where SOV is the basic structure, the verb is often moved to the left behind the stressed part of a hyperbaton. This seems to be a prosodic effect which strengthens the stress on this hyperbaton part. At the same time the second part of the hyperbaton gains weight, especially when also an unstressed vocative appears besides the verb. By the way, contrary to recent research, Wackernagel himself and afterwards Delbrück – Wackernagel primarily used Greek data and Delbrück<sup>23</sup> confirmed Wackernagel's observations also for Vedic – took verb second configurations as Wackernagel phenomena, too. This is compatible with the view that prosody, here the sequence of stressed and unstressed words, is a determining factor of the older Indo-European languages.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Lühr 2008; 2009; 2009a; 2010; 2010a; 2010b; 2010c; 2011; 2011a; 2015; Lühr/Zeifelder 2011.

<sup>23</sup> Delbrück 1878, 47.

<sup>24</sup> Lühr 2008a.

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