

FUNCTIONS OF LEFT DISLOCATION IN PETJOH

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This paper is a preliminary discussion of the function of left-dislocation in Petjoh. Petjoh is a mixed language of low socioeconomic status spoken in the former Dutch East Indies (presently the Republic of Indonesia). It contains mainly elements of Dutch, Malay/Indonesian, and Javanese.

A specific form of left-dislocation consisting of a Noun Phrase (NP) and a Resumptive Pronoun (RP) is found in high frequency in Petjoh. My explanation for its presence is based on discourse function. I propose that the RP enhances and increases the topicality of the NP. I will discuss some of the sentences with this NP + RP construction and the four environments in which it is found.

1.0 Indies Dutch and Petjoh

The analysed mixed language is called *Petjoh* by some people, (I will use this name). It is also called *Javindo*, *Bad Dutch*, or *Djedar djedur*. The Dutch language in the East Indies or Indies Dutch was a continuum of which Petjoh and Javindo are intermediates. On the one side, this continuum had the Dutch as spoken by recently arrived Dutch immigrants. On the other side was the Dutch spoken by the Eurasian child of a non-Dutch speaking Indonesian mother, whose first language was therefore not Dutch, but Javanese, Sundanese, or any of the more than 250 languages spoken in the Indies.

Before 1850, Dutch was hardly used by Eurasians in the East Indies. Even in 1900, a survey of 1,500 first class students, most of them Eurasians, showed that 40 percent of them did not understand any Dutch, and 29 percent understood only a few words. But by 1920, the situation had changed completely. Middle and upper class Eurasians as well as recently arrived Dutch children spoke grammatically correct Dutch. There were, of course, dialectal differences in phonetics, intonation, and accent. Away from school, most children spoke a dialect from anywhere on the continuum of Indies Dutch.

A continuum also existed in socioeconomic status of the speakers. This status was narrowly tied in with a knowledge of grammatically correct Dutch. The socioeconomic continuum ranged from Eurasians of high status, such as doctors, lawyers, generals, teachers, etc., who lived in big houses with many servants, to Eurasians of low status with low income, who lived at the edge of

the kampong (native village). The Indies Dutch language continuum ran parallel to the socioeconomic status of its speakers and ranged from a supercorrect Dutch for high social status, to dialects such as Petjoh with very low status.

There were primarily two kinds of Petjoh speakers. One kind could not speak grammatically correct Dutch. They regarded Petjoh as bad Dutch, a socially low status language, and a reflection on their own status. The other Petjoh speaker could also speak grammatically correct Dutch, which became his/her main language. Petjoh is dying out. No new speakers are born or made because there is no longer a language continuum with Dutch at one end. Some original speakers have moved. After World War II, in the late 1950s, some 100,000 Eurasians were repatriated to the Netherlands. Decreolizing of the Petjoh takes place because of continuous contact of the speakers with standard Dutch. Other original speakers simply grow old and die off.

Eurasians who opted to become Indonesian citizens and stayed in Indonesia after Indonesia's Independence at the end of 1949 did not speak Dutch anymore. For them, decreolizing took place because of continuous contact with Indonesian, Javanese, Sundanese, and many of the other languages. In Indonesia, there is still an older generation of native Indonesians who learned Dutch at school. Occasionally they speak Dutch, but this is generally grammatically correct Dutch, not Petjoh.

From the mid-1980s on, an increased interest in every aspect of past colonial life is noticeable in the Netherlands. It resulted in several ongoing academic studies. Not much has been published on Indies Dutch.

2.0 Functions of Left Dislocation

Many grammatical constructions can be explained by their function in discourse. Best known are the use of passive and antipassive, dative shift, and the topic of this paper, left- dislocation (LD).

Several studies (Foley and Van Valin, Duranti and Ochs, and Givón) have indicated that the primary function of LD is the introduction of a new referent or the reintroduction of a previously mentioned referent.

Duranti and Ochs report that LD in Italian is not found in spoken or written Italian discourse, but only in conversations. They find LD not only in Subject position but also in direct object and in indirect object positions.

In Petjoh, LD has the form of a noun-phrase (often proper noun) in the grammatical subject slot, which is followed by a

pronoun. I will refer to this referential pronoun as a resumptive pronoun, RP.

An intransitive clause in Petjoh:

- (1) En toen SI SJAANTJE loop weg.
And then Si Sjaantje walks away.
 'And then Si Sjaantje walks away'.

A clause with RP:

- (2) Maar DJOEFRIE **hij** maf.
But Djoefrie he snoozes.
 'But Djoefrie snoozes'.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Data base

The analyzed data was taken from *Ik en Bentiet* written by Vincent Mahieu under the pseudonym Tjalie Robinson. *Ik en Bentiet* is one of the very few accounts in Petjoh or similar dialects. There is *Het Javindo, de verboden taal* written by V.E. de Gruiter who, with some friends, recreated the dialect spoken in Semarang and Central Java, a dialect based on Javanese. There is *Si Dogol and Si Tolol* written by Felix Mathéron. His short stories recount events of repatriated Eurasians in Holland. *Je-lâh-je-rot* and *Je-lâh-je-kripoet* are anthologies with the best stories and jokes from *Tong Tong*, a bi-weekly magazine. Few of these stories and jokes are written in Petjoh, but all of the above mentioned books and booklets have stories containing LDs.

Ik en Bentiet is a series of short stories that describe the adventures of Tjalie, 'Lie', and his friend Si Bentiet. Tjalie and Bentiet are both in their early teens, ten to twelve years old. Many of their adventures take place in the afternoon, the hottest time of the day. It is siesta time, that period of the day when their parents and other adults are resting in their bedrooms. The world is open to be explored by adventurers. Tjalie and Bentiet are the Huck Finns in the world of Jakarta, or better, the world of Batavia in the 1930s. The stories carry a nostalgic longing for a world that ended with the beginning of World War II.

In those days, Batavia was the seat of the Dutch colonial government. The language of status was Dutch, although the Dutch were a numerical minority. Many languages were spoken in Batavia which was situated in West Java where the native population speaks Sundanese. Javanese was also a prominent language because of the many Javanese that had come to live in the Capitol. The Lingua

Franca was Malay which was used between mainly native and non-native speakers of Dutch. Melayu Betawi was a specific Malay dialect spoken there also, mainly by 'Anak Betawi' (Children of Batavia), longtime inhabitants of Batavia. The Petjoh spoken (or written) by Tjalie Robinson is influenced by all these neighboring languages.

3.2 Type of sentences

The first five chapters of *Ik en Bentiet* were analyzed. Some of the clauses do not contain a subject and/or a verb. Some consist of a single word, an interjection, a verb, or an adverb. Some clauses are in Malay, other clauses in Dutch. I counted complete clauses, clauses of the form **S/AVP**, because LD constructions were found in the subject slot. I left out SQ (subject + quotative verb) clauses, which consisted of the pronouns *ik*, *hij*, or *zij*, 'I, he, or she', and the verb *seht*, *seh* 'say, says'. Including these clauses obfuscates the relative frequency of RPs. The following table sums up the results.

Table I

	S/A V (P)	S/A RP V (P)
%	88	12

4.0 Discussion

4.1 Frequency and use of RP

The table of syntactic constructions shows a relatively large number of clauses containing a resumptive pronoun (RP). A total of 23 constructions with RP were found in this sample of 197 clauses, or 12 %.

The explanation for the use of the resumptive pronoun was sought in discourse function. In Petjoh, these RPs could be found in the following four different environments:

1. introducing a new referent
2. reintroducing an old referent
3. alternating actor/speaker in consecutive clauses
4. revealing the unexpected

4.2 Introducing a new referent: seven cases

A construction with an RP is used when a new referent is introduced, as in the following example:

- (3) Wattemeer MIJN FADER **hij** ferhis sèh,
What more my father he mistook himself,
 bij Burhelijk Stant.
at County Office.
 'Furthermore, my father made a mistake at the county office'.

In the first 13 lines of this story (chapter 1), the father has not been named.

4.3 Reintroducing an old referent: nine cases

Among the sampled clauses, the distance between the clause containing the RP and the time the referent was named last is a minimum of 3 clauses. The old referent had to be reintroduced because too many events had occurred.

- (4) Sij (de bibih) ferstaat toh niet.
She (the woman) understands surely not.
 'She (the woman) surely doesn't understand'.
- (5) Dese.
These.
 'This'.
- (6) En dan hij (Bentiet) laat sien een tjabé
And then he (Bentiet) lets see a tjabé
 rawit.
rawit.
 'And then he (Bentiet) shows a small chili pepper'.
- (7) Aseesee.
Acc. (Accord)
 'Okay'.
- (8) Ik haat naar de andere kant
I go to the other side
 'I go to the other side'.
- (9) en dan ik stoot tehen de bang
and then I bump against the bench
 'and then I bump against the bench'.
- (10) en dan ik brult: 'Adauw-adauw-adauw!'
and then I roar: 'Ouch-ouch-ouch!'
 and then I roar: 'Ouch-ouch-ouch!'

- (11) En dan DE BIBH, **sij** brul ook : 'Adauw-
And then the sales woman, she roars also:
 adauw-adauw
'Ouch-ouch-ouch'
 'And then the saleswoman roars also : Ouch-ouch-ouch!'

4.4 Alternating actor/speaker in consecutive clauses: eight cases

In some instances, consecutive clauses contain RPs; speakers or actors alternate in every consecutive clause. An example of alternating actors follows.

- (12) En toen SI DJOEFRIE **hij** djongkok om op
And then Si Djoefrie he squats to up
 te prapen.
to pick.
 'And then Si Djoefrie squats to pick it up'.
- (13) En toen SI BENTIET **hij** pak Tjap
And then Si Bientiet he takes Tjap
 Westminster één hele pakje,
Westminster one whole pack.
 sampé prop in mijn keel van de srik.
until lump in my throat of the scare.
 'And then Si Bientiet steals a whole pack of
 Westminster (brand of cigarettes) and fear caused a lump
 in my throat'.
- (14) Maar DJOEFRIED **hij** maf.
But Djoefrie he snoozes.
 'But Djoefrie snoozes'.

4.5 Revealing the unexpected: three cases

In some cases the author, Tjalie, reveals a characteristic of his buddy, Bientiet. In this case, it is the speaker/author who has the needs of the hearer/reader in mind. There are only three examples in this data base.

- (15) Na ini, als praten heleerd, SI BENTIET **hij** is
Nah this, if talk scholarly, Si Bientiet he is
 altijd bang.
always afraid.
 'Si Bientiet is always afraid, when one talks scholarly'.

In the stories, Bentiet is portrayed as the fearless hero who is also street smart, but suddenly a flaw is revealed, Bentiet's fear of learned talk. Bentiet's command of standard Dutch is also lacking. The way Bentiet mixes up idiomatic expressions is the main part of a chapter. This is introduced in the following way.

- (16) Als SI BENTIET **hij** praat nonsens, betoel
If Si Bentiet he talks nonsense, sure hij
 stoethaspel zijn taalles, ik weet.
he bungles his grammar lesson, I know.
 'I know that when Si Bentiet talks nonsense, he surely bungles his Dutch grammar lesson'.

The following RP can also be argued to be of informative value to the hearer. The opening paragraph of chapter five contains an RP, although the only person talked about is Bentiet. His action is contrary to what is expected, and an RP is used to emphasize this.

- (17) Op een dah ik ontmoet Si Bentiet haat noh
 (On) *one day I meet Si Bentiet goes still*
 stroop drinken bij 't depot-es.
stroop drink at the (walking) ice shop.
 'One day I met Si Bentiet at the depôt-es, where he was drinking stroop'.
- (18) Al op zijn stroop, alleen ijs-nja is nog
All gone his stroop, only ice-nja is still
 twee stuks in de glas.
two pieces in the glass.
 'His stroop was already gone. There were only two ice cubes in his glass'.
- (19) Maar SI BENTIET **hij** haat niet weh.
But Si Bentiet he goes not away.
 'But Si Bentiet did not go away'.

5.0 Expected - not present.

So far the environments where we can expect a RP to appear are fairly well defined. There were a few instances where my predictions were not borne out. I can find a psychological factor for the following construction.

- (1) En toen Si Sjaantje loop weg.
And then Si Sjaantje walks away.
 'And then Si Sjaantje walks away'.

The story goes as follows. Tjalie goes to Si Bentiet's house and whistles for Si Bentiet. Si Sjaantje, Bentiet's sister, shows up, and a conversation ensues which deteriorates into a verbal duel. Sjaantje insults Tjalie, whereupon Tjalie promises to beat up Sjaantje. At this critical moment, Bentiet slides out of the tree where he has been hiding, and the following exchange of words between Tjalie and Bentiet takes place.

- (20) Ik seht: 'Jij hoor alles in de boom!'
I say: 'You hear all in the tree!'
 'I say: 'You hear everything in the tree!'
- (21) Hij seh: 'Alles ik hoor!'
He says: 'All I hear!'
 'He says: 'I hear everything!'
- (22) Ik seht: 'Wie njang fuil dese!'
I say: 'Who who dirty these!'
 'I say: Who plays dirty ?'
- (23) Hij seh: 'Si Sjaantje, ik weet. Maar ik
He says: 'Si Sjaantje, I know. But I
 njang beuk!'
who beat!'
 'He says: Sjaantje, I know. But I am the one who fights!'

This exchange started as a possible fight between the two friends because Bentiet is honor bound to defend his sister. The next clause is:

- (1) En toen Si Sjaantje loop weg.
And then Si Sjaantje walks away.
 'And then Sjaantje walks away'.

and the story ends with:

- (24) En toen ik speelt met Si Bentiet.
And then I play with Si Bentiet.
 'And then I play with Si Bentiet',
- (25) En toen al.
And then all.
 'And that's all'.

At this point it is much more important that Tjalie and Bentiët are friends again than what happens to Si Sjaantje. Consequently, in this case, the resumptive pronoun is not used because it is not necessary to emphasize Sjaantje and what she does.

6.0 Conclusion

Explanations for syntactic constructions are being found frequently in discourse function. Philosophically, it makes sense to explain surface forms from the point of view of the daily spoken language. In this case where the data base is a simulated dialogue between two friends, an explanation emphasizing a functional aspect seems to be more pertinent. Although there are not as many hesitations, false starts, and incomplete clauses as in real conversation, an imitation of a real life dialogue is simulated in these stories about *Ik en Bentiët*, (my data base).

In this paper, I have explained and predicted a seemingly superfluous syntactical construction, left-dislocation, by its function in discourse. The appearance of this construction is in defined environments. The function is to enhance and draw attention to new information, activate old information, prevent misunderstanding, and draw attention to newsworthy events. If the purpose of language is communication, then a device like LD is very important.

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