

The Issue of contextual Punctuation Studies on Right Dislocation and Afterthought

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■ Overview

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■ Overview

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■ 1. Background

- What **are** Right Dislocation and Afterthought?

- „They are crazy, these Romans!“

- taking the referent being talked about out of his base position and putting it in the rightmost slot of the sentence

- „They are crazy! These Romans (I mean).“

- adding a clarifying noun phrase after producing an ambiguous pronominal reference

■ 1. Background

- Right Dislocations (RD) and Afterthoughts (AT) examined only in spoken utterances
- well understood and differentiated in terms of their prosodic, syntactic and informational structure (e.g. Lambrecht 2001)
 - RD used when only one referent given in preceding context
 - AT used when two competing referents given in preceding context

■ 1. Background

- RD and AT used in written novels as well (Kalbertodt 2011)
- naive readers recognize RD and AT correctly (Kalbertodt 2013)

→ which parameter triggers this identification? Preceding context, punctuation, or even both?

■ 1. Background

- Theories on German punctuation suggest:
 - RD is marked with a comma because it is neither fully integrated in the sentence nor fully desintegrated
 - AT is marked with a full stop because it is connected to the previous sentence not via its syntax but via its pragmatic function

(e.g. Primus 2008)

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■ 2.1) Experiment 1 - Design and Hypotheses

- Pre-test to account for the reliability of participants
- 10 AT and 10 RD chosen by their contexts
- participants were given:
 - the already punctuated contexts
 - the non-punctuated target sentences
- Task: punctuate the target sentences
- punctuation inventory reduced to full stop and comma

■ 2.1) Experiment 1 - Design and Hypotheses

pre-test example:

anna und tom möchten eine party feiern denn beide haben gerade ihren abschluss gemacht wegen eines großen anteils an vegetariern in ihrem freundeskreis haben sie lange überlegt was sie kochen sollen

anna and tom want to have a party because they both passed their final exams due to a **vast** number of vegetarians among their friends they thought a lot about what to cook

■ 2.1) Experiment 1 - Design and Hypotheses

pre-test example:

anna und tom möchten eine party feiern, denn beide haben gerade ihren abschluss gemacht. wegen eines großen anteils an vegetariern in ihrem freundeskreis ∅ haben sie lange überlegt, was sie kochen sollen.

anna and tom want to have a party because they both passed their final exams. due to a great number of vegetarians among their friends, they thought a lot about what to cook.

■ 2.1) Experiment 1 - Design and Hypotheses

- Hypotheses:
 - If the participants identify RD because of the given context correctly, they will mark the target sentence with a comma
 - If the participants identify AT because of the given context correctly, they will mark the target sentence with a full stop

■ 2.1) Experiment 1 - Design and Hypotheses

main task example:

S: Es sind nur noch siebzig Sekunden! **Felix** jetzt mit der sechsten Kiste. **Thomas** sitzt auf der zehnten. Noch eine Minute. Siebte Kiste jetzt bei **Felix**. Jetzt kommt **er**! Wann reagiert der **Thomas**? Ah, **er** sitzt auf der Elf, seh ich grade. **Felix** mit einem Wahnsinns-Finish jetzt! Kommt **er** da noch mal ran? Noch 34 Sekunden! Also, das wär natürlich der Oberknaller,

→ wenn **er** hier zu lange gewartet hätte der **thomas**

■ 2.1) Experiment 1 - Design and Hypotheses

main task example:

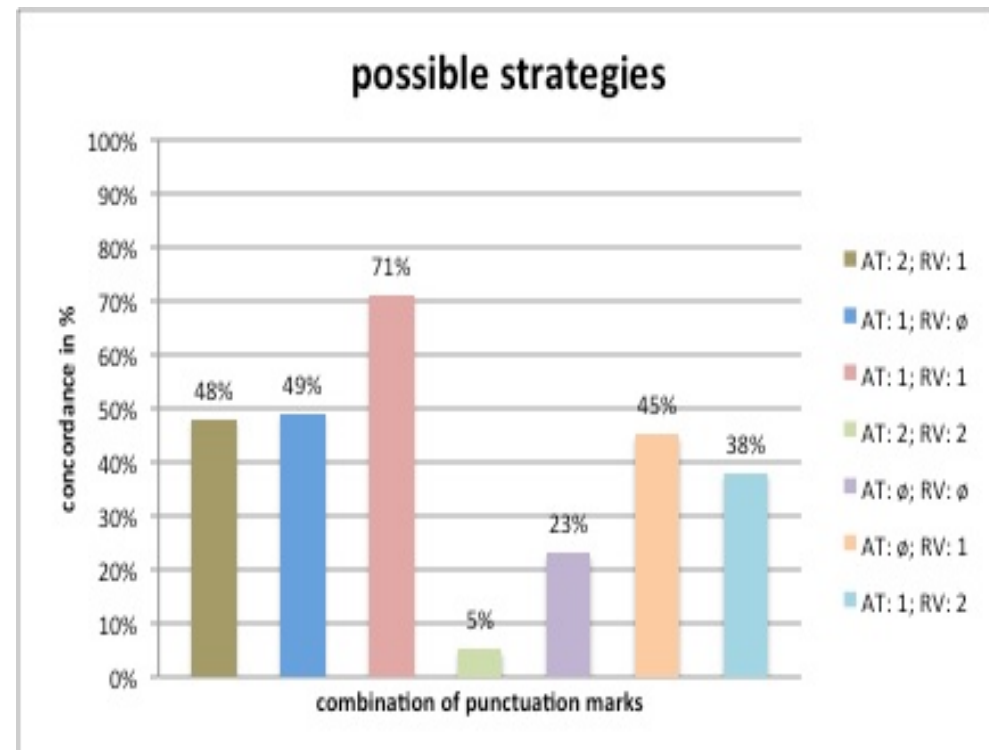
S: Es sind nur noch siebzig Sekunden! **Felix** jetzt mit der sechsten Kiste. **Thomas** sitzt auf der zehnten. Noch eine Minute. Siebte Kiste jetzt bei **Felix**. Jetzt kommt **er**! Wann reagiert der **Thomas**? Ah, **er** sitzt auf der Elf, seh ich grade. **Felix** mit einem Wahnsinns-Finish jetzt! Kommt **er** da noch mal ran? Noch 34 Sekunden! Also, das wär natürlich der Oberknaller,

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■ 2.2) Experiment 1 - Results

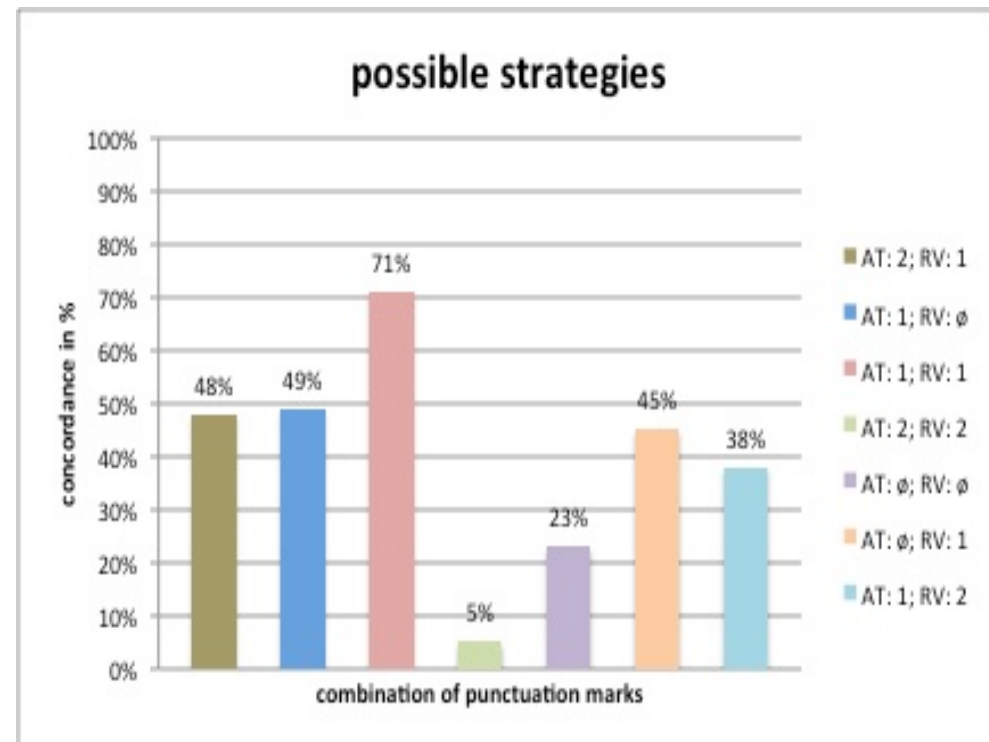
- 15 out of 27 participants (55%) had to be excluded because they did not pass the pre-test
 - the other 12 participants did not confirm the hypotheses
- maybe other strategies have been used than the ones hypothesized

2.2) Experiment 1 - Results



2.2) Experiment 1 - Results

- mere tendency to mark both RD and AT with comma
- all other possible strategies have not been used



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■ 3.1) Experiment 2 - Design and Hypotheses

- 8 control sentences
- 10 AT and 10 RD chosen by their contexts
- participants were given:
 - the already punctuated contexts
 - the punctuated target sentences (∅, comma, or full stop)
- Task: decide whether the punctuation of the target sentence is correct or not

■ 3.1) Experiment 2 - Design and Hypotheses

filler example:

A: Maite ist ne sehr nette. Herz auf der Zunge und ehrliche Haut und das gefiel mir sehr gut. Und auch, dass sie, wie gesagt, sehr ehrgeizig war, gefiel mir auch.

Weil ich finde wenn man so was macht dann muss man da auch mit dem nötigen Ernst, und Ehrgeiz ran gehen.

korrekt interpungiert falsch interpungiert

■ 3.1) Experiment 2 - Design and Hypotheses

- Hypotheses:
 - If the participants identify RD because of the given context correctly
 - RD marked with \emptyset will be judged wrong
 - RD marked with full stop will be judged wrong
 - RD with comma will be judged correct

■ 3.1) Experiment 2 - Design and Hypotheses

- Hypotheses (2):
 - If the participants identify AT because of the given context correctly
 - AT marked with \emptyset will be judged wrong
 - AT marked with comma will be judged wrong
 - AT marked with full stop will be judged correct

■ 3.1) Experiment 2 - Design and Hypotheses

target sentence example:

B: Ja, schlafen ist super. Ich kenne viele **Eltern, die** ihren ganzen Tagesablauf mit **den Kindern** nur darauf anlegen, dass **die Kinder** abends um acht dann auch wirklich im Bett sind. Also **die** müssen richtig fertig sein, durch den Garten gerannt, und dann schlafen.

Damit sie zehn Stunden Ruhe haben. Die Eltern.

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■ 3.1) Experiment 2 - Design and Hypotheses

target sentence example:

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korrekt interpungiert falsch interpungiert

■ 3.2) Experiment 2 - Results

- 6 out of 36 participants had to be excluded from analysis (around 17%) because they judged less than 75% of the control sentences correctly
- the remaining data did not truly support the hypotheses (only 60% concordance)

■ 3.2) Experiment 2 - Results

- but there were some tendencies:
 - 2/3 had a clear punctuation preference
 - 1/2 of them even only allowed for comma
 - BUT: no differentiation of RD and AT!

 - 1/3 differentiated RD and AT via their punctuation
 - BUT: in 10 people there were 4 different strategies!

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■ 4. Conclusion

- punctuation competence of the participants is generally not sufficient to employ punctuation studies
 - importance of punctuation decreases in daily life (sms, private emails, WhatsApp)
 - rules in the Duden are too many and too confusing (26 separate rules for comma, only 5 for full stop)

■ 4. Conclusion

- most of the time, RD and AT have not been differentiated
- tendency to use a comma regardless of the construction

■ 5. Outlook

- the question remains what the trigger of the correct identification of RD and AT in written language is
- to examine this question, future research has to find another, more suitable, paradigm



THANK YOU!

References

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