Abstract:

This paper looks at one topic-comment construction in spoken Brazilian Portuguese (BP). The construction is very close to what Li and Thompson (1976) have called “double-subject sentence” for Mandarin and other topic-prominent languages. Essentially, the structure is as in (1), with an initial NP followed by a sentence, where the initial NP is a discourse topic and the following sentence is a comment about the topic.

(1) NP, NP VP

This construction is prescriptively inconvenient in BP and so somewhat controversial, and so a healthy part of this paper explores the place of this construction in the language. Another part of this paper asks what sort of semantic contribution the initial topic NPs make to the sentences in which they appear. In this regard, a willing home is found for the topics in the multi-dimensional semantics of Potts (2005).

REFERENCES
