THE ENGLISH *IT*-CLEFT CONSTRUCTION: A ROLE AND REFERENCE GRAMMAR ANALYSIS

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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

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SUMMARY

In this thesis, I examine the *it*-cleft construction in English and propose an analysis within a Role and Reference Grammar framework that links the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic characteristics of the construction. I argue that the *it*-cleft construction, a bi-clausal syntactic structure with a largely unambiguous focus structure, can only be understood through examining the interaction of syntax, semantics and information structure that it entails. The non-derivational, integrated approach offered through Role and Reference Grammar provides a way of explaining and describing familial similarities between *it*-cleft constructions and other constructions without complex derivational processes. The analysis that I present in this thesis enables a close and revealing comparison between the *it*-cleft and other cleft constructions (such as *there*-clefts and pseudoclefts), other copular sentences, and relative clause constructions.

The first four chapters of the thesis constitute the foundational basis for the analytical chapters that follow. Chapter two provides a detailed description of key features of the *it*-cleft construction as a type of cleft construction and as a type of copular construction. Chapter three critically examines current literature and previous studies concerning the *it*-cleft construction from a variety of theoretical perspectives and highlights key issues that arise. Chapter four gives an overview of all aspects of Role and Reference Grammar theory. The final chapters discuss the constituents of the *it*-cleft construction and the interaction between them in detail, offering new insights into the characterization of these features, particularly in terms of the issues that arise from the literature review. These insights are framed in Role and Reference Grammar terms, which enable a clear and explanatory account of the construction. I propose syntactic, semantic and pragmatic representations for the *it*-cleft construction, and the linking process between them is discussed in detail. Finally, I comment on approaches to cross-linguistic comparison of the *it*-cleft construction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I examine the *it*-cleft construction in English and propose an analysis within a Role and Reference Grammar framework that links the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic characteristics of the construction. I argue that the *it*-cleft construction, a bi-clausal syntactic structure with the specificational function of specifying a value for a variable (DeClerck 1988), can only be understood through examining the interaction of syntax, semantics and information structure that its interpretation involves. This short introductory chapter begins by introducing the main proposals of the thesis. In the subsequent two sections, I summarize the contents of each chapter of the thesis and explain the methodology used in obtaining data. Finally, I give detailed definitions for key terms that form the basis for the analysis in part two of the thesis.

1.1 Main proposals of thesis

I argue in this thesis that each of the constituent elements of the *it*-cleft construction participate in its interpretation. The distinction in form and meaning between *it*-cleft and '*there*-cleft' constructions demonstrates the role of the cleft pronoun in indicating semantic differences between the constructions. I show that the clefted constituent functions as a type of pragmatic predicate, participating in the essentially pragmatic rather than semantic predicative function of the construction. The cleft clause represents the 'variable' element, or at least its description. The variable itself is a semantic and pragmatic element that is not necessarily expressed in the syntactic form of the construction. The essentially pragmatic function of the construction means that the relevant constituents of information structure, such as 'value' and 'variable' are not always straightforwardly mirrored by constituents in the

syntactic representation. Only an analysis that represents semantic and pragmatic features of the construction can show and explain this interaction.

I also demonstrate that the *it*-cleft construction involves two key interconnected relationships. Firstly, *it*-clefts show familial similarities with other types of 'specificational' cleft constructions and sentences involving the copular verb *be*; that is, those that have the pragmatic function of specifying a value for a variable. Secondly, there is a 'relative clause-type' relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause, comparable to that in restrictive relative clauses.

Derivational accounts of the *it*-cleft construction in the literature tend to focus on one or the other of these characteristics: 'extrapositional' accounts (*e.g.* Akmajian 1970, Gundel 1977) focus primarily on the *it*-cleft as a copular sentence while 'expletive' accounts (*e.g.* Heggie 1988, Kiss 1998) highlight the comparison with relative clauses and non-cleft sentences. The interaction of these two aspects of the construction is essential to a thorough understanding of the *it*-cleft construction as a whole (as also observed by Davidse 2000 and Hedberg 2000). I argue that while comparisons with other structurally or functionally similar constructions are helpful, *it*-cleft constructions are non-compositional. They do not correspond to 'the sum of their parts' in the sense that they are not straightforwardly composed of constituents (in agreement with, for example, Huddleston 1984, Lambrecht 1994, 2001).

The non-derivational Role and Reference Grammar analysis I present in this thesis has the advantage of not being forced to 'choose' between potential derivational sources, since it is able to account for the semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic features of the *it*-cleft construction without multiple layers of abstraction. The interlinked syntactic, semantic and pragmatic representations of the Role and Reference Grammar analysis of the *it*-cleft construction integrate these features.

In assessing the *it*-cleft as a copular construction, the analysis shows that while the construction shares a specificational pragmatic and semantic function with other copular sentences (reflected in its semantic representation) its form is significantly distinct: the 'variable' is represented by a subordinate linked clause rather than a noun phrase. This thesis highlights the consequences of this difference in form for comparison with other specificational constructions.

In parallel with this, a comparison between the Role and Reference Grammar analyses of *it*-cleft and relative clause constructions demonstrates that they share a relationship between a variable within the subordinate clause and an antecedent. The difference in form and consequently in interpretation lies in the nature of the antecedent as a complete noun phrase (*it*-clefts) or a head noun (relative clauses) (following Davidse 2000, Lambrecht 2001).

1.2 Summary of thesis contents

The first four chapters of the thesis constitute the foundation for the analytical chapters that follow. In chapter 1, I summarize the thesis and discuss some key terms. Chapter 2 provides a detailed description of key features of the *it*-cleft construction as a type of cleft construction and as a type of copular construction. In chapter 3, I critically examine current literature and previous studies concerning the *it*-cleft construction from a variety of theoretical perspectives and highlight key issues that arise. Chapter 4 consists of an overview of all aspects of Role and Reference Grammar theory. In chapter 5, I discuss in detail the constituents of the *it*-cleft construction and the interaction between them, offering new insights into the characterization of these elements, particularly in terms of the issues that arise from the literature review. I frame these insights in Role and Reference Grammar terms in chapter 6. The syntactic, semantic and pragmatic structure for the *it*-cleft construction is proposed, and I discuss

the linking process between them in detail. This enables a clear and explanatory account of the construction. Finally, chapter 7 highlights typological aspects of the *it*-cleft construction.

1.3 Data collection methodology

In order to illustrate and support the discussion of the issues surrounding the *it*-cleft construction, care has been taken to use data that reflect spoken language. In some cases, examples of unscripted spoken English are taken from transcriptions of interviews, where these are word-for-word transcriptions of what was said. Examples of this are the transcriptions of interviews with Tony Blair, which I accessed through the Internet. In certain cases, informal written data were retrieved from the Internet in order to highlight differences in use between spoken and written language.

Other data come from unscripted speech on various programmes broadcast on television. I endeavoured to ensure that the analysis relies on actual examples. However, in some cases, particularly where discussing other studies in the literature, I use examples given by the authors of those studies. In some cases, their data come from corpora of spoken language, in other cases either the authors have created their examples or the source is not explicitly stated. This variation in the type of data used reflects two goals of the analysis and discussion. On the one hand, it is important to examine the possible grammatical permutations of cleft constructions in English, for example to account for potential patterns in reflexivization. For this purpose, and for the illustration of the Role and Reference Grammar structures, sentences were created. On the other hand, the analysis should also be grounded in an understanding of the use of the *it*-cleft construction and its functional role in discourse; for this, actual texts were used.

1.4 Definition of key terms

In this section, I define several key terms crucial for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction, since studies in the literature often use these terms with various meanings. The definitions and discussions focus on the application of the terms to the description of noun phrases. However, a clear understanding of the terms 'identifiability', 'definiteness', 'specificity', and 'referentiality' is also important for the analysis of the semantic characteristics of the *it*-cleft construction and how these correlate, or not, with syntactic constituents and pragmatic functions of the construction. Other terms are discussed as they occur in the following chapters.

Table 1.1 gives examples of all the terms discussed in this section. An example of a predicate nominal is also included.[1]

Semantic function	**Grammatical coding**	**Pragmatic interpretation**		Examples
REFERRING EXPRESSION	DEFINITE[1]	SPECIFIC	REFERENTIAL	The dog is eating your shoe.
			NON (OR 'WEAKLY') REFERENTIAL (or 'attributive')	The previous tenant broke it. Who is the bank robber? The bank robber is Jesse James. (DeClerck 1988:47)
	INDEFINITE[2]	SPECIFIC	REFERENTIAL	A dog is eating your shoe.
			NON-REFERENTIAL	A friend of mine gave this hat to me.
		NON-SPECIFIC	NON-REFERENTIAL (or 'attributive')	A computer expert will come to have a look. (Rouchota 1994:441) Mary didn't get a letter.
PREDICATE	PREDICATIONAL	NON-SPECIFIC	NON-REFERENTIAL	Monica is a chef.

[1] Usually marking 'identifiable' or 'given' referents.

[2] Usually marking 'unidentifiable' or newly introduced descriptions or referents.

Table 1.1 Classification of non-generic noun phrases with English examples

Essentially, the terms identifiability, specificity and referentiality relate to the cognitive status and pragmatic interpretation of noun phrases.[2] Definiteness, on the

[1] Generic uses of noun phrases are omitted here.

other hand, is a grammatical category that concerns the expression of these cognitive statuses.

1.4.1 Definiteness

Following Lambrecht (1994) and Lyons (1999), definiteness is understood here as a formal grammatical category generally marked with articles. Definite noun phrases in English have definite determiners (1a), and indefinite noun phrases generally have indefinite determiners (1b).[3]

(1) a. the nervous guy DEFINITE NOUN PHRASE
b. a nervous guy INDEFINITE NOUN PHRASE

A noun phrase grammatically marked as definite generally codes or signals identifiability of its referent (Lambrecht 1994:79; the term 'identifiability' is discussed below). Rouchota (1994) explains that while both "set up conceptual representations…definite descriptions encode the additional (procedural) information that the representations they set up are easily accessible" (1994:452). In the literature, definiteness is often defined in terms of the properties of the referent of the noun phrase, rather than as a grammatical marking device. Such definitions generally focus on either the identifiability or familiarity of the referent of the noun phrase, or on its uniqueness or 'inclusiveness'. For example, Trask emphasizes identifiability in his definition of definite noun phrases as those "whose reference is seen as clearly established, or clearly establishable from the linguistic or extralinguistic context" (1993:74). On the other hand, Russell (1905) gives a logical description of definiteness that emphasizes the uniqueness aspect of definite descriptions rather than their identifiability. He claims that

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[2] Cognitive (or activation) status refers to the position of the referent in the hearer's consciousness. Gundel, Hedberg and Zacharski define it as indicating "information about location in memory and attention state" (1993:274). (See section 4.4.1.)

[3] Indefinite noun phrases involving mass nouns (*e.g. furniture*) and bare plurals, as in (i), do not include determiners.

(i) Seagulls sound like old women being kidnapped.

the sentence in (2) can be represented by three propositions, where (2a) and (b) describe the definite noun phrase (cited by Lyons 1999:255).

(2) The King of France is bald.
   a. There is a King of France. EXISTENCE
   b. There is only one King of France. UNIQUENESS
   c. This individual is bald.

Russell (1905) claims that existence of the referent (2a) is asserted since it could be negated (*The King of France is not bald – because there is no King of France*; cited by Lyons 1999:256). However, subsequent studies such as Strawson (1950) assert that definite noun phrases, such as in (2), are generally interpreted as presupposing both the existence (2a) and the uniqueness (2b) of the referent.

Hawkins (1978) describes the uniqueness or inclusiveness expressed by (2b) as referring to "the totality of the objects or mass within [a shared set]" (Lyons 1999:261). DeClerck (1988:20 fn) argues that inclusiveness is not presupposed, but is an implicature available in this context as a consequence of the identifiability of the referent. She illustrates this with the example given here as (3).

(3) The one who brought in <u>the wickets</u> after the game left one on the pitch.

The context in (3) prevents the noun phrase *the wickets* from having an inclusive interpretation. In other words, the noun phrase *the wickets* cannot be interpreted as referring inclusively to everything corresponding to the description 'wickets' since the sentence states that one member of the set denoted by *wickets* was left behind. The possibility of cancelling the inclusiveness interpretation suggests that inclusiveness, as a feature of definite noun phrases, is not presupposed or inherent but is implied by the identifiability of the referent. In the same way, DeClerck argues that the exhaustive interpretation of the clefted constituent in an *it*-cleft construction is a consequence of its specificational function (see section 2.2.4 for further discussion). The analogous

inclusive understanding of the clefted constituent is therefore significant for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction in chapters 5 and 6.

In addition, there is no exact one-to-one correspondence between identifiability and definiteness. Rouchota (1994:461) provides an instance of an indefinite noun phrase used to code a referent familiar to both the speaker and the hearer (given in (4a)).

(4) a. A convicted embezzler is flirting with your sister.
b. I'll get the butler to show you out. (Lyons 1999:263)

The sentence in (4b), on the other hand, contains an example of a definite noun phrase where "the locatibility of the referent…the fact that this household has a butler…may be complete news to the hearer" (Lyons 1999:263). As Lyons notes, the success of the use of the definite noun phrase to code this 'unidentifiable' referent depends upon cooperation from the hearer in "accept[ing] the definite reference as thus informing him" (1999:263). These variations in interpretation are a reflection of the communicative use of definiteness: Van Valin and LaPolla note that the hearer assumes that "the speaker will choose a form for the sentence that will allow the hearer to create the proper (*i.e.* most relevant) context of interpretation with the least amount of processing effort" (1997:201).

Thus, while identifiability is universally expressed, its expression through the grammatical category of definiteness is pragmatically conditioned. Its expression is also language-specific: some languages do not grammaticalize definiteness and yet express identifiability (Lambrecht 1994:87, Lyons 1999:278).[4] In addition, while identifiability is scalar, in as much as referents can have various degrees of cognitive status,

[4] Lambrecht (1994:86) provides the following examples from Czech, where the identifiability of the noun phrase *kniha* ('book') is expressed through the syntactic position of the noun phrase:
(i) Kniha je na stole. IDENTIFIABLE
'The book is on the table.'
(ii) Na stole je kniha. UNIDENTIFIABLE
'On the table (there) is a book.'

definiteness is binary: referents are coded as either definite or indefinite in languages that mark this grammatically (Lambrecht 1994:84).

The coding of a referent as definite (a reflection of its level of identifiability, or cognitive status) also interacts with its role in the information structure of the sentence. Lambrecht (1994:165) observes (as do Sperber and Wilson 1998) that there is a correlation between the cognitive status of referents and their acceptability as topics that is related to processing effort.[5] A cognitively active referent makes a more acceptable topic since the hearer requires less effort to process that topic and can, therefore, devote more processing effort to the assertion carried by the sentence.

1.4.2 Identifiability

Lambrecht credits Chafe (1976) with the use of the term *identifiable* when "a representation exists in the addressee's mind" (Lambrecht 1994:77). Lambrecht specifies that what is significant for identifiability is not familiarity or 'knowledge' per se, but the ability of the hearer "to pick [the referent] out from among all those which can be designated with a particular linguistic expression and identify it as the one which the speaker has in mind" (1994:77). For example, a referent may be accessible to the hearer through being physically or textually present.

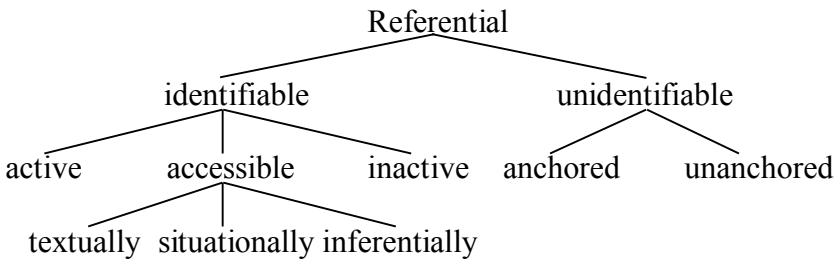

Figure 1.1 The cognitive states of referents in discourse (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:201)[6]

[5] A constituent is a topic if "the proposition expressed by the clause with which it is associated is pragmatically construed as conveying information about the referent of the constituent" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:203). (See section 4.4.1.)

[6] Van Valin and LaPolla (1997) use 'referential' here in the sense of 'pertaining to referents in discourse' and their cognitive status. The interpretation of noun phrases as 'referential' or

Figure 1.1 shows the various cognitive states identified by Van Valin and LaPolla (1997). In the process of 'picking out' or identifying the speaker's intended 'identifiable' referent, particularly when that referent is coded as a pronoun, the hearer thus searches for the most relevant referent using linguistic and non-linguistic contextual information. Utterances can "act as a prompt" to recall experiences and construct assumptions based on a shared set of "perceptible or inferable facts" termed the "mutual cognitive environment" by Sperber and Wilson (1998:39,44). It follows that if a referent is identifiable, that is, if the hearer can 'pick out' a unique referent, that referent can be said to carry a presupposition of existence in the discourse.

1.4.3 Specificity

Bennett defines specificity as dependent on "whether a unique entity is picked out" (2002:168). It concerns the question of whether the description given in the noun phrase is tied to a particular entity in the mind of the speaker.[7] Using this definition, the underlined noun phrases in the context of sentences (5a) and (5b) below are specific.

(5) a. <u>The dog</u> is eating your shoe. SPECIFIC
b. <u>A dog</u> is eating your shoe. SPECIFIC
c. Mary didn't get <u>a letter</u>. NON-SPECIFIC
d. <u>A computer expert</u> will come to have a look. NON-SPECIFIC

'non-referential' defined in section 1.4.4 below has a more precise communicative sense that relates to whether the hearer can identify the individual denoted by a noun phrase.

[7] The term specificity is used with other senses in the literature. Gundel *et al*. (1993), for example, define specific noun phrases as those having wide-scope existential readings, that is, they can be paraphrased with a sentence beginning *There is an x who…*. In Gundel *et al*.'s example below in (i), for example, there are two readings.

(i) A student in the syntax class cheated on the final exam. (Gundel *et al.* 1993:277)

Either the speaker is "intending to assert that the set of students in the syntax class who cheated on the final exam is not empty" or there is the intention to assert "of some particular student, whom he does not identify, that this student cheated" (1993:277 fn). Both of these readings, they argue, can be characterized as specific since they can be paraphrased with a sentence beginning *There is a student in the syntax class who…*. However, I would argue that the paraphrase sentence changes the context of interpretation for the noun phrase. Following the definition given above, only the latter reading (concerning a 'particular' student) can be characterized as specific, since the former does not involve the picking out of a unique entity, either by the speaker or the hearer.

The indefinite noun phrases *a letter* in (5c) and *a computer expert* in (5d), on the other hand, not only code unidentifiable referents but also have non-specific interpretations, since the speakers do not have a particular 'unique' entity in mind.

Bennett labels the non-specific use of indefinite noun phrases 'attributive' and explains, "nothing is being communicated about a specific individual, only about someone who meets the description given" (Bennett 2002:169). According to Rouchota (1994), what is relevant for a pragmatic, communication-based account in the labelling of an indefinite noun phrase as 'specific' or 'non-specific' is not so much that speaker has 'in mind' a particular individual, but whether she is "understood [by the hearer] to have intended to communicate that she has in mind a particular individual" (1994:455).[8] In (5d), for example, even if the speaker has been told on the phone that the expert in question is one she is familiar with, all she intends to communicate to the hearer is that "some expert or other" (Rouchota 1994:441) will come, which is non-specific. In that context, the indefinite noun phrase *a computer expert* is, more precisely, non-specific for the hearer. In other words, in terms of communicative intent, a noun phrase is specific if the hearer interprets it as signifying that the speaker has a particular single referent or set of referents in mind.

The non-specific interpretation of indefinite noun phrases differs from the use of indefinite noun phrases as nominal predicates since in the former case they are "weakly referring" (DeClerck 1988:47); they can set up discourse referents, as (6a) illustrates.[9]

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[8] Rouchota's (1994) analysis proposes a pragmatic account for the various interpretations of indefinite noun phrases (attributive, specific, referential, *etc.*), rather than viewing them as semantically ambiguous. Gundel *et al.* (1993) associate the uses of indefinite noun phrases with the level of cognitive status of their referents. Both studies show that the context of use in the discourse determines the cognitive status of the content of the noun phrase.

[9] As noted by Rouchota, the term 'discourse referent' (introduced by Kartunnen 1976) is distinct from the term 'referent': "a noun phrase may have a discourse referent even when it has no referent" (Rouchota 1994:450) (that is, when it is used non-specifically, as in the case of *a drug addict* in (6a) and *a letter* in (5c).

(6) a. A drug addict$_i$ spent the night here; he$_i$ left a syringe behind. (Rouchota 1994:447) NON-SPECIFIC NOUN PHRASE

b. Derek$_i$ is a teacher; he$_i$ lives with Pauline. NOMINAL PREDICATE

The pronoun *he* in (6a) has the same referent as the attributive noun phrase *a drug addict* (indicated by subscript 'i'). In (6b), on the other hand, the pronoun *he* has the same referent as *Derek*, not the nominal predicate *a teacher*.

Only unidentifiable expressions can have a non-specific interpretation. This is because if 'someone who meets the description given' is identifiable (and coded as definite), that entails that the hearer is already aware that a particular individual meeting the description exists; consequently the expression is inherently specific.[10]

1.4.4 Referentiality

The term *referentiality* is distinct from the term reference. In a broad sense, the act of reference covers the semantic function of a noun phrase in describing or denoting an entity. This definition is often used to contrast reference with predication: a 'referring expression' (*e.g.* a noun phrase) is one that is a semantic argument of a predicate, denoting a participant in a state of affairs (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:82). In this sense, all noun phrases (with the exception of grammatical 'dummy' arguments and nominal predicates) are 'referring expressions'. They are involved in the semantic act of reference, that is, the description or denotation of a participant role in a state of affairs. However, 'referring expressions' are not always used 'referentially' in the pragmatic, communicative sense described below (a distinction made, for example, by Gundel,

[10] This interpretation of identifiable referents as inherently specific contrasts somewhat with Bennett (2002) who suggests that the definite noun phrase *the tallest man in the company* in (i) is ambiguous between a "specific and non-specific interpretation" (2002:168).

(i) John is looking for the tallest man in the company.

I would suggest that both interpretations are specific in the sense described above since in both readings the speaker has in mind a particular entity. In one reading, however, the speaker may not be able to identify that entity fully (an issue of referentiality; see section 1.4.4).

Hedberg and Zacharski 1993). The examples in Table 1.1 above highlight this distinction.

Referentiality relates to the communicative act and concerns the pragmatic interpretation of noun phrases. A specific noun phrase has a referential interpretation in an utterance if it not only "refers to an entity in the world" (Bennett 2002:167) but if the hearer and the speaker pick out the same entity in 'the world'. The interpretation of referring expressions as referential is therefore "a joint achievement, undertaken by the interlocutors collaboratively, and is not simply the responsibility of the speaker alone" (Cornish 1999:20).

This process of referential interpretation is realized differently depending on the identifiability of the referent (coded as indefinite or as definite). As noted above, if the hearer cannot identify a referent through hearing an indefinite noun phrase then that noun phrase may be considered specific but is not referential (Bennett 2002:169). The following example in (7) (from Table 1.1) illustrates these different interpretations.

(7) A friend of mine gave this hat to me.

On the first, non-referential reading, the speaker is referring to a particular (specific) individual but the hearer cannot, and is not intended to, identify that individual. On the second, referential reading, the speaker is concerned with communicating information about a particular 'friend' that the hearer is expected to be able to 'pick out'; the 'friend' may possibly be the hearer herself.[11] (Gundel *et al*. 1993 imply that referentiality depends on whether the hearer can identify the referent; this is made explicit by Lyons 1999:254.) Thus, both the 'referential' and 'specific non-referential' uses of (unidentifiable) indefinite noun phrases as defined here involve a

[11] As noted above, a speaker may use an indefinite noun phrase referentially, to refer to an individual familiar to the speaker, for a particular communicative purpose. For example, if the convicted embezzler in (i) is someone they know and have just seen at a party, the speaker may be wishing to highlight a relevant characteristic of that individual (Rouchota 1994:461).

(i) A convicted embezzler is flirting with your sister.

specific, unique entity; the difference in referentiality lies in whether the hearer is able to identify that entity as a result of hearing the noun phrase.

In contrast to indefinite noun phrases, a speaker coding a noun phrase as definite indicates that the particular referent is 'identifiable' and that s/he expects the hearer to be able to retrieve an existing representation of that same referent. However, referentiality in definite noun phrases is complex. The noun phrase may only refer "in a weak sense" (DeClerck 1988:47), a sense that Donnellan (1966) labels 'attributive'.[12] In other words, the full identity of the referent of an attributive (non-referential) definite description may be unknown to the speaker and the description given in the noun phrase might represent "the only description that he can produce to refer to the [referent] in question" (DeClerck 1988:47).[13] The example in (8) illustrates this non-referential interpretation of definite noun phrases: the speaker and the hearer may not be able to fully identify, or name, the 'bank robber'.

(8) The man that robbed the bank was arrested today.

Alternatively, as discussed above for indefinite noun phrases, the speaker may be in a position to fully identify the individual but uses a description that is non-referential for the hearer: this might be to give it the role of 'variable' for which s/he then provides the 'value' (DeClerck 1988:47). Thus, the question in (9a) indicates that the noun phrase *the bank robber* is non-referential for speaker A; speaker B presents this noun phrase as the shared context onto which s/he superimposes further specificational information.[14]

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[12] This use of the term by Donnellan (1966) is analogous to the use of the term above (section 1.4.3) for the non-specific, non-referential use of indefinite noun phrases (Rouchota 1994:442, Bennett 2002:169).

[13] This contrasts with Gundel *et al*. who state, "definite expressions are always used referentially in the sense that speakers intend to refer to a particular entity in using them" (1993:276 fn). Their speaker-orientated definition is covered by the use of the term 'specific' here.

[14] DeClerck (1988:48) points out that the labelling of the variable in a specificational sentence as attributive is not new since it was noted, for example, by Fodor (1976:203).

(9) a. A: Who is the bank robber?

b. B: The bank robber is John Thomas. (DeClerck 1988:47)

The non-referential use of definite noun phrase descriptions illustrated by (8) is analogous to the non-specific, non-referential ('attributive') interpretation of indefinite noun phrases (illustrated in (5c) and (d)). In a sense, in both these uses, the description is more significant in the context than the identification of the referent that it denotes. One difference between the non-referential interpretation of definite and indefinite noun phrases is that the former are also inherently specific. Section 5.1.3 discusses the usefulness of this distinction between referential and 'weakly' or non-referential uses of definite descriptions for the analysis of the cleft clause of *it*-cleft constructions.

1.5 Conclusion

In this short introductory chapter, I have outlined the thesis and the main proposals I make. I have also provided a clarification of key terms that relate to the interpretation of noun phrases but are also essential for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction.

The integrated approach offered through Role and Reference Grammar theory in this thesis offers a way of explaining and describing familial similarities between *it*-clefts and both copular sentences and relative clauses without complex derivational processes. The analysis and structure presented in this thesis enable a close and revealing comparison between the *it*-cleft and other cleft constructions (such as *there*-clefts and pseudoclefts), other copular sentences, and relative clause constructions resulting in a comprehensive and illuminating analysis. In the next chapter, I provide an overview of the characteristic features of the *it*-cleft construction.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE *IT*-CLEFT CONSTRUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of key syntactic, semantic and pragmatic characteristics of the *it*-cleft construction in English in order to provide a framework for the literature review and Role and Reference Grammar analysis in subsequent chapters. Following a brief description of the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features of the *it*-cleft construction and the terminology used to refer to its constituents, section 2.1 examines the functional and formal properties of the *it*-cleft in comparison with other types of cleft. In section 2.2, I then describe the *it*-cleft within the more general category of specificational constructions. Finally, section 2.3 compares the *it*-cleft construction with other non-predicational copular sentence types.

The *it*-cleft is a syntactically bi-clausal construction; it comprises a main, or matrix clause containing a copula verb and a subordinate, or linked, clause. The example in (1) also provides the terms used in this thesis for the components of the *it*-cleft construction.[1]

(1) It was a Porsche that I bought.
CLEFT PRONOUN COPULA CLEFTED CONSTITUENT CLEFT CLAUSE

The cleft clause is often introduced by either a relative pronoun or the complementizer *that*. It may also contain a syntactically 'missing' element that is coindexed with the clefted constituent in the matrix clause (indicated by subscript 'i' in (2)).[2]

(2) It was Luke$_i$ that __ $_i$ appeared on TV.

[1] These terms for the components of the *it*-cleft construction follow Hedberg (2000).

[2] When a peripheral adjunct appears as clefted constituent (such as the prepositional phrase in (i) below), the cleft clause (excluding the relative pronoun or clause linkage marker *that*) is a syntactically 'complete clause' (see section 6.2.1).

(i) It was in Sweden that Luke appeared on TV.

As mentioned above, the cleft clause usually contains either a relative pronoun or a complementizer. However, these elements can be omitted if the element 'missing' from the cleft clause is not the subject, as shown in (3a) and (b).

(3) a. It was the blonde woman$_i$ that/who/*Ø ___ $_i$ fired Saul.
b. It was Saul$_i$ that/who/Ø the blonde woman fired ___ $_i$.

It is quite common in *it*-cleft constructions for *that* or zero (as opposed to a relative pronoun) to be used within the cleft clause, within the context defined above (noted by Davidse 2000:1106, for example). In addition, some studies in the literature (Sornicola 1988:357 and Davidse 2000:1106, for example) assert that even where the missing element is the subject, there is the possibility of omitting the relative pronoun (or the *that*), at least in informal English (as illustrated in (4)).[3]

(4) It was the boy Ø caused all the trouble. (Davidse 2000:1106)

In terms of its semantic structure and pragmatic function, the *it*-cleft construction presents a non-predicative[4] constituent as coindexed with an underspecified element set in the context of the linked clause. The unambiguous focus structure of the *it*-cleft construction consists of narrow focus on the clefted constituent; this is marked intonationally by a nuclear accent. This focused element is interpreted as exhaustively representing the identity, or value, of the coindexed element in the cleft clause.

2.1 The *it*-cleft as a type of cleft construction

The term *it*-cleft differentiates sentences such as (5) from pseudoclefts (also known as 'WH-clefts'), as in (6), and reverse pseudoclefts (or 'reverse WH-clefts'), as in (7). I use the term 'cleft' as a cover term for the three types of cleft construction.

[3] Schachter is among those who disagree, considering sentences such as (4) to be ungrammatical (1973:20). Since Schachter based his study in the USA, there may be cross-Atlantic variations in acceptability.

[4] The exceptional case of 'predicational clefts' are discussed further in section 3.2.1.2.

(5) It was a Porsche that I bought. *IT*-CLEFT

(6) What I bought was a Porsche. PSEUDOCLEFT

(7) A Porsche was what I bought. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

There is some difference of opinion in the literature as to which pseudocleft should be described as reverse; that is, whether it should be the version with the WH-clause first, as above in (6), or the version with the WH-clause second, as in (7). DeClerck (1988) follows Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik (1972:954) in preferring to label sentences such as (6) as 'reversed' or 'inverted', arguing that the focus noun phrase (the non-WH noun phrase) is the underlying subject. Others such as Gundel (1977:543), Lambrecht (1994:123, 2001:467) and Heycock and Kroch (2002:1) use the labelling as adopted here in (6) and (7). Since Role and Reference Grammar theory, the framework for the analysis in chapter 6, involves neither movement nor underlying structures, the choice of the term 'reverse pseudocleft' for constructions such as in (7) should not be taken to imply the priority or more 'basic' nature of what have been labelled pseudoclefts (such as (6)). These terms, which are less biased towards English than 'WH-cleft' and 'reverse WH cleft', are adopted from the literature in this thesis.

All three constructions in (5)-(7) are examples of what DeClerck (1988) terms specificational sentences; as such, they share the features associated with that type of sentence (see below, section 2.2). They also display characteristics that set them apart as a sub-type of specificational construction. This section describes the features of the *it*-cleft construction as a type of cleft construction in terms of both functional and then formal characteristics (sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 respectively).

2.1.1 Functional features

The *it*-cleft, pseudocleft and reverse pseudocleft constructions share many semantic and functional characteristics: Akmajian goes as far as to suggest that *it*-clefts

and pseudoclefts "are synonymous, share the same presuppositions, answer the same questions, and in general…can be used interchangeably" (1970:147). There are, however, several factors that can influence the choice of one cleft construction over another; these include thematic ordering, 'heaviness' of one of the constituents, and the degree of 'givenness' of the presupposition (DeClerck 1988:229, 234). The first two factors relate particularly to the choice between a pseudocleft and a reverse pseudocleft: thus, in the first case, thematic ordering may motivate a speaker to put a continuous topic first in the sentence (marked with square brackets in (8)). The sentences in (9), on the other hand, illustrate the tendency to put the shorter of the two elements first (DeClerck 1988:234).

(8) April, differences of opinion are nothing to new to Washington.

a. [What we hope will be new to Washington] is the manner in which those differences are settled and aired.[5] PSEUDOCLEFT

b. ?The manner in which those differences are settled and aired is [what we hope will be new to Washington]. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

(9) John should be punished because

a. he is the one who broke the vase. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

b. ?the one who broke the vase is he/him. PSEUDOCLEFT

In addition, Huddleston suggests that the "non-given information" presented in the "relative clause" of a pseudocleft may be "very much lower in communicative significance" (1984:466) than that in the cleft clause of an *it*-cleft, particularly when these are used as discourse-openers (illustrated in (10)).

(10) (after energetic exercise):

a. What I need now is a long cool drink. PSEUDOCLEFT

b. ?It's a long cool drink that I need now. *IT*-CLEFT

[5] http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/briefings/20010201.html Accessed 11/03/2003.

The following section (2.1.1.1) examines further functional features of cleft constructions. The first section describes the overall information structure[6] and pragmatic function of the *it*-cleft and of cleft constructions in general. Section 2.1.1.2 examines patterns related to the cognitive status, or 'givenness', of the constituents of the cleft constructions.

2.1.1.1 Information structure

In all specificational cleft constructions, the focused element is intonationally marked as prominent, a reflection of the fact that *it*-clefts, pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts have the same general information structure. As Lambrecht illustrates, the information structure pattern for all the sentences in (11) is as in (12) (2001:497).

(11) a. It's the use of clefts that he wants to explain. *IT*-CLEFT
b. What he wants to explain is the use of clefts. PSEUDOCLEFT
c. The use of clefts is what he wants to explain. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

(12) Presupposition: 'he wants to explain x.'
Focus: 'the use of clefts'
Assertion: 'x = the use of clefts'

It is important to clarify that what is 'new' in an assertion is not (necessarily) new information (or a previously unidentifiable referent), but is the relationship between that information (or referent) and the presupposition. As Lambrecht explains, "[to] make an assertion is to establish a relation between a presupposed set of propositions…and a non-presupposed proposition, the latter being in some sense…superimposed on the former" (1994:58).

[6] The 'information structure' of a sentence is taken to be "the formal expression of the pragmatic structuring of a proposition in discourse" (Lambrecht 1994:5).

The relatively unambiguous focus structure of cleft constructions means that their use in English can be considered functionally motivated, serving to disambiguate the intended focus interpretation.[7]

2.1.1.2 Cognitive status of constituents

Distinct from the information structure or pragmatic function of the cleft construction as a whole is the question of the cognitive status of its constituents. The *it*-cleft construction is most commonly characterized as having a 'given' or 'old' cleft clause and a 'new' clefted constituent, (as are the pseudocleft and the reverse pseudocleft). Thus, in (13) the responses in (a-c) presuppose that the speaker broke something.

(13) Have you broken my TV?

a. It's the stereo that I've broken. *IT*-CLEFT

b. What I've broken is the stereo. PSEUDOCLEFT

c. The stereo is what I've broken. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

However, this pattern is only one of several: not only can the referent of the clefted constituent be 'given' or active in the discourse (as in (14a) below), but the content of the cleft clause may also be new information under certain circumstances; this is particularly the case when such clefts are used as discourse openers (as in (15)).

(14) Was it England or Australia who won the Rugby World Cup?

a. It was England who won.

(15) It was just about 50 years ago that Henry Ford gave us the weekend. (Prince 1978:898)

These examples reinforce the observation that what is most significant for the function of cleft constructions is not the relative cognitive status of the constituents as such, but the assertion of their relationship to each other. This is developed further in section 5.1.

[7] Chapter 7 further discusses this subject, contrasting this functional motivation with languages that have a formal motivation for the use of cleft constructions.

2.1.2 Formal features

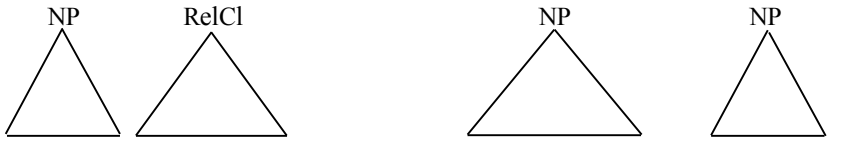
In addition to the functional features, cleft constructions also display formal, structural, characteristics. An adequate account of the *it*-cleft construction needs to describe and explain these patterns, particularly where they differ from other cleft constructions and other specificational sentences in general. The nature of the constituent units that form the *it*-cleft construction, particularly in comparison to other cleft constructions, is a current question in the literature. It has implications for the analysis of several of the other features described here that involve the connection between the variable in the cleft clause and its antecedent, the clefted constituent.

2.1.2.1 Constituent structure

Trask defines cleft constructions as "marked structure[s] in which a focused constituent is extracted from its logical position and often set off with some additional material, including an extra verb" (Trask 1993:46). Lambrecht provides more detail concerning the 'additional material', stating that it consists of "a matrix clause headed by a copula" (2001:467). He adds that the cleft construction also comprises a "relative or relative-like clause whose relativized argument is coindexed with the predicative argument of the copula" (2001:467). Cleft constructions are marked in the sense that their semantic content, or "propositional meaning" (Lambrecht 1994:22) can be equally expressed by an unmarked simple clause; in the case of (5) - (7) this would be *I bought a Porsche*.

The descriptions above hide a significant structural difference between *it*-cleft constructions and other cleft types. Pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts comprise two noun phrases, one of which contains a headless relative clause (*What I bought* in (6) and

(7)) that "constitutes a noun phrase by itself" (Trask 1993:107).[8] This contrasts with the structure of *it*-cleft constructions, where the corresponding relative-type clause appears as a syntactically subordinate clause rather than as part of a noun phrase. In other words, the subordinate clause does not appear in a syntactic unit with a head noun as it does in pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts. This is diagrammed in Figure 2.1. This difference in structure is significant for the comparison of *it*-cleft and pseudocleft constructions; for example, it affects the general unacceptability of *what* as the relative pronoun in *it*-cleft constructions.[9]



It was a Porsche that I bought. What I bought was a Porsche.

Figure 2.1 Components of it*-cleft and pseudocleft constructions*

The clefted constituent in *it*-cleft constructions cannot be interpreted as predicative (see section 2.2.1.2 in this chapter regarding the exceptional case of 'predicational clefts'). In pseudoclefts, on the other hand, the structure *NP is NP* presents the possibility for the second noun phrase to be interpreted either as a referring expression, providing the identity of the referent of the first noun phrase, or as predicative, whereby it predicates a property of the referent of the first noun phrase.

These differences between *it*-clefts and both pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts are presented briefly here to clarify the definition and description of the *it*-cleft construction. Section 5.2.1 discusses their significance in terms of the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction in more detail.

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[8] Akmajian refers to the WH-clauses of pseudoclefts as both "reduced clauses" (1970:161) and "headless clauses" (1970:161). Huddleston refers to them as "fused relative construction[s]" (1984:462). Headless relative clause, following Trask's (1993) definition, is the term adopted here.

[9] There is the possible exception of a few dialects (*e.g.* Irish and Scottish dialects (DeClerck 1988:71)): **?It was a Porsche what I bought*.

2.1.2.2 Negative polarity items, quantifiers

DeClerck (1988:52) shows that negative items in the 'given' element of a specificational sentence can "trigger" the appearance of a negative polarity item in the value part (both underlined in her examples in (16a) and (16b)).

(16) a. What I have never noticed is any/*some signs of dissatisfaction.
b. What John hasn't done is leave yet/*already. (Citing Halvorsen 1978:6)

However, this pattern only exists in pseudocleft constructions; these negative polarity items occur neither in *it*-clefts (17b), nor in reverse pseudoclefts (17c), as noted by Gundel (1977).

(17) a. What we don't need is any eggs. PSEUDOCLEFT
b. *It's any eggs that we don't need. (Gundel 1977:554)[10] *IT*-CLEFT
c. *Any eggs is what we don't need. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

Similarly, a quantifier operating on a noun phrase in the cleft clause cannot appear within the focused constituent in *it*-cleft constructions (DeClerck 1988:52), although this is possible in pseudoclefts, as (18a) and (b) illustrate.

(18) a. What the new students do is all pick the same course. PSEUDOCLEFT
b. *It's all pick the same course that the new students do. *IT*-CLEFT

These differences in patterning have implications for analyses of *it*-clefts that derive them from pseudoclefts, as discussed in section 3.1.1.

2.1.2.3 Pronominalization, reflexives, reciprocals

The remaining issues described in this section involve coreference between a pronominal item and a lexical noun phrase. In the case of cleft constructions, with their bi-clausal syntactic structure expressing a simple semantic proposition, the issue is of coreference between two semantic arguments of the same predicate that appear in different syntactic constituents.

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[10] In dialects of London English, it would be possible to say *It's eggs (that) we don't need any of*.

When the focused element in an *it*-cleft (or pseudocleft) construction is a pronominal item that corefers with a lexical noun phrase in the cleft clause, then the pronominal element must appear as a reflexive pronoun. If it is a non-reflexive, it can only be interpreted as having a different referent from the lexical noun phrase (see examples in (19) and (20), focused constituent underlined).[11]

(19) a. It was <u>himself</u>$_i$ that Oscar$_i$ loved the most. *IT*-CLEFT

b. It was <u>him</u>$_{*i/j}$ that Oscar$_i$ loved the most.

(20) a. The one who Harry$_i$ hurt the most was <u>himself</u>$_i$. PSEUDOCLEFT

b. The one who Harry$_i$ hurt the most was <u>him</u>$_{*i/j}$.

If the coreferring pronominal element is within the cleft clause and the lexical noun phrase is the focus, the same obligatory reflexivization is triggered in *it*-clefts, pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts (see (21) and (22)).

(21) a. It was Oscar$_i$ that loved himself$_i$ the most. *IT*-CLEFT

b. It was Oscar$_i$ that loved him$_{*i/j}$ the most.

c. It's me who has to protect myself/himself/herself. (Akmajian 1970:156)[12]

(22) a. The one who loved himself$_i$ the most was <u>Oscar</u>$_i$. PSEUDOCLEFT

b. <u>Oscar</u>$_i$ was the one who loved himself$_i$ the most. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

It is also interesting to note (following Akmajian 1970:158-9) that there are cleft constructions that are ambiguous while their non-cleft counterpart sentences are not. In (23a), for example, the reflexive pronoun *himself* can be coreferential with either *John* or *Bill* even though the unclefted counterpart sentences do not share this ambiguity (see (23b)). These examples are discussed further in section 6.2.2.

(23) a. It was <u>himself</u>$_{i/j}$ that <u>John</u>$_i$ wanted <u>Bill</u>$_j$ to describe. *IT*-CLEFT

b. <u>John</u>$_i$ wants <u>Bill</u>$_j$ to describe <u>himself</u>$_{*i/j}$. NON-CLEFT

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[11] Reverse pseudoclefts (as in (i)) do not follow this pattern, for the same reason that non-cleft sentences such as **Himself hurt Harry* do not. I examine this difference in behaviour further in section 6.2.2.

(i) *Himself$_i$ was the one who Harry$_i$ hurt the most.

[12] Akmajian argues that when the antecedent is a non-reflexive pronoun in the first or second person (*me* in (21c)), then (in the various dialects of American English he studied) both third person and first person reflexives are found as the coreferring reflexive (1970:155).

As with reflexives, reciprocals can appear in either the clefted constituent (24a) or the cleft clause (24b) of a specificational *it*-cleft construction.

(24) a. It's each other that Jennifer and Brad love the most.
b. It's Jennifer and Brad that love each other the most.

However, a distinctive feature of pseudoclefts is the acceptability of a reciprocal pronoun coindexed with the 'subject' argument of the predicate in the WH-noun phrase. This is not possible in the non-cleft counterpart sentence or the *it*-cleft paraphrase, as indicated by the examples in (25). ((25a) and (b) from Heycock and Kroch 2002:155.)

(25) a. What amuses them is each other. PSEUDOCLEFT
b. *Each other amuse them. NON-CLEFT
c. *It is each other that amuses them. *IT*-CLEFT

I examine this patterning and the implications for the analysis of *it*-cleft constructions further in section 6.2.2.

2.1.2.4 Verb agreement

In the syntactically complex *it*-cleft construction, it is important to determine the controller of verb agreement, both of the verb in the subordinate cleft clause and of the copular verb in the matrix clause. In the former case, ascertaining the patterns of verb agreement helps to define the relationship between the coindexed elements. It is also necessary to determine the controller of verb agreement in the copular matrix clause.

(i) The verb in the cleft clause

If the controller of verb agreement in the subordinate cleft clause is coindexed with the clefted constituent (that is, if the 'subject' of the verb in the cleft clause appears as clefted constituent), then the verb within the cleft clause is marked for number but not person. (Compare (27a-c) to the non-cleft sentences in (26a) and (b)).[13] These

[13] This is not so for standard French (i) and Italian (ii) where the verb in the cleft clause agrees in person as well as in number with the clefted constituent (examples from Sornicola 1988:348); see section 5.1.3.2.

patterns also hold for other types of cleft constructions (as well as for relative clauses), as shown in (28a-c).

(26) a. I like/*likes hand gliding.
b. You$_{SG/PL}$ like/*likes hand gliding.

(27) a. It's me that likes/*like hand gliding. *IT*-CLEFT
b. It's you$_{SG}$ that likes/*like hand gliding.
c. It's you$_{PL}$ that *likes/like hand gliding.

(28) a. The one that likes/*like hand gliding is me. PSEUDOCLEFT
b. I am the one that likes/*like hand gliding. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT
c. (I like) the you that keeps/*keep) fit. RELATIVE CLAUSE

These verb agreement patterns are particularly interesting in light of the patterns of reflexivization described in the previous section. Akmajian points out that the first person reflexive in the variable, agreeing in number and person with its lexical noun phrase antecedent (as in (21c), repeated here as (29a)), is unexpected alongside a verb that agrees in number but *not* in person with the lexical noun phrase (1970:156).

(29) a. It's me who has/*have to protect myself.

It is likely that there is a related explanation for the verb agreement in the *it*-cleft construction and in both pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts. Hence, studies that propose the derivation of *it*-clefts from pseudoclefts use as justification the similarity in patterning in verb agreement, as well as patterns of reflexivization and pronominalization (Akmajian 1970, for example; see chapter 3). The similarity with relative clauses is also significant and these patterns are discussed further in section 5.1.3.2.

(i) C' est moi qui vais à Rome.
it be-3SG 1SG who go-1SG to Rome
It is I who am going to Rome.

(ii) Sono io che sono responsabile.
be-1SG 1SG that be-1SG responsible
It is I who am responsible.

(ii) The copular verb

In the *it*-cleft construction, the copula verb in the matrix clause is always singular as it agrees with the singular syntactic argument pronoun (also noted by Heycock and Kroch 2002:147). The controller of verb agreement is clearly a syntactic element. However, there are interesting cases of pseudocleft and reverse pseudocleft sentences where the verb agrees with the focused noun phrase, rather than necessarily with the initial subject noun phrase, suggesting a pragmatic controller of agreement. Examples are given in (30) ((30b) and (c) from DeClerck 1988:80).

(30) a. It is/*are Posh and Becks that moved to Spain.
b. Theft and robbery is/are what I despise most.
c. What we can't have here is/?are theft and robbery.

This section has highlighted some comparisons between the *it*-cleft and other types of cleft construction. The following section broadens the field of comparison by discussing the *it*-cleft as a type of specificational copular construction.

2.2 The *it*-cleft as a specificational copular construction

The *it*-cleft construction has important features that align it with other types of copular sentences, as well as other features that distinguish it; this section discusses both these areas. DeClerck's (1988) detailed examination of types of copular sentences is the source of several observations made here.

In her typology of copular sentences, DeClerck (1988) makes two main distinctions. The first is to separate specificational sentences from predicational sentences. The second is to distinguish specificational sentences from two other types of non-predicational copular sentences that she terms 'descriptionally-identifying sentences' and 'identity statements'. Her examples of these five types are given below.

(31) The one who stole the money is Fred. SPECIFICATIONAL SENTENCE

(32) Bill is a good student. PREDICATIONAL SENTENCE

(33) a. Who's that man?

b. That man is Eric's brother. DESCRIPTIONALLY-IDENTIFYING SENTENCE

(34) Dr Jekyll is Mr Hyde. IDENTITY STATEMENT

(35) A motor car is a vehicle that has four wheels and is propelled by an internal combustion engine. DEFINITION

DeClerck defines specificational sentences as those "whose semantic function is to specify a value for a variable" (1988:2). Thus, (31) specifies the value (Fred) for the variable described as 'the X that stole the money'. As DeClerck notes, this definition differs from those in other studies where such sentences are labelled 'identifying' or 'identificational' (Dik 1980), 'equative' (Huddleston 1971, Adger and Ramchand 2003) or 'equational' (Bolinger 1972, Harries-Delisle 1978, Van Valin forth.). The motivation for these labels is the understanding that one argument in the sentence 'is the same as' or 'equals' the other; they are 'identified' as being identical to each other. Cann, for example, labels both the sentences in (36) as "equative" because they "equate two entities, to indicate that they are identical" (1993:31).

(36) a. Fiona was the singer.

b. Jo was Jo.

Although these terms are often used in the literature to cover the description of sentences type such as (31), (33b) and (34), DeClerck argues that 'equative'-type descriptions such as these mainly characterize identity statement sentences such as (34). Specificational sentences, on the other hand, "are identifying in the sense that they reveal the identity of some entity but not in the sense that they state a relation of identity between the two entities" (DeClerck 1988:3). In other words, specificational sentences provide identifying information in the sense that "the purpose of a specificational sentence is to make it possible for the speaker to pick out the referent(s) from a set"

(1988:10). In agreement with DeClerck's assessment, I adopt the term 'specificational' here.

The act of specification described above contrasts with the function of predicational sentences, such as (32), which "predicate a property of the subject NP" (DeClerck 1988:2). DeClerck notes that predicational sentences have also had numerous labels; they have been termed 'attributive' (Gundel 1977, Halliday 1970), 'property-assigning' (Dik 1980), 'characterizational' (Kuno and Wongkhomthong 1981), and 'non-equational' (Harries-Delisle 1978). I remain consistent with DeClerck (1988) in adopting 'predicational' for sentences such as (32) to contrast with 'specificational'.

DeClerck (1988) distinguishes three other copular sentence types that she labels descriptionally-identifying sentences (33), identity statements (34), and definitions (35). She stresses their distinctive characteristics, which I examine below in section 2.3. Distinguishing these three sentence types from specificational sentences has implications for the study of copular sentences and the analysis of *it*-cleft constructions. Having clarified the terms used here, I present an examination of the characteristics and behaviour of the *it*-cleft construction as a copular sentence in the following section.

The *it*-cleft construction always has a specificational function. DeClerck notes that the availability of an *it*-cleft paraphrase for a sentence is often used as a diagnostic test to determine whether the sentence has a specificational function (1988:10). This is illustrated in (37) below where the fact that the value *Gerald* can be the clefted constituent in an *it*-cleft (in (37b)) indicates that (37a) is a specificational sentence.

(37) a. Gerald is the murderer.
b. It is Gerald who is the murderer.

This 'diagnostic' function of *it*-cleft constructions may relate to the fact that they are "a more emphatic kind of specificational construction" (DeClerck 1988:39), in the sense

that they display all the key characteristics of specificational sentences such as contrastiveness and exhaustiveness described below.

2.2.1 Components of specificational sentences

The information in the part of a specificational sentence containing the variable corresponds to the 'old' or presupposed part of the sentence in the sense that it is information generally assumed to be in the hearer's consciousness. The value represents the asserted information. The *it*-cleft in (37b), for example, provides the value *Gerald* for the variable described as 'the x who is the murderer'. As noted above, there is no requirement that the referent itself be new to the discourse; it is rather its relationship to the presupposed information that is new. In other words, the constituent is "new in the sense that it is new information that it is this constituent that is the value satisfying the variable" (DeClerck 1988:12). The assertion of the *it*-cleft construction is illustrated by (38), from an interview with Tony Blair. The referent of *oil* is clearly not new to the discourse but Blair is seeking to stress (and negate) the fact of oil being the value corresponding to the variable (the 'something' that is the issue; value element underlined).

(38) (The fact is that, if the oil that Iraq has were our concern I mean we could probably cut a deal with Saddam tomorrow in relation to the oil.) It's <u>not the oil</u> that is the issue, it is the weapons.[14]

2.2.1.1 The variable (presupposition)

The variable part of a specificational sentence is considered the presupposition; its content is logically presupposed (DeClerck 1988:14). The pragmatic presupposition remains even if the sentence does not contain a syntactic expression of the variable or its description (as in the truncated cleft *it is the weapons* in (38) above).

[14] http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1139.asp. Accessed 06/02/03.

Elements that are presupposed are taken to be shared information at some level. For a specificational construction such as an *it*-cleft to be felicitous, DeClerck states that the variable must "not only be 'known' but also 'given'" (1988:18). According to Prince, this means it must be information that "the cooperative speaker can assume to be appropriately in the hearer's consciousness at the time of hearing the utterance" (1978:888).

In Lambrecht's (1994) terms, adopted by Role and Reference Grammar and introduced in section 1.4.2, the information must be 'active', or at least 'accessible' in the discourse. The hearer may have to build what Clark and Haviland (1977) term inferential 'bridges'. Hedberg (2000:902) provides an example of a cleft construction (an interrogative *that*-cleft) involving an inferential 'bridge' that is given here in (39b). Hedberg argues that the use of *that* or *this* as the cleft pronoun signals to the hearer to "search her long-term memory for an antecedent for the cleft clause" (2000:902). (I discuss the use of *this* and *that* as cleft pronoun further in section 5.1.1.)

(39) a. N: That's the reason I don't want to go to Miami!
b. B: Yeah. Wasn't that somewhere in Southern Florida where they thought those people got AIDS from bug bites… (Hedberg 2000:902)

It-cleft constructions termed 'informative presupposition' by Prince (1978) are exceptions to the pattern described above (see (40)). (These are termed 'discontinuous clefts' by DeClerck 1988:222.) In this type of *it*-cleft construction, the variable is not 'given' in the sense above, but the reader is nevertheless "invited to process the information in the cleft clause as background material" (Johansson 2001:554).[15]

[15] DeClerck argues that it is not only *it*-cleft constructions that can be used in this way; she suggests that any specificational sentence can have a "marked use" that involves presenting new information in the variable as given (1988:219); she gives the following pseudocleft in (i) and the non-cleft specificational sentence in (ii) among her examples (variable element in square brackets).

(40) [Beginning of a mystery novel:]

It was jealousy that kept David from sleeping, drove him from [his] tousled bed out of the dark and silent boarding house to walk the streets. (Cited in Johansson 2001:553)

Informative-presupposition *it*-cleft constructions thus have the same structure as other specificational *it*-clefts without all the specificational characteristics such as contrastiveness, exhaustiveness and 'givenness' of the variable (cleft clause) element. They therefore present an interesting complication to the analysis of *it*-cleft constructions and are discussed further in section 7.2.

The presupposition in specificational sentences referred to above includes the presupposition of existence (in the discourse) of the 'missing' or underspecified variable described by the cleft clause. Thus, the presupposition for the sentence in (41), for example, is that someone exists who ate all the ice-cream.

(41) It was Angela who ate all the ice-cream.

Presupposition: someone ate all the ice-cream.

As DeClerck notes, "a specificational sentence by its very nature requires that the variable must exist" (1988:17); without an identifiable variable, the act of specification – adding information to that shared by the hearer – is impossible.[16]

Since it is presupposed, material in the variable part of a specificational sentence cannot be negated as part of the assertion of the sentence; in other words, its existence

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(i) [What I have often asked myself] is how other linguists manage to keep abreast with the rapid developments in the different fields of linguistics while still finding time to go on writing articles themselves. (1988:213)

(ii) (We certainly hope to have the bridge finished before next week). [The problem] is that the weather forecast is none too good. (1988:219 fn11)

[16] DeClerck suggests that one difference between clefts and other specificational sentences is that while the variable or presuppositional element in a cleft may be marked as definite, in a non-cleft specificational sentence it may be indefinite (such as that in square brackets in (i) below). She adds (1988:19) that one reason for the acceptability of these sentences is the presence of 'given' information, or a link to given information, within the variable noun phrase (the *this*, in the case of (i)).

(i) (Most wars in history have had economic causes.) [An example of this] is World War II.

cannot be denied. Only the identity of the value as the correct one corresponding to the variable can be negated (DeClerck 1988:77). In the *it*-cleft construction in (42), for example, the presupposition is that someone exists who built the house; the assertion is that Jack is not the correct value for that variable. The existence of someone who built the house cannot be negated (negation marker underlined).

(42) It was <u>not</u> Jack who built the house.
Presupposition: someone (exists who) built the house.

The variable can also be 'internally' negated within the cleft clause (as in (43) below) but this still does not deny the presupposition of existence of the variable, merely the action performed by that referent; in other words, (43) has the presupposition that someone exists who did not build the house.[17]

(43) It was Jack who did <u>not</u> build the house.
Presupposition: someone (exists who) did not build the house.

Since the variable element of a specificational sentence is presupposed to exist, if it is a noun phrase it is usually definite (see (31), for example). However, establishing the cleft clause in an *it*-cleft construction as in some way 'definite' is less straightforward. The question of the status of the variable element in a specificational sentence as a referring expression, and the representation of the variable within cleft constructions is discussed in section 5.1.3.

2.2.1.2 *The value (focus)*

Neither the value nor the variable in a specificational sentence necessarily correspond to a whole constituent: in (44) below, the context given by the question in (44a) leads to presupposed elements that describe the variable in (44b) (in square

[17] The same principles and presuppositions apply to other types of specificational clefts. Examples of pseudoclefts are given in (i) and (ii).
(i) The one who built the house was <u>not</u> Jack.
(ii) The one who did<u>n't</u> build the house was Jack.

brackets) appearing within the clefted constituent as well as in the cleft clause. It is only *green* that forms the value and which is intonationally accented as the focus (marked as small capitals). The clefted constituent is therefore not necessarily equivalent to the value although the value is always within it (DeClerck 1988:12-3).

(44) a. The student in which hat came in first?
b. It was [the student in the] GREEN [hat] [that came in first].

As noted above, the role of the value element in a specificational sentence is to provide a fuller identity of the variable that is presupposed to exist (in the sense of being identifiable to the hearer). There are consequently constraints against certain elements appearing as the value as they would contradict this presupposition (DeClerck 1988:86). Indefinite pronouns such as *someone* and *somebody*, for example, are not possible because they add nothing to the presupposition. The *it*-cleft sentence in (45a), for example, already presupposes that 'someone' swam the channel and so the clefted constituent adds no information for the hearer. Pronouns such as *no one* and *nobody* are equally unacceptable because they deny the existence of the variable that is presupposed to exist (see (45b)).[18]

(45) a. #It was someone who swam the channel.
b. #It was no-one who swam the channel.

The examples given thus far reflect the fact that the value in a cleft construction is usually a non-predicative element such as a noun phrase. If a predicative element is presented as the clefted constituent value, as in the examples in (46), that element seems

[18] The negative and indefinite pronouns can occur as the focus in an *NP is NP* sentence, as in (i) and (ii). These do not seem to be specificational *NP is NP* sentences, as they do not provide the value for a presupposed variable.
(i) NO-ONE is the winner.
(ii) SOMEONE is the winner.

to take on a referential quality.[19] This helps to explain why the colour term in (46a) is possible while *flat* in (46b) is not possible; the latter cannot be interpreted referentially.[20]

(46) a. It's blue that they painted the house.
b. *It's flat that they hammered the nail. (Both Heggie 1993:55)

There is often a strongly contrastive interpretation of the value when it is a predicative element, which is reflected by a strong intonational accent on the value element (as indicated in (48)).

(47) It is ambitious that John is, not haughty. (DeClerck 1988:150)

(48) A: Her eyes are green.
B: No, it's BLUE that her eyes are, not GREEN. (Heggie 1993:50)

Cases such as (46a), (47) and (48) are argued by DeClerck to be specificational, despite their predicative values. This is because they still specify a (predicational) value for a (predicational) variable (1988:150). However, it is also possible, under certain circumstances, for a predicative adjective to appear as the value of an *it*-cleft construction and retain its predicative nature. Examples are given in (49).

(49) a. Was it an interesting meeting you went to last night? (DeClerck 1988:158)
b. It is a very devoted, rather simple-minded young woman who is writing. (Kruisinga 1932:504, cited in DeClerck 1988:158)
c. Gee, it's a nice dress you're wearing. (Ball 1977, cited in DeClerck 1988:158)

It-cleft constructions such as those in (49) are labelled predicational by DeClerck since they do not specify a value for a variable. The *it*-clefts do not provide an exhaustive enumeration of items on a list as specificational *it*-cleft constructions do (see

[19] Davidse, following Halliday (1981), refers to this process as 'rankshifting' to nominal status whereby "a unit of a given rank is "reclassified" as a unit of a different rank" (2000:1115), in this case in order to perform the noun phrase function of identification.

[20] Heggie's (1993) examples lead her to suggest that *blue* must be interpreted, not as a resultative predicate but as an inherent argument of *paint*, to explain the difference in grammaticality between (46a) and (b). An alternative explanation is that it is their role as pragmatically, rather than semantically predicational that affects their interpretation. Section 5.1.2.2 describes the 'pragmatic predicate' role further.

section 2.2.6). The appropriate paraphrases for these sentences are therefore not the 'list' paraphrases typical of specificational sentences (given in (50)), but rather predicational sentences such as those in (51).

(50) a. Did you go to the following last night: an interesting meeting?
b. The following person is writing: a very devoted, rather simple-minded young woman.
c. You're wearing the following: a nice dress.

(51) a. Was the meeting that you went to last night interesting?
b. The young woman who is writing is very devoted and rather simple-minded.
c. The dress you're wearing is nice.

In fact, the interpretation of the examples in (49) is related to the fact that the clefted constituents are all indefinite noun phrases. I consider the use of indefinite noun phrases as clefted constituent further in section 5.1.2, where I show them to have a descriptive, non-specific interpretation.

2.2.2 Similarities to non-copular specificational sentences

DeClerck (1988) proposes that, as well as copular sentences, non-copular sentences can be interpreted with a specificational function if they correspond to the same focus/presupposition patterning and possess the contrastive, exhaustive interpretation associated with specificational sentences (see sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4). This interpretation is usually prompted by a combination of intonation and context. Examples are given in (52).

(52) a. (Who robbed the bank?) Jesse did.
b. JESSE robbed the bank.

The answer in (52a), in replying to a specificational question, is a specificational sentence where the variable has been replaced by a pro-form *did*; there is no copula and yet the specificational reading whereby *Jesse* is the value for the presupposed variable (the 'someone' who robbed the bank), remains. Sentences with an intonational accent

on a particular constituent reinforce a specificational reading. The sentence in (52b) provides the value *Jesse* for the variable described as 'the x who robbed the bank' (indicated by small capitals). This alignment of intonational focus with a single constituent is termed 'narrow' focus by Van Valin (forth.:60).

The clear suggestion from these observations is that there is some common ground in the interpretation and analysis of copular specificational sentences such as *it*-clefts and non-copular narrow focus constructions. This is further discussed in section 5.1.2.2.

2.2.3 Contrastiveness

The function of the specificational sentence is to help determine the correct identity for the variable. Cleft constructions and other specificational sentences can be interpreted, therefore, as providing an answer to an implied (or explicit) question (see section 2.2.6). In narrowing the identity to the correct interpretation, it follows that others are excluded, and thus the asserted 'value' is inherently contrasted with other potential values. This contrastiveness is related to the presuppositions in specificational sentences: the variable (representing the presupposition of the sentence) contains a 'missing' or underspecified element that nevertheless has a presupposition of existence attached to it. In other words, there is an understanding that a fuller identification of the variable can be made, and that there is potentially more than one candidate. For this reason, as illustrated below in (53) and (54), universal quantifiers (*e.g. every, all*) and pronouns (*e.g. everybody*) do not generally appear as the value in specificational sentences because they imply a totality that contradicts the contrastive understanding described above (DeClerck 1988:86).

(53) *?It was every fan that gave Eric a standing ovation.

(54) *?It was everybody that enjoyed Rose's meal.

In (53), for example, the presupposition is that someone exists that gave Eric a standing ovation. The specificational nature of the sentence creates the contrastive interpretation that there are also those who did not. This is contradicted by the presence of the universal quantifier *every*. It is worth noting that (53) is more acceptable if only the universal quantifier *every* is the focus, with *fan* as part of the presupposition (that is, with the presupposition that some number of fans gave Eric a standing ovation). In this case, the speaker is contrasting the nature of the quantifier with a non-universal quantification (*e.g. most of*).

Contrastiveness is thus connected to the form of the presupposition, or the focus structure of a specificational sentence, rather than to the presence of the copular verb per se. Therefore, it is to be expected that non-copular narrow focus constructions, containing the same pattern of presuppositions as copular specificational sentences, follow the same pattern. The sentence in (52b), for example, which contains the presupposition that there is someone who robbed the bank, can be seen to carry the same contrastive interpretation that there may well be other potential values. *Jesse* is asserted to be the only correct value. DeClerck draws a connection between the marked nuclear accent on a focal element in a specificational sentence (*e.g.* on *Jesse* in (52b), or *green* in (44b)) and its contrastive interpretation. This leads her to claim that "placing the nuclear accent on a constituent that should not normally receive it is a sign that the constituent in question is to be interpreted specificationally – an interpretation which is then automatically contrastive" (1988:28).[21]

DeClerck goes further to state, "affirmative specificational sentences always convey a contrastive meaning. This follows from the act of specification itself…[that]

[21] DeClerck's description of the placement of accent on a constituent as 'not normal' is interpreted to mean that the focus structure is marked as different from the default 'predicate focus' focus structure (see section 4.4).

automatically creates a contrast" (1988:24). However, this can only be the case using the somewhat 'weak' definition of contrastiveness given above. Contrastiveness can also imply that the hearer has a particular referent or presupposition in mind and that the speaker of the specificational sentence is seeking to *correct* that presupposition or referent.[22] In other words, a cleft construction can, in some (but not all) cases, present the one and only correct value, in contrast to other implicitly held or explicitly stated assumptions or presuppositions. In the pseudocleft in (55), for example, the speaker (Tony Blair) adds to the correcting, contrastive interpretation of the pseudocleft with his triple use of *do*.[23]

(55) (No, we don't move round the world creating war on everyone, but) what we do do is we do confront those countries that have this material.[24]

The strongly contrastive function can also be achieved by negating the assumed value in a cleft construction and then presenting the correct one, as in (38), repeated here for convenience as (56).

(56) (The fact is that, if the oil that Iraq has were our concern I mean we could probably cut a deal with Saddam tomorrow in relation to the oil.) It's not the oil that is the issue, it is the weapons.

Thus, I suggest that contrastiveness can be interpreted as a matter of degree, as suggested by Lambrecht (1994:290, who in turn follows Bolinger 1961:87).

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[22] Katz (2000) makes this distinction in her classification of French *it*-cleft constructions.

[23] Cleft constructions were found to be frequent in this text, a reflection perhaps of the defensive position of the speaker who uses the relatively unambiguous cleft constructions to specify the intended point. This is further illustrated in the extract in (i) below (PSC = pseudocleft, RPSC = reverse pseudocleft).

(i) Well [what there was, was evidence]$_{PSC}$, I mean [this is what our intelligence services are telling us]$_{RPSC}$ and it's difficult because, you know, either they're simply making the whole thing up or [this is what they are telling me, as the Prime Minister, and I've no doubt what the American Intelligence are telling President Bush as well]$_{RPSC}$. And [that is that there are weapons of mass destruction in Iraq]$_{PSC?}$...[what Colin Powell was talking about at the UN yesterday was the systematic attempt to try and conceal this]$_{PSC}$… (http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1139.asp Accessed 06/02/03).

[24] http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1139.asp Accessed 06/02/03.

2.2.4 Exhaustiveness

Specificational sentences, including *it*-cleft constructions, "imply that the focus represents an exhaustive list of the values satisfying the variable" (DeClerck 1988:28). In other words, the value represents 'all and only' the correct referents for the variable. In (57), for example, the understanding is that it was Harry together with Ron, and no one else, who built the tree house.

(57) It was Harry and Ron who built the tree house.

The exhaustiveness understanding in specificational sentences is an implicature that follows directly from Grice's maxims of Quality, directing the speaker to specify the correct value(s) for the variable, and Quantity, requiring a full, exhaustive list of the values for the variable (DeClerck 1988:30). As with contrastiveness, DeClerck argues that exhaustiveness "follows directly from the act of specification" (1988:30). She cites Halliday's (1967:225) example of the London brewer Watney's, who changed their slogan from *We want Watney's* (with its implication that we might also want other things) to the specificational pseudocleft sentence *What we want is Watney's*, precisely to convey this exhaustive interpretation. It is important to note that the exhaustiveness implicature is associated here with a particular function (specificational), rather than a particular syntactic form (also noted by Horn 1981:131).

One of the few ways that specificational sentences can bypass this exhaustiveness implicature is if a negative marker appears as part of the focus, as in (58) (and (38)).

(58) It was not George that built the tree house.

Here, the assertion is that George is not on the list of people who built the tree house; it clearly does not simultaneously provide an exhaustive list of those who did (DeClerck 1988:32-3; also Atlas and Levinson 1981:368).

It is also worth highlighting the use of *only* in the focus of specificational sentences, where an exhaustiveness implicature is already present.

(59) a. It was John that kissed Mary.
b. It was only John that kissed Mary.
c. (Prime Minister, you said of Iraq that) it was only the threat of force that got the UN weapons inspectors back in there… [25]

The explanation for the difference in *it*-cleft constructions such as (59a) and (59b) is given by DeClerck as follows: sentence (59a) "presupposes that some X (singular or plural) kissed Mary, asserts that X is John and implicates that only John is X (i.e. that no one else kissed Mary)". On the other hand, sentence (59b) "presupposes that John kissed Mary and asserts that no one else did" (DeClerck 1988:36). In other words, *John* is part of the focus in (59a), but is part of the presupposition in (59b). Example (59c) also illustrates this use of *only* as the focus: the sentence presupposes that the threat of force got the UN inspectors into Iraq and asserts it was this and this alone that achieved that end.

2.2.5 Reversibility

Reversibility refers to the ability of either the variable or the value noun phrase in a specificational sentence to appear as syntactic 'subject' (DeClerck 1988:40).[26] This is illustrated in (60) and (61).

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[25] http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1139.asp Accessed 06/02/03.

[26] An exception to the possibility of reversibility is pseudoclefts whose WH-NPs are introduced by WH-words other than *what.* As with the specificational nature of WH-questions described below in 2.2.6, *what* behaves differently from other WH-words in allowing the formation of pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts while other WH-words only occur in reverse pseudoclefts, as (i) and (ii) illustrate (examples from DeClerck 1988:41).

(i) a. Here is where the accident took place. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT
b. ?Where the accident took place is here. PSEUDOCLEFT

(ii) a. Lack of money is why he did it. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT
b. ?Why he did it is lack of money. PSEUDOCLEFT

In contrast, the reverse pseudocleft in (iii) has no pseudocleft or *it*-cleft counterpart (see (iv) and (v)). There appears to be a fixed, idiomatic meaning for this sentence with a negative pronoun value; this could explain its resistance to being expressed as a pseudocleft or *it*-cleft.

(60) a. Jenny is the doctor. SPECIFICATIONAL *NP IS NP*

b. The doctor is Jenny.

(61) a. What I want is the truth. PSEUDOCLEFT

b. The truth is what I want. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

Some motivations for the choice of one ordering over the other (such as thematic ordering and the heaviness of the noun phrases) were given in section 2.1.1. The impossibility of reversibility is one characteristic that sets *it*-cleft constructions (including truncated *it*-clefts with no cleft clause) apart from pseudoclefts constructions and other *NP is NP* specificational sentences (as in (60)). The examples in (62) and (63) illustrate the ungrammaticality of 'reversed' *it*-cleft constructions.

(62) a. It was Nina that fed the cat. *IT*-CLEFT

b. *That fed the cat (it) was Nina.

c. *Nina was it that fed the cat.

d. *It that fed the cat was Nina.

e. *Nina that fed the cat was it.

(63) a. It was Nina. TRUNCATED *IT*-CLEFT

b. *Nina was it.

Reversibility is clearly structurally constrained. Hence, *it*-cleft constructions are not reversible because, as noted above in section 2.1, they are not composed of two noun phrase constituents, unlike other types of cleft and *NP is NP* specificational sentences. In the *it*-cleft construction, there is a structural dependency between the subordinate cleft clause and the rest of the sentence (the nature of which is described in chapter 6). Therefore, they do not contain two clear units to be reversed, as (62b)-(e) illustrate (also noted by Sornicola 1988:359). The truncated *it*-cleft construction exemplified in (63) has the syntactic form *NP is NP* but is not reversible because the

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(iii)Nothing is what it seems. (/No-one is who they seem to be).

(iv) *What is seems is nothing. (/*Who they seem to be is no-one).

(v) *It is nothing that is what it seems. (/*It is no-one that is who they seem to be).

pronoun is not referential and the sentence still carries the presupposition included in full *it*-cleft construction.

2.2.6 Similarities to lists and WH-questions

Another feature of specificational sentences exhibited by *it*-cleft constructions is the similarity between the act of specifying a value for a variable in a specificational sentence and the enumeration of items on a list (DeClerck 1988:5). Thus, the value represented by the clefted constituent *peas and rice* in (64a), for example, enumerates the items on the list 'things that Carmyn hates'. (It also enumerates *all* the items as explained in section 2.2.4.)

(64) a. It's peas and rice that Carmyn hates.
b. Carmyn hates the following: peas and rice.

Likewise, the act of specifying a value for a variable is similar to answering a question: as noted above, specificational sentences are often either used to answer an explicit question or imply such a question. The *it*-cleft in (64a), for example, implies the question *What does Carmyn hate?*. In addition, the implied question carries the same presuppositions as the specificational cleft sentence given in reply; in this case, that Carmyn hates something. If this variable is sufficiently 'given' or accessible, it can be omitted (see (65c) and (38)) although, in an *it*-cleft, it is at best awkward to use a proform, as (65b) illustrates.

(65) Q. Who fed the cat?
a. It was Nina who fed the cat.
b. ?*It was Nina who did.
c. It was Nina.

The implied or explicit questions that lie behind specificational sentences request information to replace the variable of the question-word with the value in the answer. WH-questions in general (such as (66a)) can therefore usually be regarded as

specificational sentences since they request specificational information (that is, a value). This specificational nature is reflected in the fact that they can be paraphrased with *it*-cleft constructions (DeClerck 1988:36).[27]

(66) a. Who fed the cat?
b. Who was it who fed the cat?

In this section (2.2), I have examined features of specificational sentences and assessed the degree to which the *it*-cleft construction displays these characteristics. The following section turns to comparisons with other subtypes of copular sentence.

2.3 Comparison with other non-predicational copular sentence types

There are several types of copular sentences described by DeClerck (1988) whose characteristics distinguish them from specificational sentences and thus prevent them from having *it*-cleft paraphrases. The overview of the pertinent features of these constructions below demonstrates why this is so. The distinction of these sentence types is useful since, as noted earlier, studies in the literature often contain examples of these types of sentences without acknowledgement of their particular characteristics. The descriptions of these sentence types will therefore explain the ungrammaticality of their *it*-cleft counterparts.

2.3.1 Descriptionally-identifying sentences

The first of these constructions is the descriptionally-identifying sentence. Examples of these are given in (67).

(67) a. (Who's that woman?) That woman is Peter's boss.
b. (Who's William?) William is my yoga teacher.
c. (Who's that guy?) He's a friend of mine.

[27] Several studies (*e.g.* Schachter 1973, Harries-Delisle 1978) point out cross-linguistic formal similarities between cleft constructions and specificational questions; Harries-Delisle cites Hutchinson's (1969) observation that in Temne (Niger-Congo) questions and their answers have to be cleft constructions, of the type in (66b). See chapter 7 for further discussion of typological patterns.

The answers given above in (67) provide identifying information but differ from specificational sentences in several respects. The variable element in specificational sentences is what DeClerck (1988:47) refers to as weakly referring (as discussed further in section 5.1.3). A value is assigned to the variable to help the hearer fully identify the referent concerned. However, the resulting sentence will only be adequate for a full identification if the hearer can associate the description given as the value with a particular referent. If they cannot, a descriptionally-identifying sentence may well follow to enable the hearer to 'pick out' the referent. Therefore, when an descriptionally-identifying sentence is used, it presupposes that some degree of specification or identification has already taken place but that this was not enough for the hearer to make a full identification (DeClerck 1988:108). The use of the construction gives a 'second go' at a more precise identification of the specified referent. The exchange in (68) is an example of such a situation.

(68) A: It was William who gave me those flowers. *IT*-CLEFT
B: Who's William?
A: William is my yoga teacher. DESCRIPTIONALLY-IDENTIFYING SENTENCE

The key characteristics of specificational sentences, including contrastiveness, exhaustiveness, and reversibility, are also missing from descriptionally-identifying sentences. In (67a), the description *Peter's boss* does not necessarily contrast with or exclude other possible descriptions of the woman in the same sense that *Jesse* in the specificational sentence in (52b), repeated here as (69), contrasts him with other possible referents that match the variable.

(69) JESSE robbed the bank.

This difference is reflected in the fact that the referent of a descriptionally-identifying sentence can be identified with multiple descriptions (see (70a)) while this is

not possible in a specificational sentence (see (70b), which is a truncated *it*-cleft; DeClerck 1988:100).

(70) a. (Who's that man?) He is a relative of John's and a friend of mine.
b. (Who is Smith's murderer?) *It is a relative of John's and a friend of mine.

The examples in (71) illustrate that descriptionally-identifying sentences are also non-reversible, unlike some specificational sentences (see above, section 2.2.5).

(71) a. (Who's that woman?) *Peter's boss is that woman.
b. (Who's William?) *My yoga teacher is William.
c. (Who's that guy?) *A friend of mine is he.

Since descriptionally-identifying sentences differ significantly from specificational sentences, it is not surprising that they do not have *it*-cleft counterparts since *it*-clefts are specificational sentences and descriptionally-identifying sentences are not. The examples in (72) demonstrate this fact.

(72) a. (Who's that woman?) *It is Peter's boss that that woman is.
b. (Who's William?) *It is my yoga teacher that William is.
c. (Who's that guy?) *It's a friend of mine that he is.

2.3.2 Identity statements

Another sub-type of copular sentence distinguishable from specificational copular sentences consists of what DeClerck terms identity statements (1988:110). Identity statements are also referred to as true or "prototypical equatives" (Heggie 1992:113). Examples are given in (73) (cited in DeClerck 1988:110).

(73) a. The Morning Star is the Evening Star.
b. Dr. Jekyll is Mr. Hyde.
c. The man who killed Smith is the man who robbed the bank.

This type of construction is often conflated with specificational sentences, particularly where specificational (or 'equative') sentences are defined in terms of the referent of one noun phrase being 'the same as' or 'equal to' the referent of the other

noun phrase, as discussed in section 2.2. The description of specificational sentences given in this chapter has defined them as providing a value for a variable rather than as necessarily 'equating' two referents. The sentences in (73), however, clearly have an 'identity' reading, equating the referents as one and the same. According to DeClerck, sentences such as in (73) are ambiguous; they have both a specificational and an identity reading. The sentence in (73c), for example, can have a specificational reading that can be paraphrased as a specificational *it*-cleft construction (given in (74b)).

(74) SPECIFICATIONAL READING

a. The man who killed Smith is the man who robbed the bank.

VARIABLE VALUE/FOCUS

b. It is the man who robbed the bank who (is the man who) killed Smith.

The identity reading, however, cannot be so paraphrased; in this reading, the focus is most often on the copula rather than one or other of the noun phrases (DeClerck 1988:111).

(75) 'IDENTITY STATEMENT' READING

a. The man who killed Smith IS the man who robbed the bank.

FOCUS

b. The man who killed Smith is the same person as the man who robbed the bank.

Finally, in identity statements both of the noun phrases are referring noun phrases in the sense of "serving independently of one another to make genuine references" (Wiggins 1965:42, cited in DeClerck 1988:111). This must be the case since the function of the identity statement is to identify two independent descriptions as one and the same entity. This is not the case with either specificational sentences or descriptionally-identifying sentences. A consequence of this is that identity statements do not share with specificational sentences a sense of contrastiveness. They are

exhaustive by definition, in a sense, and since they equate two referents, the ordering is reversible, illustrated in (76).

(76) a. The Morning Star is the Evening Star.
b. The Evening Star is the Morning Star.

2.3.3 Definitions

Definitions are the final sub-type of copular sentence. DeClerck notes these are also infrequently distinguished and discussed in the literature (DeClerck 1988:113).

(77) a. A helicopter is an aircraft with blades that revolve horizontally.
b. A pyramid is what the Egyptians built to bury their pharaohs in.
(DeClerck 1988:113)

Definitions do not fit the description of a specificational sentence since they do not specify a value for a variable in the sense of "giv[ing] an exhaustive enumeration of the items on the list whose heading is 'the X that is a [helicopter]'" (DeClerck 1988:113). In addition, definitions are not reversible (without losing the definitional status) nor contrastive. Finally, and most significantly for this study, as non-specificational sentences, they do not have *it*-cleft counterparts.

(78) a. *It is a helicopter that is an aircraft with blades that revolve horizontally.
b. *It is an aircraft with blades that revolve horizontally that a helicopter is.

Finally, because definitions have the function of assisting the hearer to understand a concept or term, the subject noun phrase "should not be interpreted as referring" (DeClerck 1988:114). This differentiates definitions from other copular sentence types where both elements are referring to some degree.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has set out the key features of the *it*-cleft construction and put it in the context of other cleft constructions as well as other types of copular sentences. I have shown that *it*-cleft constructions fall into the category of specificational sentences

in terms of serving to specify a value for a variable and this is reflected in characteristics such as contrastiveness, exhaustiveness, and reversibility. The *it*-cleft construction patterns with pseudoclefts in terms of connectedness phenomena such as patterns of reflexivization.

However, the distinctive syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft construction sets it apart, for example in allowing only a specificational reading while pseudoclefts also have a predicational reading. The syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft construction also prevents reversibility. Distinguishing descriptionally-identifying sentences, identity statements and definitions as different from specificational copular sentences accounts for their inability to have *it*-cleft counterparts.

			Contrastive	Exhaustive	Reversible	*It*-cleft paraphrase	Both NPs referring
SPECIFICATIONAL	*It*-cleft	*E.g.* (5)	Yes	Yes	No	n/a	Yes[ii]?
	Pseudocleft	*E.g.* (6)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Reverse Pseudocleft	*E.g.* (7)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	NP *is* NP	*E.g.* (37a)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Non-copular	*E.g.* (52b)	Yes	Yes	n/a	Yes	n/a
PREDICATIONAL	Pseudocleft	*E.g.* (79)	No	No	No[i]	No	No
	NP *is* NP	*E.g.* (32)	No	No	No[i]	No	No
DESCRIPTIONALLY-IDENTIFYING	NP *is* NP	*E.g.* (33b)	No	No	No	No	Yes
IDENTITY STATEMENT	NP *is* NP	*E.g.* (34)	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
DEFINITION	NP *is* NP	*E.g.* (35)	No	No	No	No	No

[i] Not reversible except in a fronted sentence, *e.g. A doctor is what Jacob is*.

[ii] The status of the variable element in the *it*-cleft is discussed in section 5.1.3.1.

Table 2.1 Features of specificational sentences and other types of copular sentences ('n/a' indicates 'not applicable')

Table 2.1 summarizes all these sentence types and their features.[28] The sentence in (79) provides an example of a predicational pseudocleft; the second noun phrase *a miracle* can be interpreted as predicating a property of the thing that was seen (that is, that it was miraculous).

(79) What I saw was a miracle.

It is important to note that categorizing copular sentences (and specificational sentences in particular) in this way has implications for the syntactic analysis of these sentences and thus for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction. The distinction of specificational types of copular sentences as involving a value specified for a variable implies a difference between the functions of the noun phrases in the sentence. Some studies in the literature have interpreted this as evidence for a structural analysis where the variable noun phrase (in a sentence of the form *NP is NP*) is the semantic predicate. I discuss this debate and the implications for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction in section 5.2.1.

To conclude, I have shown that there are clear familial similarities between *it*-clefts and other types of cleft, and between *it*-clefts and other types of specificational sentence in general. At the same time, however, the *it*-cleft construction is clearly unique in many ways, as noted in the literature (*e.g.* Huddleston 1984, Lambrecht 1994). This uniqueness is characterized in two main ways: firstly, the *it*-cleft construction is not the sum of the function of its parts; Lambrecht, for example, states that the "focus meaning of these two-clause sequences is thus non-compositional…it is a property of the complex grammatical construction as a whole" (1994:230). The other distinctive feature of the *it*-cleft construction is that its syntactic elements seem to have a unique role; Huddleston, for example, suggests the relative clause in *it*-cleft

[28] Definitions are different from sentences with nominal predicates since, in the former, the subject noun phrase is generic, whereas the subject noun phrase of a predicational *NP is NP* sentence is not.

constructions to be “sui generis, unique to this construction” (1984:462). The analysis presented in chapters 5 and 6 discuss the notion of the uniqueness of the *it*-cleft construction and show that there are arguments for and against both these interpretations.

3. PREVIOUS STUDIES OF THE *IT*-CLEFT CONSTRUCTION

In this chapter, I begin by providing a survey of the literature that analyzes the *it*-cleft construction and the main approaches that are taken. Following this, in section 3.2, I draw out the issues that arise and highlight key points for consideration.

3.1 Literature Review

Studies of the *it*-cleft construction in the literature, particularly those that have a derivational basis, tend to fall into two broad approaches; descriptions of these form the first two parts of this section (3.1.1 and 3.1.2). These two approaches focus on one of the two main relationships in the cleft construction as primary. The first type, here labelled extrapositional, emphasizes the copular nature of the *it*-cleft, focusing on the copular matrix clause in order to analyze the *it*-cleft construction in relation to other copular sentence types. The second type of analysis highlights the relation between *it*-cleft constructions and their un-clefted counterparts, focusing on the cleft clause as a type of relative clause. The third part of this section (3.1.3) examines some recent key studies by Huddleston (1984), Lambrecht (2001), Davidse (2000), Hedberg (2000) and Clech-Darbon, Rebuschi and Rialland (1999). These studies make use of a variety of theoretical approaches and do not fit neatly into the extrapositional and expletive categories.

3.1.1 Extrapositional analyses

The first type of formal analysis of *it*-cleft constructions focuses on the copular nature of cleft constructions, and often treats the cleft clause as being related to, or as modifying, the cleft pronoun. Together these form a semantic constituent and the copula serves to equate or identify that unit with the clefted constituent. The interpretation of the cleft clause as having been moved, or extraposed, to the end of the sentence leads to

such analyses being labelled "extrapositional" (Hedberg 2000:907); I diagram this approach in (1).

(1) It was John that I saw. → [It + that I saw] was [John]

The extrapositional type of analysis has its roots in Jespersen's 1927 *Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles.* Jespersen begins with the assumption that the cleft clause in an *it*-cleft construction is a type of restrictive relative clause. He notes that the restrictive relative clause in the *it*-cleft construction does not restrict or modify the syntactically neighbouring clefted constituent; evidence for this comes from cases where the clefted constituent is "a word which is in itself so definite that it cannot be further restricted" (Jespersen 1927:89), such as a proper noun. He argues that the antecedent must therefore be the cleft pronoun and concludes that the combination of cleft pronoun plus cleft clause forms a unit with which the clefted constituent referent is identified or equated.

In the 1970s, generative grammarians adopted extrapositional analyses of *it*-clefts, focusing on the copular nature of the construction; their structural analyses of *it*-cleft constructions treated them as extraposed variants of pseudoclefts (*e.g.* Akmajian 1970, Emonds 1976, Gundel 1977 and Wirth 1978).[1] In these analyses, "the subject *it* of clefts is taken as the by-product of a cleft-extraposition operation (with the relative clause thus serving as a postponed modifier to *it* in surface structure)" (Collins 1991:50). They thus give formal structural analyses to support Jespersen's intuitive observation that "from a logical point of view…when we say…'it was the Colonel I was looking for'…what we mean is really 'the Colonel was the man I was looking for'" (Jespersen 1927:88).

[1] Harries-Delisle takes almost the reverse derivational direction, proposing, "all contrastively-emphasized constructions have underlying cleft sentences, independent of whether the surface structure is an equational or a non-equational one [that is, including sentences with 'contrastive emphasis' marked intonationally, such as *MARY kicked the car*]" (1978:419).

Akmajian (1970) presents an example of an extrapositional account within a transformational framework. Akmajian views *it*-clefts as derived from pseudoclefts with what he terms "reduced initial clauses" (in other words, from *Who is sick is me*, rather than *The one who is sick is me*). He proposes the derivation diagrammed in Figure 3.1 from (a) to (b) whereby S_2 is extraposed out of a unit with the cleft pronoun and becomes a daughter of S_1.

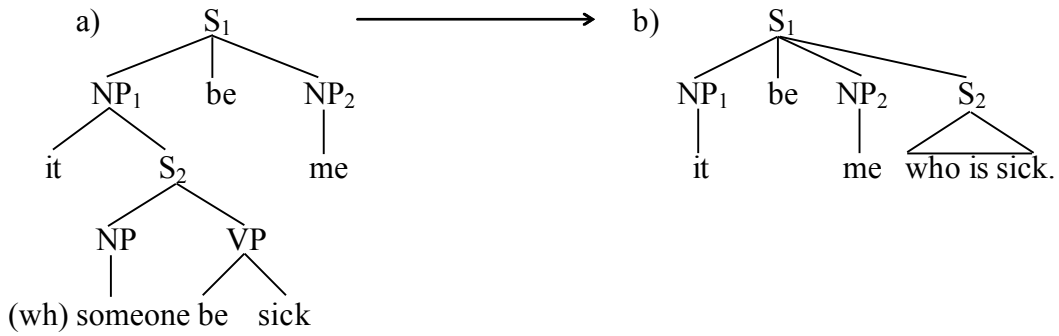


Figure 3.1 It-*cleft derivation following Akmajian (1970:165-6)*

To get from (a) to (b), Akmajian applies multiple rules: a verbal agreement rule results in *someone is sick* in S2, then a relativization rule produces *who is sick*. A specific extraposition rule (appropriately called the Cleft-Extraposition Rule; 1970:150) moves S2 to the end of the sentence, and a verbal agreement rule results in the cleft sentence in (b). His analysis also requires further constraints to prevent predicates being clefted: **It was go that John did* (Akmajian 1970:166). It is unclear how Akmajian's analysis would deal with cleft sentences that use the complementizer (or 'clause linkage marker') *that* rather than a relative pronoun in the cleft clause.

Akmajian's arguments for an analysis that derives *it*-clefts from pseudoclefts hinge firstly on the shared meaning and presuppositions between the two constructions, which he suggests makes them "synonymous" (1970:150) and "interchangeable" (1970:149). He also seeks to justify his analysis through explaining similarities in certain formal syntactic properties between *it*-clefts and pseudoclefts, such as verb

agreement within the subordinate clause, as in (2a-b), and patterns of reflexivization, as in (3a-b) (these phenomena are discussed more fully in section 6.2.2).

(2) a. It's me$_{[1SG]}$ who is$_{[3SG]}$ responsible. (150) *IT*-CLEFT
b. The one$_{[3SG]}$ who is$_{[3SG]}$ responsible is me. (151) PSEUDOCLEFT

(3) a. It's not me$_{[1SG]}$ that shaves himself$_{[3SG]}$ with a straight razor. (155)
b. The one$_{[3SG]}$ who shaves himself$_{[3SG]}$ with a straight razor is not me. (155)

Throughout his article, Akmajian's goal is to demonstrate that *it*-clefts and pseudoclefts 'mean' the same thing and that they exhibit the same patterns in terms of various syntactic properties. There is evidence against both these assumptions. Patterns of negative polarity markers (such as *not…any*) indicate differences in syntactic patterning, as (4a) and (b) illustrate:

(4) a. What we don't need is any eggs.
b. *It's any eggs that we don't need. (Gundel 1977:554)

In addition, Sornicola provides evidence that the two constructions differ in meaning in terms of 'aboutness'. In referring to the two examples below, she states, "[(5a)] is 'about' 'the one who goes to Rome', whereas [(5b)] is 'about' 'me'" (1988:356).

(5) a. The one who goes to Rome is me. PSEUDOCLEFT
b. It is me who goes to Rome. *IT*-CLEFT

Even if the two constructions are taken to be equivalent, what is not made clear is the justification for transformationally deriving the *it*-cleft from the pseudocleft rather than the other way around.

Gundel (1977) provides a second example of an extrapositional analysis of *it*-clefts, in which she adds another abstract level between pseudocleft and *it*-cleft: Gundel claims that *it*-clefts are "reduced forms of right-dislocated pseudo-clefts, where *it* is a pronominal reference to the topic which appears at the end of the sentence" (1977:543).

Thus, in (6) below, (c) is derived from (b), which is in turn derived from (a) (Gundel 1977:543).

(6) a. What you heard was an explosion. PSEUDOCLEFT
b. It was an explosion, what you heard. RIGHT-DISLOCATED PSEUDOCLEFT
c. It was an explosion that you heard. *IT*-CLEFT

Hedberg (2000:908) provides an example of a syntactic structure for an *it*-cleft sentence based on Gundel's analysis (in Figure 3.1b); it is similar to Akmajian's (1970) except that the matrix clause forms an S, which is itself a daughter of an S.

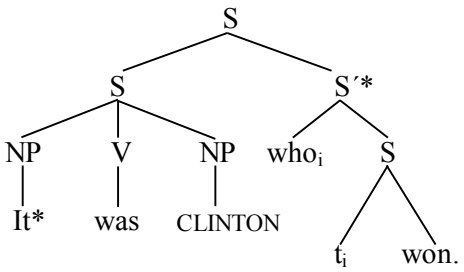


Figure 3.2 It-*cleft structure following Gundel (1977) (Hedberg 2000:908)*

As with Akmajian's (1970) analysis, Gundel's (1977) approach, deriving *it*-clefts from right-dislocated pseudoclefts, uses an equally, if not more complex construction from which to derive one for *it*-clefts. In fact, although there are clearly familial similarities between pseudoclefts and *it*-clefts, as both are specificational copular constructions, an analysis to derive one from the other requires four separate stages, four rules to derive a grammatical *it*-cleft construction from a pseudocleft. These are in addition to those that derive the pseudocleft from its underlying form. These transformational contortions make for a rather circuitous route. A cleft sentence such as (7) would no doubt necessitate more.

(7) (C: Are you missing being the hostess?) M: It's a relief is what it is.[2]

In addition, Schachter (1973) notes that there are *it*-cleft sentences with prepositional phrases as clefted constituent for which there are no pseudocleft or relative

[2] *Friends* (Warner Bros. Entertainment), series 4, episode 13.

clause-type source. Thus, while (8b), for example, could be interpreted as an *it*-cleft counterpart to (8a) (given narrow focus on *to Matt*), there is no pseudocleft or other copular sentence available as a derivational source (8c) (examples from Schachter 1973:28).

(8) a. I gave the cat to MATT.
b. It was to Matt that I gave the cat.
c. *The one/person/place that I gave the cat was to Matt. /*How I gave the cat was to Matt.

Gundel notes these exceptions, and observes that the version of the *it*-cleft in (9a) with a stranded preposition has a grammatical pseudocleft equivalent ((9b); 1977:550). She therefore suggests one more (optional) rule that copies some prepositions into the coreferring focus constituent (the clefted constituent) and deletes the original copy (presumably different from 'moving' it).[3]

(9) a. It was Matt that I gave the cat to.
b. The one (who) I gave the cat to was Matt.

In addition, Gundel has to account for the intonation differences between right-dislocated pseudoclefts and *it*-clefts. She also has to account for the difference in meaning and form between the first noun phrase in a pseudocleft *(What you heard* in (6a)), which is a referring noun phrase with a head noun, and the cleft clause *(that you heard*) in an *it*-cleft. The latter clause has no head and is therefore not a referring expression in the same sense since it is an incomplete unit (see section 5.1.2 for further discussion of the referential status of the cleft clause). Gundel (1977) introduces a rule that deletes the head (*what*) from pseudoclefts to prevent it appearing in the cleft clause. This rule has to be specified as applying only to the right-dislocated noun phrases of identificational sentences, a rather ad hoc rule applying in very restricted circumstances

[3] This rule does not apply to all prepositions; I analyze the different types of prepositional phrases as clefted constituents in section 4.1.1.1 and 6.2.1.

which Gundel acknowledges has "no independent motivation in English…[and is] suspicious" (Gundel 1977:557).

I noted in chapter 2 that the distinctive structure of an *it*-cleft construction, comprising a matrix clause and subordinate clause, means that it does not equate or identify two complete referential noun phrases, as does a pseudocleft or other specificational copular sentence containing two definite noun phrases. This difference is, of course, precisely the motivation for an extrapositional analysis, whereby difficulties stemming from these surface structure differences are eliminated. However, deriving *it*-cleft constructions from various types of pseudoclefts is uneconomical in the sense that it creates more complications that it does solutions. In chapter 6, I show that a non-derivational, functional account can account for familial similarities between types of clefts in terms of their meaning, function, and syntactic behaviour with less complexity and more explanatory insights.

Extrapositional analyses that begin with the cleft pronoun and the cleft clause in an 'underlying' unit are also problematic since they sideline, or ignore, any relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause. This has two major implications. Firstly, it creates a problem in accounting for sentences where only part of the clefted constituent is focused and the rest seems to function with the cleft clause as being part of the 'given' description, part of the presupposition (*e.g. Jack* in (10)).

(10) It was Jack and LORNA that visited Mongolia.

The second consequence is difficulty in accounting for verb agreement in number between the predicate in the cleft clause and the clefted constituent. Extrapositional analyses consider the cleft clause to modify the cleft pronoun rather than the clefted constituent. However, in *it*-clefts, the verb in the cleft clause agrees in number with the clefted constituent, not (necessarily) with the cleft pronoun. Akmajian argues that this

follows if *it*-clefts are derived from pseudoclefts since this patterning matches the agreement with *the one* in pseudoclefts, which is in number only, as in (11a) (repeated from (2a)).

(11) a. It's me who is/*am responsible.
b. The one who is/*am responsible is me. (Akmajian 1970:150-1)
c. The ones/*one who are responsible are Jerry and Thomas.

However, he does not elaborate on the nature of the element *one* and the anaphoric relationship that must exist in pseudoclefts between the first and second noun phrase that determines the number of *one/ones* (see (11c)).

To summarize, extrapositional accounts of *it*-cleft constructions focus on the fact that these are copular constructions; they are viewed as derived from, or related to, other copular cleft constructions that are closer to the structure *NP is NP*. Derivational extrapositional accounts provide the *it*-cleft with an underlying form that gives a syntactic 'head' to the cleft clause, usually by association with the cleft pronoun *it.* This analysis gives, at an abstract level, a syntactic structure corresponding to the semantic structure where a variable is presupposed to exist. The analysis of *it*-cleft constructions as primarily copular sentences uses as evidence the similarities between characteristics of *it*-clefts and of other specificational copular sentences. These include syntactic connectedness phenomena (*e.g.* reflexivization), semantic meaning and presupposition and implied aspects such as contrastiveness and exhaustiveness.

There are three main difficulties with this approach. Firstly, in a derivational account, the necessity of multiple transformations is created, and of rules that apply in very restricted circumstances. Secondly, there is a difference in form and meaning between the 'WH-NP' in a pseudocleft, containing a referential head noun, and the cleft clause in an *it*-cleft, which has no head noun. Finally, in subordinating any direct relationship between the cleft clause and the clefted constituent, extrapositional

accounts are stretched to explain both verb agreement between these two constituents and cases where elements of the clefted constituent function together with the cleft clause as the presupposed part of the sentence. It is also worth noting that the label 'extrapositional' is somewhat misleading: *it*-cleft constructions are significantly different from constructions usually referred to as extraposed; that is, where a sentential subject appears at the end of a sentence, with a dummy *it* filling the subject position (see (12a)). One difference is that such extraposed sentences have 'non-extraposed' counterpart sentences where the *that*-clause appears in subject position (see (12b)); there is no such direct equivalent for clefts (see (13a-b).

(12) a. It surprised me that Jennifer dumped Brad. EXTRAPOSITION
b. That Jennifer dumped Brad surprised me.

(13) a. It was Jennifer that dumped Brad. *IT*-CLEFT
b. *That dumped Brad was Jennifer.

3.1.2 Expletive analyses

The other main approach to the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction treats the cleft pronoun (and generally also the copula) as expletive, dummy, semantically inert elements, while the cleft clause bears a semantic relation to the clefted constituent (examples include Heggie 1988 and Kiss 1998). The perceived 'dummy' nature of the cleft pronoun motivates the label 'expletive' for this type of analysis (Hedberg 2000:909), as diagrammed in (14).

(14) It was [John + that I saw]

Rather than focusing on *it*-clefts as copular constructions, this type of analysis connects them more closely to their non-cleft counterpart sentences (*I saw John* in the case of (14)). The roots of this approach are in Jespersen's second study involving *it*-clefts, published in 1937, in which he recognizes that the relative-type clause in *it*-clefts cannot be described as restrictive in connection with the cleft pronoun because of the

close relationship evident between the cleft clause and the clefted constituent (as described above). He notes, for example, that there is no intonational break between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause, and that there is agreement in number between the two.

Setting aside the cleft pronoun and copula, as well as the relative pronoun or complementizer, Jespersen "treat[s] the rest of the sentence as if there had been no intercalation" (1937:86). In other words, *the wife* in (15) below is not any kind of predicative element, but is marked instead as subject, with *decides* as the verb, ignoring the presence of the other elements (subscript S and V indicate "lesser subject and verb" (1937:86), and [3^c] is Jespersen's notation to represent *that*):

(15) a. It is the wife that decides.
b. [$_{SV}$] S [3^c] V (Jespersen 1937:86)

Jespersen's study also hints at a pragmatic interpretation of *it is*, suggesting it to be "a demonstrative gesture to point at one particular part of the sentence" (1937:86). Jespersen avoids the issue of whether *it*-cleft constructions are derived from a more basic structure stating, "I shall leave out of account the question of the origin of such constructions…what interests me is how they are felt now" (1937:84).

Kiss (1998) gives an account based on an 'expletive' analysis of *it*-clefts that *does* seek to explain their derivation. Kiss differentiates between information focus, which conveys new information, and identificational focus, which expresses exhaustive identification. She then states that identificational focus "occupies the specifier of a functional projection [focus phrase]" (1998:245, following Brody 1990). It serves to "mark the sentence part following it…as the scope of exhaustive identification" (1998:253). Kiss argues that in English the clefted constituent in *it*-clefts "is the realization of identificational focus in English" (1998:245). The cleft pronoun is viewed as expletive, as is the copular verb (1998:258). This structure is

given in Figure 3.3; Kiss explains that the prepositional phrase *Clinton* in the example "has been moved from under the embedded VP [(an 'IP' in the diagram)] into spec-FP through spec-CP" (1998:258-9). This is indicated with subscript 'i'.

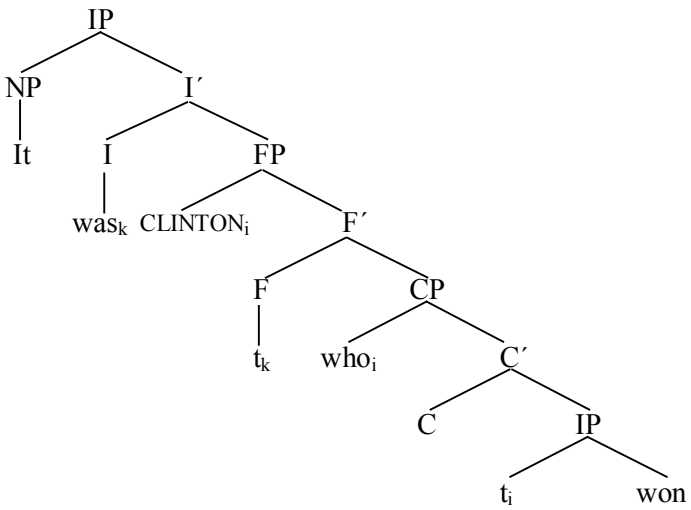


Figure 3.3 It-*cleft structure following Kiss (1998) (Hedberg 2000:911)*

Kiss explicitly states that exhaustive identification is a function of structural focus of the clefted constituent; in other words, other focused constituents such as in (16) carry information focus but do not express exhaustive identification (where small capitals indicate focal stress).

(16) Mary picked for herself a HAT. (Kiss 1998:249)

However, this would seem to depend on the context. Sentences with an accent on the sentence-final element have ambiguous focus structure; they may have predicate focus structure, in which case they would not express exhaustive identification. However, such sentences *can* also carry exhaustive, 'identificational' focus given the right contrastive context, that is, if the final element carries narrow focus (as noted by Horn 1981). The reply by 'B' in (17) illustrates this.

(17) A: Mary ate pie and chips.
B: No, Mary ate a PIZZA.

This suggests that Kiss' analysis of the identificational focus of the English sentence as being only "realized in the form of the cleft construction" (1998:256) may be too restricted in one sense, since identificational focus can also apply in non-cleft narrow focus constructions. On the other hand, the occurrence of *there*-clefts such as in (18), which do not have an exhaustive interpretation, is evidence that the cleft structure can also have other functions (see section 5.1.1 for further comparison of *there*-cleft and *it*-cleft constructions).

(18) There was one man that kept interrupting. (Huddleston 1984:469)

One potential hurdle the expletive approach to the analysis of *it*-cleft constructions must cross is "the interpretation of a defining relative as modifying an already-defined head " (Collins 1991:51), that is, the possibility of proper names and pronouns as clefted constituent. This is a problem if the relative clause is interpreted as being restrictive, as modifying the clefted constituent. However, most studies agree that while the cleft clause has an internal structure that resembles a relative clause, the role of the cleft clause within an *it*-cleft construction is not the same. It does not serve to help identify the referent of the clefted constituent (or the cleft pronoun). Jespersen's (1937) study recognizes this to be so; he states that "the clause is felt to be, and is treated like, a restrictive clause, though it does not logically restrict the word with which it is connected" (1937:83). Others, such as Davidse (2000) outlined below, instead describe the relationship within *it*-cleft constructions as 'value-variable', terminology that reflects the anaphoric coreference between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause without suggesting a restrictive function.

In addition, expletive analyses that propose that the clefted constituent and cleft clause form a structural unit need to account for why the clefted constituent can be

fronted within the matrix clause of an *it*-cleft construction, as in (19b) (clefted constituent underlined).

(19) a. It was John who broke it.
b. John it was who broke it. (Huddleston 1984:460)
c. *John who broke it it was.

To summarize, expletive accounts of *it*-cleft constructions concentrate on the relationship between the cleft clause and the clefted constituent with the cleft pronoun and copula considered syntactically and semantically expletive. Expletive analyses formalize the intuitive connection between *it*-cleft constructions and their unclefted counterparts. They argue that this accounts for syntactic behaviour such as number agreement between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause verb (see (11a) for example).

For expletive analyses that are concerned with the interaction of focus structure with syntactic structure, such as Lambrecht (2001) outlined below in section 3.1.3, the matrix structure remains an object of study, usually assigned a pragmatic focus-marking function.

3.1.3 Alternative studies

While many studies of the *it*-cleft construction follow either the extrapositional or the expletive approach, these labels are most relevant for analyses involving derivations. Other studies, particularly (though not exclusively) those with a non-transformational theoretical basis, cannot be straightforwardly classified as either extrapositional or expletive. Several of these are examined further here.

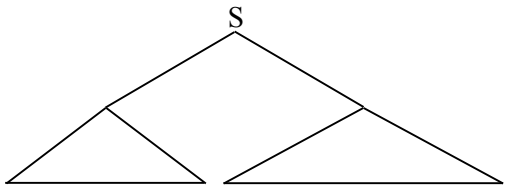
Huddleston's (1984) study adopts a form of the expletive approach but modifies it. He analyses *it*-cleft constructions "in terms of the non-cleft counterpart", viewing the *it*-cleft in (20b), as well as the pseudocleft in (20c), for example, as "thematic variant[s]" (1984:459) of the non-cleft sentence in (20a).

(20) a. A faulty switch caused the trouble.

b. It was a faulty switch that caused the trouble. IT-CLEFT

c. What caused the trouble was a faulty switch. PSEUDOCLEFT

Regarding the structure of *it*-cleft constructions, Huddleston asserts that the original non-cleft counterpart sentence works "in conjunction with the cleaving operation" (1984:462) to form an *it*-cleft construction though he says no more about the precise nature of this cleaving operation. He argues for an interpretation of *it*-clefts involving non-embedded subordination, that is, with *It was a sherry* and *that Tom offered Sue* as immediate constituents in the cleft sentence *It was a sherry that Tom offered Sue*. I illustrate this interpretation with the diagram in Figure 3.4.



[It was a sherry] [that Tom offered Sue].

Figure 3.4 It-*cleft construction structure following Huddleston (1984)*

According to this analysis, the clefted constituent (the "highlighted element") is the antecedent for the relative clause but the relative clause and antecedent together do not form a constituent (Huddleston 1984:462). Huddleston acknowledges his analysis as "largely ad hoc – the relative clause is of a kind that is sui generis, unique to this construction" (Huddleston 1984:462). He also views the relationship between the cleft pronoun and copular verb as unique, arguing that it displays "fully grammaticalized features of the construction whose contribution to the meaning is not directly predictable from their use in other kinds of clause" (1984:462). It is not clear how this 'non-embedded' subordinate structure reflects the iconic patterning associated with the *it*-cleft construction whereby the 'backgrounded' cleft clause represents the presupposition of the sentence.

In contrast to Huddleston (1984), Hedberg (2000) argues that the clefted constituent and cleft clause do form a syntactic constituent. She presents an analysis of *it*-clefts in English that, like Davidse (2000) outlined below, seeks to explain the perceived semantic role of the cleft pronoun as well as to account for the relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause. Hedberg interprets the cleft clause as being involved in two relationships; "[it is] directly related syntactically to the clefted constituent and directly related semantically and pragmatically to the cleft pronoun" (2000:907; see Figure 3.5). In syntactic terms, the cleft clause is "a complement clause extraposed from the subject DP and adjoined to the clefted constituent" (2000:912) to become a DP unit. Subscript 'i' indicates the semantic relationship between the cleft pronoun and the cleft clause. Thus, Hedberg takes elements from both the extraposition and expletive types of analysis.

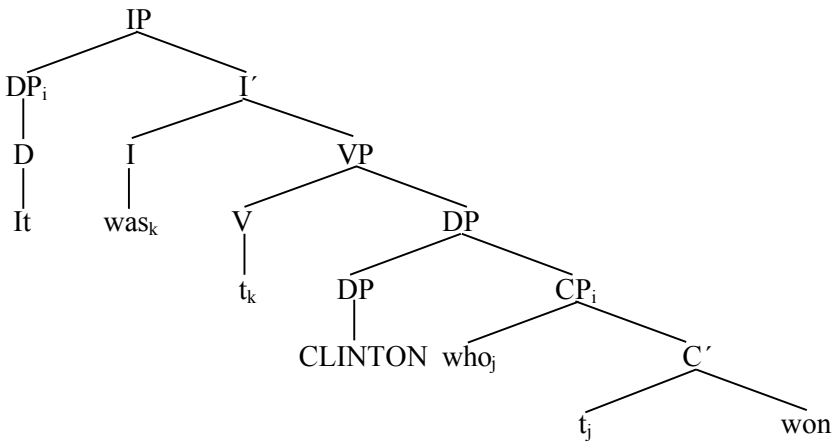


Figure 3.5 It-*cleft structure following Hedberg (2000:913)*

Hedberg argues that the syntactic relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause resembles the structure for non-restrictive relative clauses. This is because, of the two (restrictive and non-restrictive), the cleft clause structure is syntactically more similar to non-restrictive relative clauses (they can both have proper nouns as antecedent, for example). However, while there are similarities between the *it*-cleft construction and non-restrictive relative clauses, there are also differences.

Sornicola notes differences in intonation patterns and in the choice of relative pronouns: the complementizer *that* cannot be used in non-restrictive relative clauses, while it is commonly used in *it*-cleft constructions (1988:346). In addition, forming a syntactic unit of the clefted constituent and the cleft clause creates the need to account for the verb agreement between the two in terms of number but not person, an unresolved issue in the study of *it*-cleft constructions. Hedberg acknowledges, "the agreement properties are very mysterious" (Hedberg, personal communication, 27/11/02).

Hedberg (2000) devotes most of her article to the 'extrapositional' semantic relationship between the cleft pronoun and the cleft clause. She seeks to show that the cognitive status or 'givenness' of the cleft clause puts constraints on which pronoun – *it, that* or *this* – is selected as the cleft pronoun. She makes the assumption that *it* functions as an allomorph of the definite determiner *the* when there is accompanying descriptive content that does not immediately follow; in other words, in a full *it*-cleft construction where the descriptive content appears in the cleft clause (Hedberg 2000:898). Her argument is that the constraints governing the choice of cleft pronoun are the same as those affecting the determiner and nominal content of a referring ('continuous') determiner phrase. The latter constraints are proposed by Gundel, Hedberg and Zacharski (1993); see Figure 3.6.[4]

in focus	>	activated	>	familiar	>	uniquely identifiable	>	referential	>	type identifiable
{*it*}		{ *that* / *this* / *this* N }		{*that* N}		{*the* N}		{indefinite *this* N}		{*a* N}

Figure 3.6 Givenness hierarchy (Gundel et al*. 1993:275)*

[4] Gundel *et al*. use the term 'referential' for the use of noun phrases where "the speaker intends to refer to a particular object or objects" (1993:276). This is slightly different from the communicative, hearer-orientated interpretation discussed and adopted in section 1.4.4.

Hedberg uses the sentences in (21) and (22) below as examples of this similarity of patterning (determiners/cleft pronouns and associated descriptions are underlined).

(21) a. This dog/this/that kept me awake. (Hedberg 2000:895)
b. This isn't Iowa we're talking about. (Hedberg 2000:899)

(22) a. The dog (next door) kept me awake. (Hedberg 2000:895)
b. It was just about 50 years ago that Henry Ford gave us the weekend. (Prince 1978:898, cited in Hedberg 2000:902)

For the appropriate use of *this* as the determiner in (21a) and as the cleft pronoun in (21b), the description depicted by the noun in (21a) and by the cleft clause in (21b) must be at least 'activated' in the mind of the hearer. In the *this*-cleft in (21b), in other words, the content of the cleft clause (that the speaker and hearer are talking about something) must be activated in the discourse (2000:899).

Example (22a) illustrates that the determiner *the* accompanies a referent that is at least uniquely identifiable. This corresponds, according to Hedberg, to the licensed use of *it* (and not *this* or *that*) in a full *it*-cleft where the content of the cleft clause is uniquely identifiable, but not familiar, as in (22b). (These 'informative presupposition clefts' (Prince 1978) or 'discontinuous clefts' (DeClerck 1988) are described above in section 2.2.1.1.)

Hedberg notes that the pronoun *it* is often used not only in full *it*-clefts with uniquely identifiable cleft clauses, but also in *it*-clefts where the content of the cleft clause is more activated. This also correlates, she suggests, with the use of *the*, pointing to Gundel *et al.* (1993), who show that the definite determiner *the* is frequently used where a form that indicates a higher cognitive status would have been appropriate.

This patterning between cleft pronouns and determiners leads Hedberg to argue that the cleft pronoun and cleft clause work together pragmatically and semantically to form what she terms a "discontinuous definite description, with the cleft pronoun

playing a role analogous to that of the definite article" (2000:891). Her diagrams are given in Figure 3.7.[5]

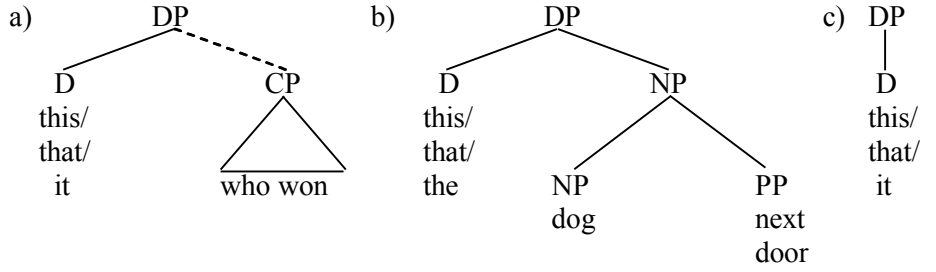


Figure 3.7 Discontinuous (a) and continuous (b, c) referring expressions (Hedberg 2000:898)

Hedberg argues that the existential and exhaustiveness conditions that operate with definite determiners are also matched by the same conditions within *it*-cleft construction, as illustrated by her examples in (23):

(23) a. The present queen of France lives in Ithaca.
Implies: there is a unique present queen of France.
b. It was Lee who got a perfect score on the semantics quiz.
Implies: someone [exists who] got a perfect score on the semantics quiz.
(Hedberg 2000:905)

Hedberg states that, in the case of *it*-clefts, the exhaustiveness is "identified with" the clefted constituent through the use of the copula "linking verb" (2000:906-907) which "just functions as an equals (=) sign" (Hedberg, p.c., 24/11/02). This contrasts

[5] Hedberg suggests that *it* is in fact used in two different ways as the cleft pronoun in *it*-clefts. Where a full *it*-cleft occurs, the cleft pronoun patterns as an allomorph of *the*, that is, as a type of determiner, as illustrated above in (22b). On the other hand, Hedberg interprets the cleft pronoun of truncated clefts such as *it was Marcel* in (i) as analogous to the use of the referential pronoun *it* in non-cleft sentences such as in (ii) (rather than as an allomorph of *the*). In other words, just as the referential *it* in (ii) requires the intended referent (the dog) to be 'in focus' (see Figure 3.6), so the use of the truncated *it*-cleft in (i) requires the content of the associated cleft clause (that someone was called) to be 'in focus'.

(i) (I had thought…I would be the first to be called; but to my surprise,) it was Marcel. (Hedberg 2000:899)

(ii) (The dog next door barks a lot. I couldn't sleep last night.) It kept me awake. (Hedberg 2000:895)

Hedberg states that cleft pronouns in truncated clefts and full clefts (containing cleft clauses) are therefore different, the former functioning as pronouns, the latter as determiners.

with a 'value-variable' description, as in Davidse (2000) and described by DeClerck (1988) (see section 2.2 above). Hedberg does not elaborate on the nature of this identification but asserts (in contrast with Davidse 2000) that "assuming that the exhaustiveness effect is contributed by the copula…isn't necessary" (p.c., 24/11/02). As noted above in chapter 2, an alternative approach is to view the *it*-cleft construction as expressing a specificational value-variable function; the exhaustive condition is then treated as an implication that follows as a consequence of that specificational function.

Hedberg appears to equate definiteness and reference in her analysis of clefts, referring variously to 'discontinuous definite descriptions' and later to 'discontinuous referring descriptions'. She thus seems to assume that one can interpret the cleft clause as a referring expression because of perceived patterns with referring nouns in its use of determiners. In contrast, Lambrecht deems the cleft clause element "semantically incomplete [and thus argues that] it cannot designate an identifiable discourse referent" (1994:232; see 228-233). The 'incompleteness' of the cleft clause sets limits on the extent of a direct comparison between the cleft pronoun *it* and the determiner *the*. Hedberg (2000) does not fully explain the shift in applying the givenness hierarchy (Figure 3.6) and terms such as 'uniquely identifiable' and 'referential' to propositions (designated by clauses) rather than referring expressions (designated by noun phrases).[6]

To argue that the cleft clause is a referring expression because of the perceived collaboration of the cleft pronoun would seem to be very close to using the argument to prove the argument. At least, it takes several significant steps to move from firstly observing a patterning between the use of various cleft pronouns and the cognitive status of the cleft clause in English, to drawing analogies between this patterning and

[6] In addition, it is worth noting that Lambrecht demonstrates that the relationship between grammatical definiteness and cognitive status (particularly in terms of specificity) is "imperfect" and language-specific (Lambrecht 1994:87, 108). I discussed this relationship further in section 1.4.

those within definite noun phrases, and then finally to describing the cleft clause as referring because of this patterning. However, Hedberg's (2000) examples and observations do make clear that speakers can exploit the syntactic cleft pronoun position for discourse purposes by using deictic *this/that*. I examine this use of different cleft pronouns further in section 5.1.1.

Lambrecht's own (2001) examination of the *it*-cleft construction approaches the subject from a different theoretical angle, taking a largely functional approach. His discourse-functional approach to the analysis of *it*-cleft constructions highlights their role as "one of several devices languages can use to express deviations from the unmarked predicate-focus type" (2001:463).[7]

The fact that the characteristics of *it*-cleft constructions are not "directly predictable" (Huddleston 1984:462) leads Lambrecht to adopt a constructional grammar approach (2001:466). He treats the *it*-cleft as a construction in the sense of a "form-function pairing whose structural and semantic properties cannot…entirely be accounted for in terms of other properties of the grammar of the language or of universal grammar…therefore requir[ing] independent explanation" (2001:466).

Lambrecht's analysis is generally expletive, based loosely on Jespersen's (1937) account. He argues for an analysis "in which [both] the matrix sequence *it is* and the relative pronoun or complementizer are analyzed as grammatical elements that do not enter into the semantic composition of the sentence" (2001:463). However, his analysis recognizes a pragmatic, focus-assigning function for the cleft pronoun and copula in its relation to the clefted constituent. Meanwhile, he states, "the relative-clause predicator assigns a semantic role to the shared argument" (2001:463). Lambrecht takes cleft

[7] Other functional or discourse-based studies of clefts include Collins (1991) and Prince (1978). Collins examines "the communicative properties of 'cleft' and 'pseudo-cleft' constructions" (Collins 1991:1). Prince (1978)'s "text-based study draws on the work of Chafe (1976), Grice (1975), and others in order to analyse and subclassify clefts and pseudo-clefts…according to their discourse functions" (Collins 1991:4).

constructions to have pragmatic/focus structure meaning not derivable from the functions of its parts; they are used to create focus on a semantic argument (usually) even though neither of the two clauses that make up the construction is "formally marked as having argument-focus structure. The focus meaning of these two-clause sequences is thus non-compositional…it is a property of the complex grammatical construction as a whole" (1994:230).

Lambrecht develops what he considers Jespersen's (1937) "unwitting" (Lambrecht 2001:465) capture of the intuitive relation between some *it*-cleft narrow focus constructions and fronted focus constructions. The examples in (25), where there is no relative pronoun or *that* in the cleft clause, clearly illustrate this. (Jespersen's (1937) symbolization is also repeated below.) Section 7.1 examines this parallel between *it*-cleft constructions and 'fronted' sentences in the light of cross-linguistic data.

(24) a. It is the wife that decides. [$_{SV}$] S [3^{c}] V (Jespersen 1937:86)
b. The WIFE decides. S V

(25) a. It was John we saw. [$_{SV}$] O S V (Lambrecht 2001:465)
b. JOHN we saw. O S V

Unlike Jespersen (1937) who treats the clefted constituent as the subject, Lambrecht analyses it as a syntactic and pragmatic predicate. This role is connected to the focus or asserted part of the sentence and is explained further in Lambrecht (1994). Thus, for example, both the specificational sentences in (26) have the pragmatic predicate is '(is) the speaker's car'.

(26) Sentence: *My CAR broke down/It was my CAR that broke down.*
Presupposition: "speaker's x broke down"
Assertion: "x = car"
Focus: "car"
Focus domain: NP
Pragmatic predicate: '(is) the speaker's car'

In the case of the *it*-cleft construction, Lambrecht associates the copula with the focused constituent, stating that the focus, although a semantic argument, functions as a predicate by virtue of its post-copular position in the matrix clause (2001:470). The pragmatic predicate serves to identify (indicated by the equals sign in (26)) rather than to semantically predicate. It is in this sense therefore, according to Lambrecht, that a semantic argument can function as a predicate. The pragmatic predicate seems essentially to describe the function of the 'value' element in specificational sentences. In section 5.1.2.2, I discuss further the concept of pragmatic predicate in the context of the Role and Reference Grammar analysis of the *it*-cleft construction.

Davidse (2000) also takes a constructional approach to *it*-clefts, interpreting them as a combination of two semantic relationships associated with the two constructions that make up the *it*-cleft construction. Firstly, she argues that the relationship between the cleft clause and its antecedent, the clefted constituent, constitutes a 'value-variable' relation, rather than a head-modifier or restrictive relation. This difference in the role of the cleft clause and restrictive relative clause stems, according to Davidse, from the nature of the antecedents in noun phrases containing relative clauses and in *it*-clefts. Following Langacker (1991), Davidse states that in noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses, the antecedent of the relative clause is the head minus the determiner (2000:1109) whereas in *it*-clefts the antecedent is the head plus determiner, or the "grounded instance designated by the full NP" (2000:1112). In other words, the antecedent in *it*-cleft constructions is a 'grounded' referring expression while in restrictive relative clauses it is a head noun. Thus in (27), for example, the antecedent of the relative clause is the nominal head *man* whereas in (28) it is the noun phrase *the man*. The proposed Role and Reference Grammar structure reflects this difference (see section 6.1).

(27) I didn't like the [man]$_{N}$ [who spoke first]$_{RC}$.

(28) It was [the man]$_{NP}$ [who spoke first]$_{RC}$. (Davidse 2000:1111)

Davidse also proposes, contrasting with expletive accounts, that there is a coded semantic relation within the matrix clause. (Her analysis also contrasts with Lambrecht's pragmatic analysis although the result is quite similar.) The cleft pronoun, in Davidse's analysis, is not expletive but performs a quantificational role, "impos[ing] a specific "quantificational" value on [its] complement" (Davidse 2000:1101). In the case of the *it* in *it*-clefts, this 'quantificational value' is an identifying value: it "quantifies exhaustively" in the sense that it "specifies the total set of instances corresponding to the variable expressed by the relative clause" (2000:1125). The cleft pronoun quantifies the clefted constituent through being equated via the copula.

Davidse contrasts *it*-cleft constructions such as (28) with *there*-clefts, illustrated by (29a) below, which she labels "enumerative existentials" since they provide a potentially incomplete list of instances (2000:1126); in other words, they are not exhaustive.

(29) a. There's Jim who makes the coffee. (Davidse 2000:1121).

b. (Who could be considered for this job?) Well, we have/you've got Mick and Di that could be considered. (Davidse 2000:1119).

Davidse also discusses "possessive" (2000:1120) cleft constructions (such as (29b)), which she suggests are another type of 'enumerative' construction (following Quirk *et al*. 1972:961): they can, with appropriate intonation, be interpreted as giving an incomplete list of items corresponding to that described by the cleft clause. These constructions are therefore not specificational, in the sense of DeClerck (1988), since they do not specify a value for a variable. These types of cleft construction provide some evidence against the claim that the use of *it is* in *it*-cleft constructions is not related to its use elsewhere (*e.g.* Huddleston 1984:462).

Thus, according to Davidse, in *it*-cleft constructions the clefted constituent is exhaustively quantified and *then* serves as antecedent for the following relative-type clause. For example, the antecedent in (30) below is "Jules and Jim as exhaustively specified set" (2000:1125). Davidse repeats several times that the ordering, or scope, of the two semantic relationships she posits is significant but she does not explain this ordering. One assumption might be that she relates it to the linear order of the constituents involved, but this is not stated. This omission proves somewhat problematic when Davidse compares *it*-cleft constructions to pseudoclefts (as in (31)) to show the correspondence between *it* and *the* as 'definite', expressing exhaustiveness.[8]

(30) It's Jules and Jim that got away with it.
(31) The ones that got away with it are Jules and Jim. (Davidse 2000:1121)

Davidse argues that the cleft pronoun *it* in (30), "points to all the instantiation in the relevant discourse context of the category in question" (2000:1121). The pseudocleft in (31) "correspond[s]" to the cleft sentence in (30); in this pseudocleft, "*the* also encompasses all the instances in the discourse space of the general type expressed by *ones that got away with it*" (2000:1122). This comparison in fact serves to highlight differences rather than similarities between the cleft pronoun and the definite determiner. As Davidse's own analysis demonstrates, the definite determiner in noun phrases has scope over the head noun and modifiers such as relative clauses. In *it*-clefts, on the other hand, Davidse argues that the cleft pronoun operates only on the clefted constituent.

Despite these queries, Davidse's constructional approach makes useful advances and begins to bear similarities to the way a Role and Reference Grammar analysis would interpret the constructions.

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[8] Davidse's (2000) association of the cleft pronoun with the exhaustive interpretation of the *it*-cleft has parallels with Hedberg's (2000) analysis. I discuss these studies further in section 5.1.1.

Finally, and in contrast to both Davidse's (2000) and Lambrecht's (2001) constructional approach, Clech-Darbon, Rebuschi and Rialland (1999) provide an example of a transformational analysis of *it*-cleft sentences based on French data. They argue explicitly against the existence of a cleft "construction" (1999:83) but it is unclear what they understand by the term 'construction', particularly since they consider the *it*-cleft construction to be essentially "base-generated" and devote a section to demonstrating that the cleft structure itself "supplies…semantic information" (1999:103) connected with the uniqueness interpretation of the clefted constituent.

In agreement with the observations made in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, Clech-Darbon *et al.* argue that both expletive and extrapositional derivational accounts have difficulty in accounting for French data. They propose instead that the 'coda' (the cleft clause) is "base-generated as right-adjoined to an ordinary identificational sentence" such as (32a), resulting in (32b) (1999:105).

(32) a. $[_{IP}$ C' est_v $[_{VP}$ t_v $[_{NP}$ le petit]]]
it is the little.one

b. $[_{IP}$ $[_{IP}$ C' est_v $[_{VP}$ t_v $[_{NP}$ le petit]]] $[_{CP}$ Op_i $[_{C'}$ qui $[_{IP}$ t_i est tombé]]]]
it is the little.one who is fallen

This produces a structure roughly similar to the Role and Reference Grammar syntactic structure I propose in section 6.1 (see Figure 6.1). However, their explanation and interpretation of the structure is very different. They interpret the cleft clause (the 'coda') as a relative clause that "translates into a property"; it "restricts" an antecedent or variable (1999:107). This variable is "associated with the translation of the [Spec, IP] *ce* [(the cleft pronoun)]" (Clech-Darbon *et al*. 1999:108), thus taking a semantically extrapositional approach. One issue with this analysis, however, is that it treats the 'relative clause' relationship as restrictive; I have shown this to be an inappropriate characterization of the cleft clause. The analysis in chapter 6 proposes an alternative

analysis based on the nature of the antecedent in *it*-cleft constructions and its syntactic environment.

In addition, Clech-Darbon *et al*. (1999) claim that the *it*-cleft consists of an identificational sentence onto which the cleft clause is adjoined. This conflicts, in a sense, with the information structure of the sentence as it implies the primacy of the matrix clause. In an *it*-cleft construction, in contrast, the presupposed material generally appears within the cleft clause and the matrix clause serves to specify the value of the variable described there. Thus, the form and role of the clefted constituent in the matrix core cannot be determined without reference to the predicate in the cleft clause. In the conclusion to their article, Clech-Darbon *et al*. accept that while there are some formal similarities between *it*-cleft constructions across languages (to the extent that their form defines them as *it*-cleft constructions), what various cleft constructions have in common has more to do with their semantic function than their form (1999:109). Chapter 7 discusses the importance of function as a defining characteristic of the *it*-cleft construction cross-linguistically.

In conclusion, *it*-cleft constructions are generally perceived to be a 'marked' syntactic option to represent a simple logical proposition. The question of their relationship to 'more basic' or simply 'other' constructions is answered in different ways depending on the theoretical framework in which the analysis is conducted. The interpretation of the copular nature of *it*-cleft constructions as more basic tends to result in an extrapositional analysis, where similarities with, or derivations from, other copular sentences are built upon. On the other hand, there is a second relationship in *it*-cleft constructions between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause and this is similar to their corresponding non-cleft constructions. The interpretation of this relationship as primary leads to an 'expletive' analysis.

The transformational studies that fall most strongly into one camp or the other are concerned with using the characteristics of *it*-cleft constructions to justify the underlying 'source' of *it*-clefts as either some type of pseudocleft (extrapositional) or as the non-cleft version of the sentence (expletive). There is clearly the need for both relationships to be integrated into a study of the *it*-cleft constructions and it is advantageous to produce a combined analysis, to have one's cake and eat it. A non-transformational account without underlying forms, such as within Role and Reference Grammar, provides the framework for such an analysis: since there is no derivational source of the *it*-cleft construction, there is no need to be forced into one camp or the other.

3.2 Issues arising

In chapter 2, I presented the key characteristics of the *it*-cleft construction and in the preceding section I highlighted key analyses and approaches in the literature that seek to describe and explain these various characteristics. This section summarizes the issues that have arisen and the key questions that remain unresolved in the literature that any new analysis must therefore address. The first section (3.2.1) examines the main components of the *it*-cleft construction and the second (3.2.2) discusses aspects of the *it*-cleft construction as a whole.

3.2.1 Elements of the *it*-cleft construction

A productive analysis of the *it*-cleft construction needs to integrate all elements of the construction, and all the relationships between them. It is useful, therefore, to begin by examining the constituents of the *it*-cleft construction and the issues surrounding each one.

3.2.1.1 Cleft pronoun

The issues connected with the cleft pronoun in the *it*-cleft construction depend to some extent on the type of analysis adopted, and on whether clefts using other pronominal elements (*e.g. this, that, there*) are considered.

Extrapositional accounts view the cleft pronoun as linked to the cleft clause (which has been extraposed to the end of the sentence); the relationship between the cleft pronoun and the cleft clause then bears some similarities to that in other extraposed sentences (such as (34a)). However, as I noted in section 3.1.1, there are structural differences between these constructions, as the examples in (33) and (34) further illustrate.

(33) a. It was Bob who got sick. *IT*-CLEFT
b. *Who got sick was Bob.

(34) a. It surprised Mary that Bob ate the sushi. EXTRAPOSITION
b. That Bob ate the sushi surprised Mary.

In addition, I observed above that elements describing the presupposition of the sentence sometimes appear as part of the clefted constituent, rather than solely within the cleft clause.

Within expletive accounts, on the other hand, the cleft pronoun is interpreted as a syntactic 'dummy' element similar to the *it* in a sentence such as *It's raining*. The *it* is present because the language (in this case, English) requires a syntactic subject and the copula verb agrees with this syntactic subject (see (35a)). The cleft pronoun also participates in question formation, as illustrated in (35b) and (c).

(35) a. <u>It</u> was/*were Lily and George that were named after their grandparents.
b. Was <u>it</u> Lily and George that were named after their grandparents?
c. <u>It</u> was Lily and George that were named after their grandparents, wasn't <u>it</u>?

The different meaning and discourse function of cleft constructions containing *this/that* in place of *it* as cleft pronoun, and with those beginning *there* (see (36a-d)),

serve as evidence against a non-semantic, purely syntactic 'dummy' role for the cleft pronoun.

(36) a. It's Laura who's leaving Boston. *IT*-CLEFT
b. This isn't Iowa we're talking about. *THIS*-CLEFT (Hedberg 2000:899)
c. That was the platoon sergeant that said that. *THAT*-CLEFT (Hedberg 2000:900)
d. There's Laura who's leaving Boston. *THERE*-CLEFT

As discussed in section 3.1.3, Hedberg (2000) studies the distribution of *this/that*-clefts in discourse and concludes that their use is related to the cognitive accessibility of the content of the cleft clause. In other words, there is a semantic connection between the cleft clause and the (form of) the cleft pronoun, the latter functioning as a type of determiner or referential pronoun. In the case of *there*-clefts, Davidse (2000) demonstrates that aspects of the meaning of a cleft sentence, such as its exhaustive interpretation, depend on the choice of pronoun, *it* versus *there*. She argues that the cleft pronoun therefore acts as a type of quantifier on the clefted constituent.

These comparisons of *it*-clefts with *this/that*-clefts and with *there*-clefts lead both authors to grant a meaningful semantic role to the cleft pronoun, although they disagree on the precise nature of that role. Lambrecht (2001) views the cleft pronoun (and copula) as a focus marker, giving it a pragmatic rather than semantic role in the sentence.

- ***Key points***

While the focus in this study is on the *it*-cleft construction, it is clear that an adequate analysis of *it*-clefts needs to take into account the other types of cleft construction illustrated in (36) and examine two relationships.

i. *'Quantificational' role for cleft pronoun* - the choice of cleft pronoun can affect the semantic interpretation of the sentence, as Davidse (2000) suggests. Extensive comparison between *it*-cleft and *there*-cleft constructions is needed to demonstrate

the influence of the choice of pronoun on the interpretation of the cleft construction.

ii. *Determiner role for the cleft pronoun* - the claim of a semantic relationship between the cleft pronoun and the cleft clause needs to be closely assessed to determine the existence and nature of a role for the cleft pronoun analogous to the role of the determiner in a noun phrase.

3.2.1.2 Clefted constituent

In a sense, the clefted constituent forms the pivotal element of the *it*-cleft construction at the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic level: it interacts with the cleft clause as well as being an element in the copular matrix clause. At the syntactic level, for example, the clefted constituent is the post-copular element within the matrix copular clause as well as being the antecedent (for expletive accounts at least) for the coindexed element in the cleft clause.

A variety of phrasal units can appear as clefted constituent in an *it*-cleft construction; examples are given in (37).

(37) a. It's [Paul]$_{NP}$ who likes kites.
b. It was [with Thomas]$_{PP}$ that Jonathan went to school.
c. It's [orange]$_{AdjP}$ that she painted the walls.

In the case of noun phrases, the clefted constituent is a semantically referring expression. It is also coindexed with the 'variable' element in the cleft clause, serving as the 'value' or identity corresponding to the presupposed variable presented within the cleft clause. This coindexed relationship means the presupposition attached to this variable becomes coindexed with the clefted constituent (the value). For example, one of the presuppositions in (37a) is that someone (exists that) likes kites; the variable can be described as 'the X that likes kites'. Thus the speaker has a specific referent in mind

and begins from this presupposed (that is, shared) description, adding identifying information that forms the value (the clefted constituent).

However, as well as being demonstrably referring, the clefted constituent is also interpretable with a predicational sense, prompted by its post-copular position and its pragmatic interpretation. The clefted constituent carries the main focus of the sentence, in terms of intonation and information structure, since the assertion within a specificational *it*-cleft sentence is the identification of the referent of the clefted constituent as corresponding to the variable represented within the cleft clause. However, the post-copular element is not *semantically* predicational. In fact, the predicates that can appear as clefted constituent lose their predicational sense when they are in that position and are interpreted 'referentially', an effect that precludes some predicates from appearing as clefted constituent, as observed in section 2.2.1.2. Examples from that section are repeated below in (38).

(38) a. It's blue that they painted the house.
b. *It's flat that they hammered the nail.

Rather than referring to semantic predication, Lambrecht instead describes the role of the clefted constituent as 'pragmatic predicate'; the clefted constituent is said to predicate on the level of information structure, rather than semantics (1994:231). In other words, the pragmatic predicate identifies or specifies a referent rather than (semantically) predicating a property. Thus, the pragmatic predicate for (37a) is '(is) Paul'.

- ***Key points***

Issues concerning the clefted constituent stem from its dual function as the post-copular element in the matrix clause and as the antecedent for the variable in the cleft clause. A goal for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction, therefore, is to explain the

seemingly incongruous character of the clefted constituent as a referring expression on the one hand (at least if a noun phrase), and some type of predicate on the other.

i. <u>*Referential status of clefted constituent*</u> - there is a need to account for the interpretation of the clefted constituent as a 'nominalized' expression, prompted by its coindexation with the variable. This affects the type of element that can occur as clefted constituent and its interpretation.

ii. <u>*Predicative nature of clefted constituent*</u> – while not a semantic predicate, the 'value' element of the *it*-cleft construction, represented syntactically as (or within) the clefted constituent, has the role of adding information about the variable. This pragmatic role needs definition and integration with the referential status of the clefted constituent.

3.2.1.3 Cleft clause

As for the cleft pronoun, the issues that concern the cleft clause within the *it*-cleft construction depend largely on the approach taken. Expletive accounts are concerned primarily with the relationship between the clefted clause and the clefted constituent. As a result, they often seek to define that relationship by distinguishing it from the relationship in non-restrictive and restrictive relative clauses (*e.g.* Davidse 2000). In terms of syntactic form, the cleft clause does resemble a relative clause, as described in section 2.0: it usually comprises a clause that has a 'missing' variable, making the clause incomplete and subordinate, structurally dependent on the rest of the sentence.

Extrapositional studies, on the other hand, connect the cleft clause either semantically or syntactically (or both) to the cleft pronoun in order to concentrate on the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction related to its copular nature. The cleft clause may be perceived as having the cleft pronoun as a type of placeholder or "pronominal [co]reference" (Gundel 1977:553). Alternatively, it may be viewed as

modifying the cleft pronoun in some way (*e.g.* Jespersen 1927).[9] In fact, both the extrapositional and expletive approaches often emerge with similar descriptions of the relationship between the referent of the clefted constituent and the cleft clause as 'value/variable'.[10]

The variable element, in terms of the entity described generally by the cleft clause, may not be represented in the syntactic form of the *it*-cleft; this leads to another consideration for the analysis of the cleft clause. In applying a 'value/variable' analysis to *it*-cleft constructions, it is important to clarify the use of the two terms, and to distinguish the 'variable' and its description (corresponding to the logical presupposition) from the semantic content of the cleft clause constituent. This distinction is not always apparent in the literature but is necessary since the two need not entirely coincide: the variable and its description need not be restricted to the cleft clause, as was mentioned in section 2.2.1.2; a further example is given in (44) (square brackets indicating presupposed elements).

(39) a. Was it Paula and Sally that came in joint first?
b. It was [Paula and] CHARLIE that [came in first].
c. Semantic content of cleft clause in (44b): open proposition 'X came in first'.
d. Presupposition for (44b): '(there exists) someone in addition to Paula who came in first'.

It is most commonly the case in the literature that the variable is interpreted as the entity that is described or "characterized" (Schachter 1973:41) by the descriptive material in the 'relative-type' clause. In other words, the variable is the 'entity'

[9] The emphasis on the work of the cleft pronoun in extrapositional accounts is, according to Harries-Delisle, a reflection of the fact that the analyses are based on English (1978:436). She notes that *it*-cleft constructions "do not exist in most other languages" and, when they do, those languages always also have clefts of the form *the one who…is X'* (1978:436).

[10] This would not, however, characterize Jespersen's (1927) account and others that view the cleft clause as modifying the cleft pronoun in the manner of a restrictive relative clause.

presupposed to exist (the *someone* (or 'x') in the pseudocleft example in (40)), excluding the descriptive material (*who cuts my hair*).

(40) a. The one who cuts my hair is Milo.

b. Presupposition: Someone (exists who) cuts my hair.

Davidse, for example, takes the variable (in an *it*-cleft) to be "the entity involved in the situation designated by the relative clause" (2000:1125). This understanding of 'variable' as meaning the entity, as outlined above, leads to it being interpreted as the same as the 'x' in the semantic representation of the cleft clause. Other studies in the literature use the term 'variable' more loosely to mean essentially the same as the presupposition (that is, *the x who cuts my hair* in (40)). The terms 'value' and 'variable' thus have slightly different or underspecified interpretations and need clarification.

Secondly, there is a need to examine in close detail the referential status of the variable, and consequently of the cleft clause constituent. Some studies in the literature take (semantically) extrapositional approaches that frame the cleft pronoun and the cleft clause together as a unit. They argue that the cleft clause should be interpreted as a referring expression because of its descriptive role. As outlined above, Hedberg (2000) compares the [*it* + cleft clause] unit with the [determiner + noun] unit that forms a noun phrase and argues that, because of similarity in patterning in the use of determiners, the cleft clause (plus cleft pronoun) can be interpreted as a "discontinuous referring description" (2000:898). The semantic character of the variable as syntactically represented by the cleft clause is closely connected to its pragmatic function as a variable in a specificational construction. The definition of referentiality, identifiability, specificity, and definiteness provided in section 1.4 needs to be applied for an accurate description and explanation of the cleft clause constituent.

- ***Key points***

An analysis of the cleft clause needs to characterize the nature of the cleft clause in syntactic and semantic terms and define its relationship to the rest of the sentence. With regard to a 'value/variable' analysis of the *it*-cleft construction, two main points arise.

i. *Clarification of 'variable' element* – for an adequate analysis of the cleft clause in *it*-cleft constructions, there is a need to clarify the term 'variable' (and 'value'), particularly as they relate to both the semantic content of the cleft clause and the pragmatic presupposition of the *it*-cleft construction.

ii. *Referential status of the variable and cleft clause* – a subsequent question is the extent to which the cleft clause can be interpreted as a referring expression by virtue of its role representing the variable that is presupposed to exist. The complication here is that the cleft clause may not be a semantically or syntactically complete unit, and may not contain a syntactic representation of the variable element itself, only its 'description'.

3.2.2 The *it*-cleft construction as a whole

I have demonstrated that the nature of the constituent units within the *it*-cleft construction is not straightforward, either in syntactic or in semantic terms. The interaction of these components is equally complex. Concerning the syntactic form, there is the question of whether the clefted constituent and the cleft clause form a unit, as well as the possibility of interpreting the matrix clause (cleft pronoun + copula + clefted constituent) as a unit. Some studies (*e.g.* Hedberg 2000) also posit a semantic relationship between the cleft pronoun and the cleft clause.

Issues surrounding the *it*-cleft construction fall into two general areas that follow from the type of construction to which they are primarily compared. The specificational

nature of the *it*-cleft construction leads to comparison with other sentences involving specification, most of which involve the copular verb. Secondly, the structural similarity between the cleft clause and relative clauses leads to comparisons with restrictive relative clauses (as well as non-restrictive relative clauses) and an expletive approach leads to comparisons with the corresponding non-cleft counterpart structures. The following two sections discuss these two areas.

3.2.2.1 It-*clefts as copular, specificational sentences*

Section 2.2 described the characteristics of the *it*-cleft construction as a specificational copular sentence. The role of the *it*-cleft construction is to specify, or identify, a value for a variable. Characteristics associated with the *it*-cleft construction such as the 'value-variable' interpretation, and the exhaustive, contrastive understanding are associated with its specificational nature. Studies in the literature on copular sentences, particularly specificational copular sentences, tend to focus on sentences of the form *NP is NP* (including pseudoclefts). They also assume the presence of a semantic predicate within such sentences. These two points need to be addressed in assessing the applicability of such studies to the *it*-cleft construction.

One issue in comparing *it*-cleft constructions to other specificational sentences is that the terms 'value' and 'variable' are not always carefully defined in the literature, as noted in section 3.2.1.3.[11] I stated in section 3.2.1.3 that the term 'variable' needs clarification in relation to the semantic proposition within the cleft clause and the presupposition of the sentence. This is particularly relevant when comparing *it*-clefts to other specificational copular sentences such as pseudoclefts.

[11] Since these terms and the discussion surrounding them come generally from the study of specificational sentences involving noun phrases, they are most relevant for *it*-cleft constructions with a noun phrase as clefted constituent. Consequently, the discussion in this section highlights issues of terminology related to this common type of *it*-cleft construction. I examine the analysis of prepositional phrase clefted constituents in section 6.2.1.

I noted in chapter 2 that pseudocleft constructions and some *NP is NP* copular sentences contain two syntactic units, one usually corresponding to the value and one the variable, both of which are definite referring expressions. The *it*-cleft construction, in contrast, does not contain two such syntactic constituent units (see (41)). This lack of isomorphism creates complications for relating an analysis in terms of 'value' and 'variable' constituents to the syntactic form of the *it*-cleft construction.

(41) a. It was [a goldfish]$_{NP}$ [that I bought]$_{RelCl}$.[12]

VALUE VARIABLE

b. Semantic content of cleft clause: open proposition 'I bought X'

c. Presupposition: I bought something/something exists that I bought.

➢ ***Key points***

The central issue is that while *it*-cleft constructions clearly have a specificational function where a relationship exists between two units, this is not reflected by two clear syntactic constituents. In other words, the isomorphic mapping between semantic meaning and syntactic form is lacking.

i. <u>*Structural differences between specificational sentence types*</u> – the distinctive syntax-semantics interrelation in the *it*-cleft construction means that analyses in the literature concerning specificational sentences containing two noun phrases with a copular verb between them, such as (40a) above, are difficult to apply to *it*-clefts. Nevertheless, there are clearly many functional characteristics that pattern the same in all specificational sentences, including *it*-clefts, and this fact needs an adequate account.

ii. <u>*Comparison with pseudoclefts*</u> – there may be no syntactic representation of the variable entity within the distinctive syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft construction,

[12] The cleft clause is labelled a relative clause here; a more precise characterization of the clause is given in section 5.1.3.

only of its description (generally within the cleft clause). This has implications for comparisons with functionally similar pseudocleft constructions.

3.2.2.2 Comparisons between the it*-cleft construction and noun phrases containing relative clauses*

Alongside the comparison between the *it*-cleft construction and other copular specificational sentences, the similarity between the syntactic form of the cleft clause and restrictive relative clauses leads to comparisons between *it*-clefts and noun phrases containing relative clauses. Early studies assume the cleft clause to be a restrictive relative clause and concentrate on determining its antecedent. Jespersen, for example, initially concludes that the cleft clause modifies or restricts the cleft pronoun (1927:88). Sornicola views the cleft clause, not as restrictive as such, but as expressing a property: "the predication in [*It is me who goes to Rome*] expresses a property 'of mine', that is the property of going to Rome" (1988:357).

There are also formal similarities between noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions. For example, in both constructions, verb agreement within the subordinate clause exists in number but not person with the antecedent when that antecedent controls verb agreement. Schachter (1973) also suggests that what *it*-clefts and relative clauses have in common is a process that takes an SVO sentence and results in a foregrounded, or focused element (the clefted constituent or head noun) and a backgrounded, or presupposed element (the cleft clause or relative clause).

Other studies (including Jespersen's (1937) analysis of *it*-clefts) recognize the character of the cleft clause in the *it*-cleft construction to be different from the restrictive relative clause, not least in terms of the possible antecedents each can have. For example, proper names and other phrasal constituents are permissible in *it*-clefts but not

in relative clauses, and relative clauses can have the pronouns *somebody* and *nobody* as antecedents while *it*-clefts cannot.[13] The nature of the relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause is thus different from the head-modifier relationship in noun phrases containing relative clauses.

- ***Key points***

There are similarities and differences between relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions, in terms of their constituent elements and in terms of the relationship between those elements. These two aspects need to be fully examined both independently and as they relate to each other.

i. <u>*The constituent elements of relative clauses and it-clefts*</u> – there is a need, within an analysis of *it*-clefts, for a close comparison of the similarities and differences between the component parts of these two types of constructions. The syntactic, semantic and focus structure of both the dependent clause and antecedent need to be examined.

ii. <u>*The relationship between the dependent clause and the antecedent*</u> – once one has determined the constituents, this can lead to a productive analysis of the different relationship between them in the two constructions. Some studies in the literature consider this a question of a different type of relationship (that is, restrictive, non-restrictive, *etc.*). Others, such as Lambrecht (2001), consider the difference between the constructions to be related to the nature of the constituent elements and the syntactic environments in which they are found.

[13] An exception for relative clauses with proper nouns as head includes sentences such as (i) where the existence of more than one *Pete* is implied.

(i) The Pete that you married (is a good man).

3.3 Conclusion

It is possible to illustrate similarities in syntactic behaviour between the *it*-cleft construction and other copular constructions and assert that the former is derived from the latter. It is equally possible to observe the relative-type nature of the cleft clause and suggest derivation from non-cleft counterpart sentences. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to do both in a derivational analysis. In addition, a purely syntactic analysis provides no explanation for why cleft sentences should exist at all, given that they are motivated by pragmatic focus structure considerations. Their structure allows for an unambiguous focus reading while their non-cleft (or pseudocleft) counterpart sentences may have more than one possible focus interpretation. In a non-transformational, functionally orientated analysis, it is possible to incorporate aspects of the specificational nature of the *it*-cleft construction, as well as its exploitation of the relative-type subordinate cleft clause. In addition, in concentrating on the relatively unambiguous narrow focus structure characteristic of the *it*-cleft construction, one can make comparisons with other sentence types displaying similar focus structure. The non-compositionality of the *it*-cleft construction, the sense in which it is not equal to the sum of its parts, is captured best in an analysis that treats it as a construction in its own right. All the issues I raise here are addressed in chapters 5 and 6. Before the analysis, as a final component of the foundational part of the thesis, the next chapter presents the main features of Role and Reference Grammar theory.

4. ROLE AND REFERENCE GRAMMAR THEORY

Chapters 2 and 3 provided an account of the *it*-cleft construction and the unresolved issues for which an analysis of the construction needs to provide an account. This chapter completes the first part of this thesis by presenting an overview of Role and Reference Grammar theory; this provides the theoretical background for the analysis developed in chapters 5 and 6.

Role and Reference Grammar theory is "concerned with the interplay of syntax, semantics and pragmatics in grammatical systems" (Van Valin forth.:3). It is one of a number of theories that take a communication-and-cognition perspective; exponents of these theories do not view language as an "autonomous language module" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:10), nor syntax as central, as is the case for transformational theories (*e.g.* Chomsky 1995). They consider language crucially connected to other cognitive processes and argue that it cannot be fully understood without reference to the communicative function of language. This latter consideration means that Role and Reference Grammar and other communication-and-cognition theories are "concerned with…uncover[ing] those aspects of clause structure which are found in all human languages" (Van Valin forth.:3), in other words, with elements of language that are, in some sense, universal. Theories with a communication-and-cognition viewpoint would argue that studying language use is a prerequisite to the understanding the formal aspects of the language such as syntactic form. Dik (1991) expresses it as follows:

> The language system, therefore, is not considered as an autonomous set of rules and principles, the uses of which can only be considered in a secondary phase; rather it is assumed that the rules and principles composing the language system can only be adequately understood when they are analyzed in terms of conditions of use. In this sense the study of language use (pragmatics) precedes the study of the formal and semantic properties of linguistic expressions. (1991:247)

Within the group of theories that can be broadly classified as communication-and-cognition, Role and Reference Grammar falls somewhere in the middle of a scale between those emphasizing the importance of communicative language use (*e.g.* Systemic Functional Grammar: Halliday 1985) and those that concentrate on aspects of cognition (*e.g.* Cognitive Grammar: Langacker 1987, 2002). Thus, within Role and Reference Grammar, language is studied as a "system of communicative social action" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:13) and the "conviction [is] that grammatical structure can only be understood with reference to [the] semantic and communicative functions [of language]" (1997:13).

Role and Reference Grammar theory also adopts the criterion of psychological adequacy for syntactic theories proposed by Dik (1991). This states that a syntactic theory should be "compatible" with current psycholinguistic research in the areas of acquisition, processing, production, interpretation and memorization of language (Dik 1991:248). The bi-directional linking algorithms that are part of the theoretical framework of Role and Reference Grammar describe the interaction between the syntactic and semantic representation from the speaker's (semantics to syntax) or the hearer's (syntax to semantics) perspective (see Figure 4.1).

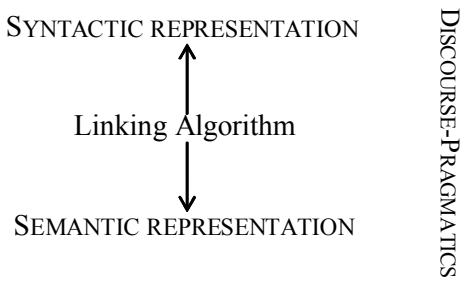


Figure 4.1 Organization of Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valin forth.:1)

As Figure 4.1 shows, discourse-pragmatics can influence each stage of this process. Role and Reference Grammar theory considers the interaction of discourse-

pragmatics with syntax and semantics to be one of the major ways in which languages differ from each other (Van Valin forth.:1).

The bi-directionality of the linking algorithms also reflects the fact that this linking process is not derivational; there is no sense of 'underlying' and 'surface' forms: the two directions of linking between the syntactic and semantic representations merely provide two perspectives on the same utterance.

Van Valin and LaPolla (1997) give the most comprehensive presentation of Role and Reference Grammar theory, while Van Valin (forth.) includes some recent modifications that are adopted here where appropriate. This chapter presents the main aspects of Role and Reference Grammar theory: clause structure, semantic structure, grammatical relations, information structure and the linking process. Particular focus is given to elements relevant to the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction.

4.1 Clause structure

In terms of syntactic structure, Role and Reference Grammar attempts to prevent bias towards Indo-European languages by imposing on itself two strong conditions:

(1) a. A theory of clause structure should capture all of the universal features [of clauses] without imposing features on languages in which there is no evidence for them.
b. A theory should represent comparable structures in different languages in comparable ways. (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:22)

To be considered typologically adequate, a theory should "formulate such rules and principles as can be applied to any type of language without 'forcing', *i.e.* without adapting the language…to the theory" (Dik 1991:248). In other words, these conditions mean that structures that differ from those in Indo-European languages should not necessarily be considered more complex as a result. These premises also entail that no universal elements of clause structure should be posited for which there is not evidence

in all studied languages. In terms of the tension between description and explanation, Role and Reference Grammar "is concerned with being flexible enough to capture what Sapir (1921) called the 'structural genius' of the language, and yet to be part of a serious theory of U[niversal] G[rammar] it must make strong cross-linguistic claims" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:15). Examples of the repercussions of this theoretical approach are discussed in this section as they occur.

One major feature that characterizes Role and Reference Grammar theory is its monostratal syntax. Its proponents argue that structurally based accounts of language that focus only on syntax prompt the need for a multi-level analysis. 'Surface' forms are derived from 'underlying' forms precisely because those accounts are based on the linear order of syntactic elements (in addition to any possible bias towards English structures). In other words, "the justification for the abstract syntactic representation is entirely theory internal…multilevel syntactic analyses are unnecessarily complex and inelegant or entail a loss of significant generalizations" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:20-1). Role and Reference Grammar involves one 'surface' representation of the syntactic form integrated with semantic and pragmatic factors; this provides a "direct and elegant" (1997:21) explanation for the various language phenomena seen as requiring a multi-level analysis. The analysis of the *it*-cleft construction presented in this thesis highlights the advantages of this approach.

4.1.1 Layered structure of the clause

The Role and Reference Grammar interpretation of clause structure is based on two semantic contrasts: firstly, predicating and non-predicating elements are distinguished; secondly, a distinction is made between noun phrases and adpositional phrases that are arguments of the predicate and those that are not. Noun phrases and adpositional phrases that are not arguments of the predicate are assigned to the

periphery, which contains adjuncts modifying the core. All the syntactic constituents within the clause are semantically motivated, as set out below in Table 4.1 (see also Figure 4.2 below). Relational aspects of syntactic structure (that is, how the elements can be combined) are discussed in section 4.1.4.

Semantic Element(s)	Syntactic Unit
Predicate	Nucleus
Argument in semantic representation of predicate	Core argument
Non-arguments	Periphery
Predicate + Arguments	Core
Predicate + Arguments + Non-arguments	Clause (= Core + Periphery)

Table 4.1 Semantic units underlying the syntactic units of the layered structure of the clause (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:27)

One consequence of the semantic motivation for syntactic constituents, and of the cross-linguistic approach of Role and Reference Grammar, is that there is no equivalent to the notion of a verb phrase (VP), a central element of many transformational approaches. In many so-called 'free word order' languages there is no evidence for a unit that includes the 'object' noun phrase and the verb (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:20).[1] Van Valin states that "VPs, to the extent that they exist in languages, are the grammaticalization of focus structure; they are not primitive categories in clause structure" (forth.:70). See section 4.4.2 for further discussion of focus structure.

The elements in Table 4.1 above represent the universal elements of the layered structure of the clause (LSC). In addition, there are non-universal elements whose linear

[1] Van Valin and LaPolla cite data (i) from Dyirbal (Australian Aboriginal; Dixon 1972) to illustrate this point (1997:20). In (i) (one of many possible word orders), there is no evidence of a VP constituent. Case assignment rules that depend on the NP being dominated by a VP or S node require positing abstract underlying representations where such constituents exist.

(i) Ba-la-n ɖugumbil-Ø ba-ŋgu-l yaɽa-ŋgu buɽa-n.
DEIC-ABS-II woman-ABS DEIC-ERG-I man-ERG see-TNS
'The man saw the woman.'

order is relevant. The pre-core slot (PrCS) (or post-core slot (PoCS) for some languages) is the syntactic position of 'fronted' elements (as in (2a)) and of question words that do not appear *in situ* (as in (2b)). These elements lie outside the core but within the clause.[2]

(2) a. [Strawberries]$_{PrCS}$ [I like]$_{CORE}$.
b. [Where]$_{PrCS}$ [did you go]$_{CORE}$?

Outside the clause there are left and right detached phrases, which are assigned to left detached position (LDP) and right detached position (RDP) respectively. Elements in detached positions are usually set off from the main clause by a pause; in addition, if the detached element functions as semantic argument of the verb in the core, there is normally a resumptive pronoun within that core referring to it, as illustrated in (3).

(3) [As for Luka$_i$,]$_{LDP}$ [I saw her$_i$ yesterday]$_{CLAUSE}$.

While there is semantic motivation for the universal aspects (as shown in Table 4.1), the non-universal aspects (such as detached phrases and extra-core slots) "seem to be pragmatically motivated (or at least are associated with constructions that have strong pragmatic conditions on their occurrence)" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:39-40). These pragmatic conditions are part of the information structure of the sentence and are further discussed in section 4.4. Figure 4.2 illustrates some of these constituents for English.

[2] The examples in (2) illustrate that a syntactic core argument always represents a semantic argument but that semantic arguments may appear outside the syntactic core (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:38).

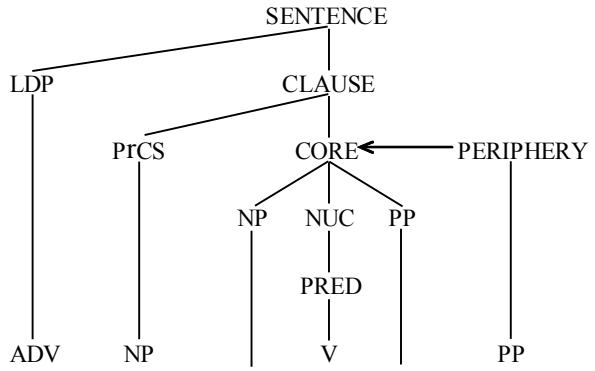


Figure 4.2 Illustration of the Layered Structure of the Clause for English (adapted from Van Valin forth.:6)

As noted above, the NUC node is reserved for semantically predicative elements.[3] This semantic criterion distinguishes predicative verbs from non-predicative verbs such as the copular verb *be* in sentence with non-verbal predicates, as in (4a-c).

(4) a. Sally is creative.
b. Sally is an artist.
c. Sally is in Paris.
d. Sally was hired by a design company.

In sentences such as these, containing predicative adjectives, nominals, or prepositional phrases, and also in passive constructions (see (4d)), *be* is labelled an auxiliary, while the predicative element (verb, adjective, noun, *etc.*) forms the nucleus of the sentence, as Figure 4.3 illustrates. In these cases the verb *be* is "required for nucleus formation" and it also occurs "even when there are no operators, *e.g.* in an infinitive like *Kim wants to be a doctor*" (Van Valin forth.:11 fn).

[3] This includes larger elements such as cores and clauses that can also function as the nucleus of a sentence, as for example in *it*-cleft constructions. Examples provided here as (i) and (ii) illustrate this possibility. See chapter 6 for further discussion.
(i) It was [John's winning the race]$_{\text{CORE}}$ that surprised Maria.
(ii) It was [that Steph didn't care]$_{\text{CLAUSE}}$ that troubled Max.

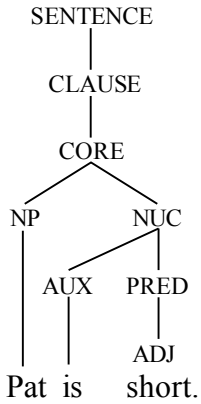


Figure 4.3 LSC with a non-verbal predicate and be *as auxiliary*

The auxiliary use of *be* is distinguished from the use of *be* as an operator; that is, an element that modifies part of the clause. Operators are represented in a separate operator projection and are discussed below in section 4.1.2 (see Figure 4.8 for the use of *be* as an operator).

4.1.1.1 Adpositional phrases and noun phrases

Within the layered structure of the clause, adpositional phrases and noun phrases can also have internal layered structures. Adpositional phrases are divided into non-predicative and predicative adpositional phrases. This division is dependent on their function rather than on the nature of the preposition itself since the same preposition can occur predicatively or non-predicatively.

(5) a. Kim gave the book <u>to</u> Mary/Kim gave Mary the book.
b. Maren walked home <u>after</u> the concert.

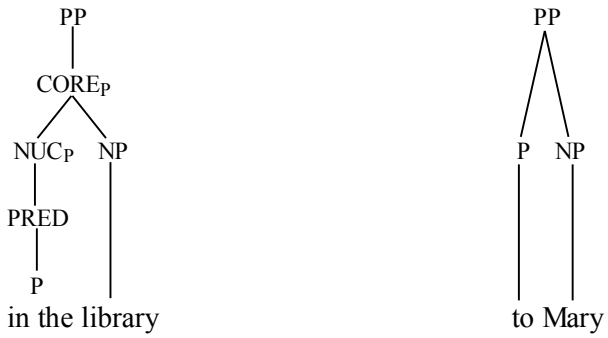
In the sentence *Kim gave the book to Mary* in (5a), the obliquely marked noun phrase *to Mary* is required by the verb *give*; this requirement is highlighted by the fact that when the arguments are reversed the preposition does not occur: *Kim gave Mary the book*). The type of adpositional phrase in (5a) is therefore labelled 'argument-marking'.

In the case of predicative adpositional phrases such as *after the concert* in (5b), the prepositions "contribute substantive semantic information to the clause in which they occur, both in terms of their own meaning and the meaning of the argument that they license" (Van Valin forth.:20). In (5b), for example, the noun phrase *the concert* is not a required argument of the verb *walk* and thus the preposition *after* is predicative.

The third type of prepositional phrase is termed 'argument adjunct': some verbs require a prepositional phrase but the nature of the preposition can vary. The preposition thus marks an argument of the verb but also contributes to the semantic meaning as a predicative preposition. An example is the English verb *put*, which requires a locative expression though the nature of the preposition may vary, as (6) indicates. These argument-adjunct prepositional phrases are thus predicative (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:52-3, 159-62).

(6) Pete put the record on/next to/behind/on top of/under the shelf.

In terms of internal structure, predicative adpositional phrases have an internal layered structure while non-predicative adpositional phrases do not. This is illustrated below in Figure 4.4:



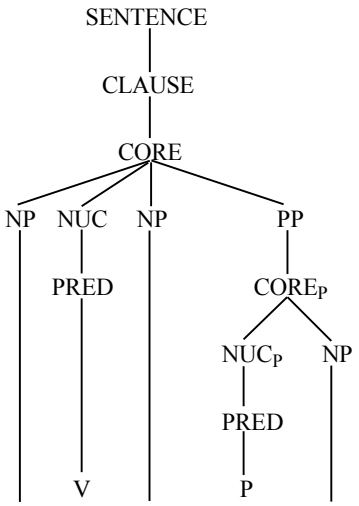
a) Predicative b) Non-predicative

e.g. Alice met Brian [*in the library*]. *e.g. Brian gave flowers* [*to Mary*].

Figure 4.4 Internal layered structure of prepositional phrases (Van Valin forth.:21)

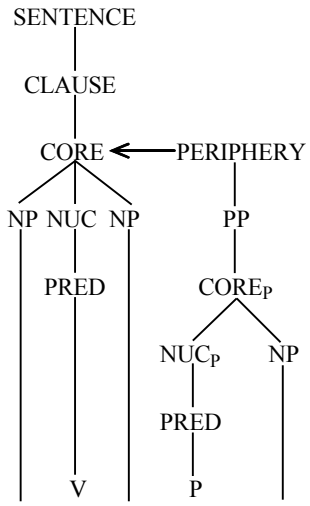
Peripheral adpositions (those not required by the meaning of the verb in the core) are always predicative (see Figure 4.5b), whereas non-predicative adpositions normally

mark core arguments and thus occur within the core (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:52; see Figure 4.5c). Argument-adjunct prepositional phrases, illustrated in (6), are predicative (and thus have an internal structure) but occur inside the core, as Figure 4.5a shows.



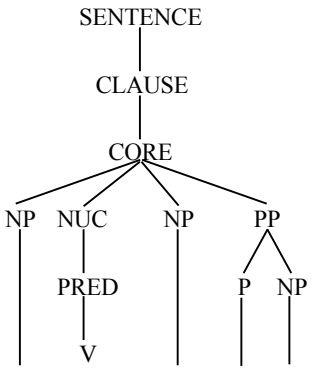
Kim put the book under the box.

a. Argument-adjunct prepositional phrase



Kim saw Pat in the library.

b. Adjunct prepositional phrase



Kim gave the book to Mary.

c. Argument-marking prepositional phrase

Figure 4.5 Structure of English prepositional phrases

Predicative prepositional phrases can also form the nucleus of the core, as the main predicate of the sentence, following the pattern of Figure 4.3 (illustrated in (7)).

(7) [[Ed]$_{NP}$ [is]$_{AUX}$ [in the bowling alley]$_{NUC\text{-}PP}$]$_{CORE}$.

The layered structure of noun phrases is similar to that of clauses: nouns may sometimes take arguments, although noun phrases can only contain a single direct core argument (marked by *of* in English, as in *the march of the light brigade*).[4]

Finally, the noun phrase-initial position (NPIP) (or noun phrase-final position (NPFP)) exists for elements such as possessives and WH-words, as illustrated in (8) (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:492).

(8) a. [[Jacob's]$_{NPIP}$ [friend]$_{CORE_N}$]$_{NP}$

b. [[which]$_{NPIP}$ [cake]$_{CORE_N}$]$_{NP}$

The noun phrase elements are illustrated in Figure 4.6. (The structure of noun phrases containing relative clauses is discussed in section 4.1.4.1.)

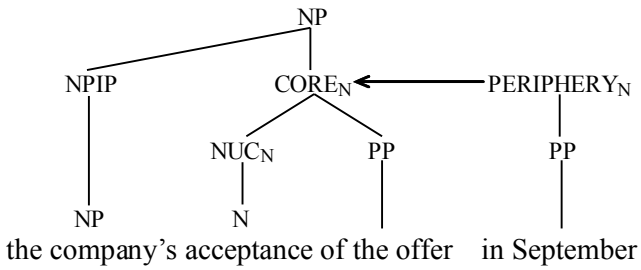


Figure 4.6 Layered structure of the noun phrase in English (internal structure of PPs omitted)

4.1.2 Operators

In Role and Reference Grammar, heads of phrases are always the primary elements in the semantic representation: "the head of a phrase is a function of its semantics" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:68). Functional (or 'operator') elements such as determiners have a separate projection and cannot therefore appear as heads of phrases.

The separate operator projection represents elements in the sentence such as tense, aspect and modality, which modify the clause, core and nucleus. To some degree, this

[4] Pronouns and proper nouns do not have an internal layered structure as they do not normally take arguments or modifiers.

operator projection mirrors the constituent (syntactic) projection since the operators appear at the level corresponding to the unit that they modify (see Figure 4.7).

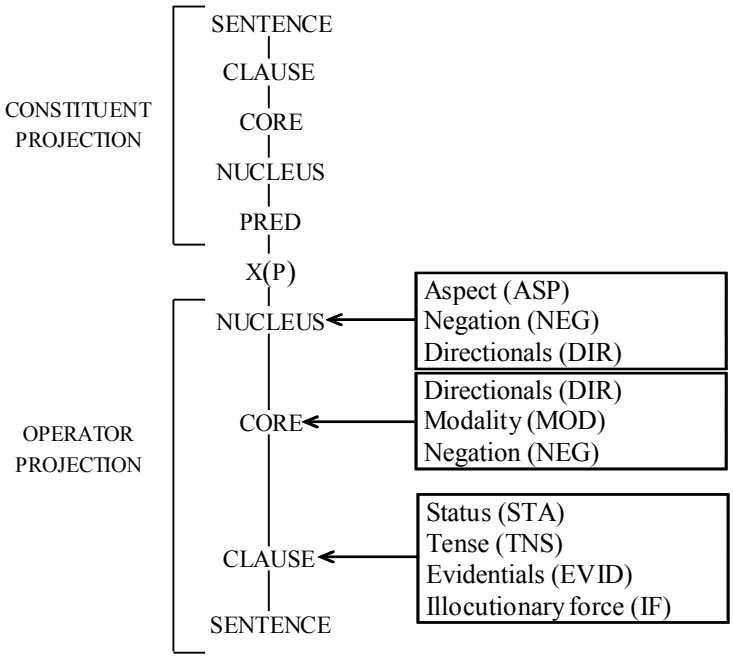


Figure 4.7 Operator projection (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:49)

Role and Reference Grammar posits that "cross-linguistically…operators are ordered with respect to each other in terms of [their] scope…with the…predicating element as the anchorpoint" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:49). In other words, in terms of linear order in the sentence, operators modifying the nucleus, as a class, should appear closer to the nucleus than core operators and so on, although there is some degree of cross-linguistic variation within the three levels themselves.[5]

[5] Directionals, as the name suggests, are markers that indicate direction (for example, *He shouted up to let the bucket go*). Core level modality refers to deontic modality, which includes obligation, ability and permission. Clause level status operators include epistemic modality (*i.e.* necessity, possibility), external negation (which can be paraphrased as *It is not the case that…*) and the realis/irrealis distinction. Evidentials refer to how the speaker came to know the information contained in what they are saying; Van Valin and LaPolla (1997:44) cite the following examples from Hixkaryana (Carib, Brazil; from Derbyshire 1985).

(i) Ton ha-ti Waraka.
3SG.go HEARSAY Waraka
'They say/It is reported that Waraka has gone.'

(ii) Ton Waraka.
'Waraka has gone.'

The structure in Figure 4.8 provides an example of an English sentence with its constituent and operator projection.

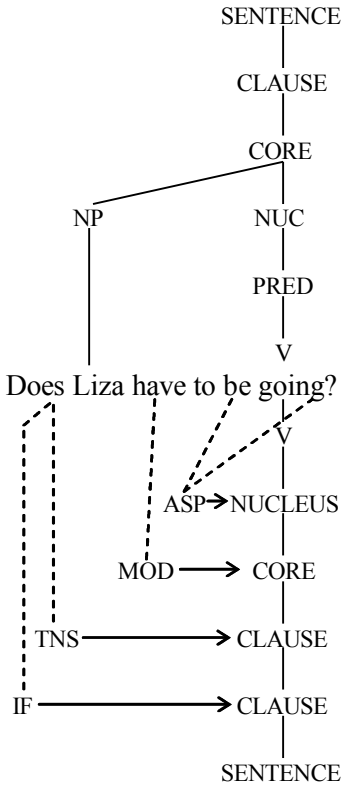
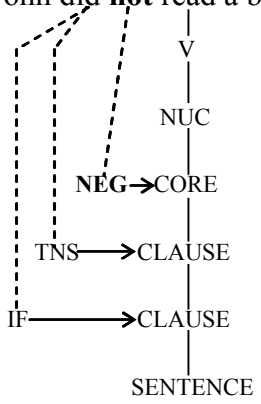


Figure 4.8 Example sentence of English with constituent and operator projection

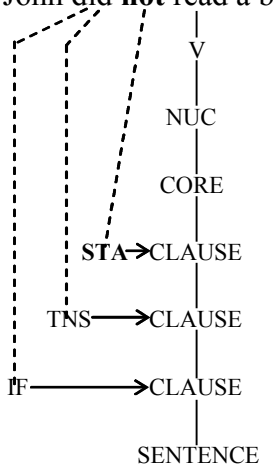
As Figure 4.7 above shows, negation can operate at the nucleus, the core or the clause level. (At the clause level it is subsumed under the category of 'status'.) Nuclear level negation refers to derivational negatives in English such as *un-* in *unhappy.* Core negation, also known as internal negation, occurs where "the scope of negation is only on part of the core, not over the entire proposition" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:45). In the sentence in (9), for example, *a book* or *read a book* is being negated. (The syntactic constituent projection has been omitted and the negation operator is marked in bold.)

(9) John did **not** read a book.



Clausal, or external, negation negates the whole proposition and can be paraphrased as *It is not the case that*…. It is often the case in English that sentences are ambiguous in terms of the scope of negation.[6] Thus, another reading of the sentence in (9) involves clausal negation, negating the whole proposition: *It is not the case that John read a book* (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:46). This is shown in (10).

(10) John did **not** read a book.



Just as noun phrases have internal layered structures similar to clauses, they also have operators modifying different parts of the noun phrase (see Figure 4.9).

[6] See also section 4.4.4 for discussion of this ambiguity.

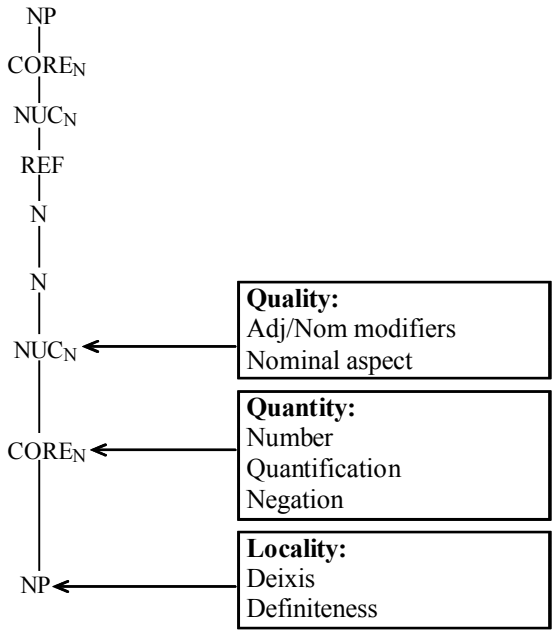


Figure 4.9 Noun phrase operators (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:56-7)

A principle of scope, analogous to that for clausal operators, affects the ordering of operators within the noun phrase: NUC_n operators are located closer to the noun than $CORE_n$ operators, which in turn have scope over noun phrase operators (see Figure 4.10).

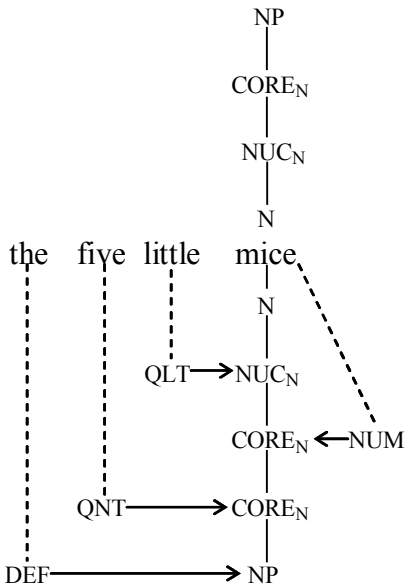


Figure 4.10 Example noun phrase of English with constituent and operator projection

4.1.3 Syntactic templates

Representations of the layered structure of the clause as outlined above are stored as language-specific syntactic templates in the syntactic inventory of a language; they can be retrieved and used alone or combined to make complex sentences. Two examples of syntactic templates for English are given in Figure 4.11.

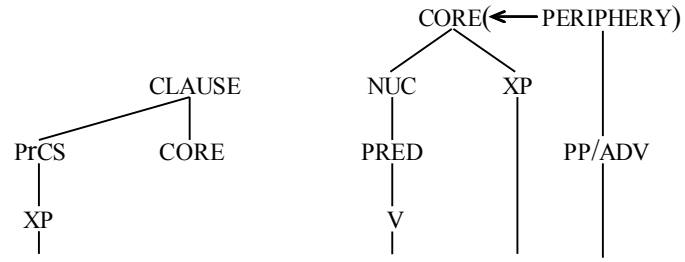


Figure 4.11 Examples of English syntactic templates (Van Valin forth.:13)

The choice of syntactic template is made on the basis of a principle given in (11a) below (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:593).

(11) a. Syntactic template selection principle: The number of syntactic slots for arguments and argument-adjuncts within the core is equal to the number of distinct specified argument positions in the semantic representation of the core.

b. Universal qualifications of the principle in (a):

i. The occurrence of a core as either the matrix or linked core in a non-subordinate core juncture reduces the number of core slots by 1.

ii. The occurrence of a core in an externally-headed relative clause construction in which the head noun is a semantic argument of the predicate in the core reduces the number of core slots by 1.

c. Language-specific qualifications of the principle in (a):

i. All cores in the language have a minimum syntactic valence of 1.

ii. Passive constructions reduce the number of core slots by 1.

iii. The occurrence of a syntactic argument in the pre/postcore slot reduces the number of core slots by 1.

The universal qualification given in (11b.i) accounts for core juncture sentences with a shared argument that is only represented once in the syntax (see section 4.1.4). In

(12a), for example, *Bill* is a semantic argument of *ask* and *mend*. The qualification in (11b.ii) accounts for relative clauses where the core within the relative clause is missing a core argument, as in (12b).

(12) a. Mary asked Bill to mend the blender.
b. the blender that __ broke

The language-specific qualifications include (11c.i) that accounts for 'dummy subjects' in sentences such as *It rained*.

4.1.4 Juncture and nexus

Complex sentences involve the interaction of juncture and nexus. Juncture refers to a construction in which one unit contains two or more units of the same type. In other words, a nuclear juncture is a single nucleus that itself contains two or more nuclei, a core juncture contains multiple cores, and a clause juncture multiple clauses. Nexus concerns the nature of the relationship between the elements within these complex sentences that can involve subordination, coordination or cosubordination.

Role and Reference Grammar adds cosubordination (following Olson 1981) to the traditional notions of subordination and coordination as it is found to have cross-linguistic validity (see Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:448-454 for discussion). The crucial feature of cosubordination is "operator dependence, *i.e.* obligatory sharing of operators across the units…at the level of juncture" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:455). This distinguishes such structures from subordinated units, which are structurally dependent rather than exhibiting dependence in terms of operators. In the core cosubordinate 'control' sentence in (13), for example, the core-level modality operator *must* is obligatorily shared between the two cores; in other words, it has scope over both cores.

(13) Ted must try to open the window. CORE COSUBORDINATION

The structure for the sentence in (13) is given below in Figure 4.12. Since it is a cosubordinate construction, the two cores are daughters of another core node (CLM = clause linkage marker).

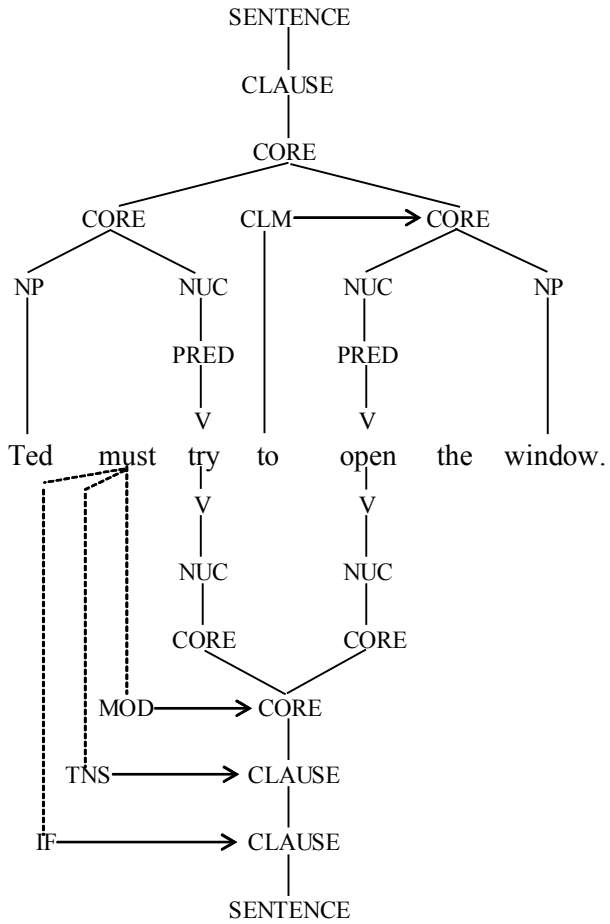


Figure 4.12 LSC for a core cosubordinate sentence of English (adapted from Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:459)

The three levels of juncture and three types of nexus create nine possible juncture-nexus types that can be ordered in terms of the strength or tightness of the syntactic relation. Thus nuclear cosubordination, for example, involves two nuclei forming a complex predicate where the two nuclei share all operators. Clausal coordination, at the other end of the scale, is the weakest syntactic relation between the two conjoined elements: the two separate clauses have their own arguments and operators and one may even have its own illocutionary force, as illustrated by 0).

(14) Sit down and I'll fix you a drink. CLAUSAL COORDINATION

IMPERATIVE + DECLARATIVE

Not all languages exhibit all the nine juncture-nexus types; seven are present in English, as illustrated in (15).

(15) Juncture-nexus types (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:455)

English examples	Juncture-nexus type	
Max made the woman leave.	Nuclear cosubordination	Strongest:
-	Nuclear subordination[7]	Tightest integration
-	Nuclear coordination	into a single unit
Ted tried to open the window.	Core cosubordination	
David regretted Amy's losing the race.	Core subordination	
Louisa told Bob to close the window.	Core coordination	
Paul drove to the store and bought some beer.		
	Clausal cosubordination	
John persuaded Leon that Amy had lost.	Clausal subordination	Weakest:
Anna read for a few minutes, and then she went out.		Least integration
	Clausal coordination	into a single unit

Non-subject *that*-clauses (such as in *John persuaded Leon that Amy had lost*) are semantic arguments of the main verb but are nonetheless assigned a subordinate position in the syntactic constituent projection as a direct daughter of the matrix clause node. One reason for this is that peripheral material such as time adverbials can occur between the core and the *that*-clause (see (16); see also Figure 6.6, chapter 6).

(16) [Keri told Bob]$_{\text{CORE}}$ [yesterday]$_{\text{PERIPHERY}}$ [that she will buy his car]$_{\text{CLAUSE}}$.

[7] Nuclear subordination and coordination are both illustrated by the Barai sentence in (i) (Papua New Guinea; Olson 1981, cited in Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:458). The coordinated nuclei are underlined; the verbal aspect marker *furi* is subordinate, and operates only on the first nucleus *ufu*.

(i) Fu vazai ufu furi numu akoe.
3SG grass cut finish pile throw.away
He finished cutting, piled and threw away the grass.

There is an iconic relationship between the tightness of the bond between the syntactic units and the level of "semantic cohesion between…the units [in the complex structure; that is,]…the extent to which [they] express facets of a single event, action or state of affairs or discrete [actions or events]" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:478). This iconic correspondence, which one would broadly expect to find in all languages, is termed the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy and is given in Figure 4.13.[8]

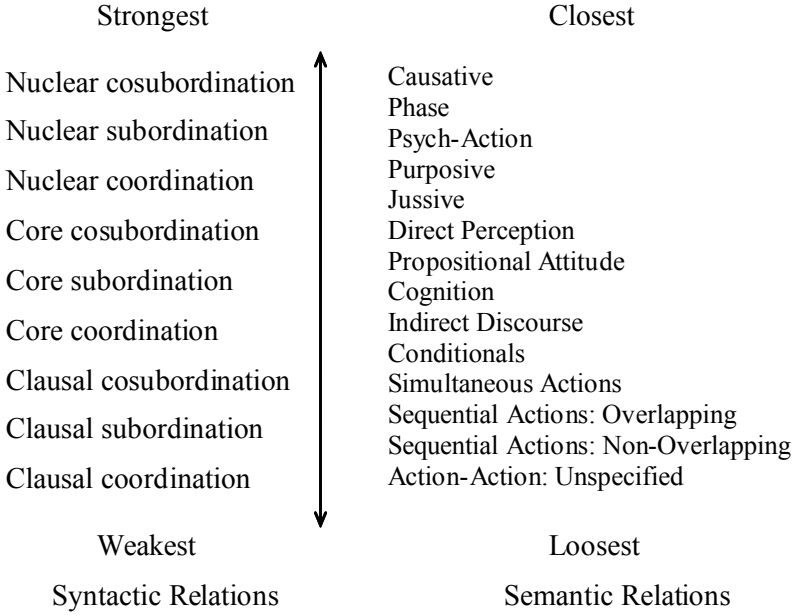


Figure 4.13 Interclausal Relations Hierarchy (Van Valin forth.:187)

[8] Below are some definitions of the less straightforward semantic relations used in the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:478-9, Van Valin forth.:185):

Causative: the bringing about of one state of affairs directly by another state of affairs, usually an event or action, *e.g. Harold pushed open the door, Velma let the bird go.*

Phase: a separate verb describes a facet of the temporal envelope of a state of affairs, specifically its onset, its termination, or its continuation, *e.g. Chris started crying.*

Psych-action: a mental disposition regarding a possible action on the part of a participant in the state of affairs, *e.g. Max decided to leave, Sally forgot to open the window.*

Purposive: one action is done with the intent of realizing another state of affairs, *e.g. Juan went to the store to buy milk, Susan brought the book to read.*

Jussive: a command, request or demand (Lyons 1977), *e.g. Pat asked the student to leave.*

Propositional attitude: the expression of a participant's attitude, judgment or opinion regarding a state of affairs, *e.g. Carl believes that UFOs are a menace to the earth.*

Cognition: an expression of knowledge or mental activity, *e.g. Aaron knows that the earth is round.*

4.1.4.1 Complex noun phrases

Noun phrases can also be complex structures involving juncture and nexus that, as for simple noun phrases, mirror the types of structures found at the sentence level. One difference is that there do not appear to be all nine juncture-nexus permutations available for noun phrases cross-linguistically (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:497). Examples for English are given in (17).

(17) Juncture and nexus in NPs (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:492-494)

a. the two tall duck hunters	NUCLEAR_N JUNCTURE
b. the attempt by the prisoners to escape	CORE_N COSUBORDINATION
c. the rumour that Fred saw a UFO	CORE_N SUBORDINATION
d. the three green cars and two red cars	NP COSUBORDINATION
e. the two red cars that were sold yesterday	NP SUBORDINATION
f. the woman and the man	NP COORDINATION

All three types of nexus (coordination, cosubordination (shared determiner) and subordination (restrictive relative clauses)) are found at the noun phrase level (see (17d-f)). At the core_n level, however, only cosubordination and subordination are found. Core_n cosubordination involves infinitival complements to nouns (*to escape* in (17b)) while core_n subordination concerns *that*-clauses functioning as core_n arguments of the noun (see (17c)). At the nuclear_n level Van Valin and LaPolla (1997:497) states that there is no contrast: where nuclear junctures exist, nuclear operators always have scope over both nuclei together.[9]

The structure for English noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses, an important aspect of the analysis presented in chapters 5 and 6, is given in Figure 4.14.

[9] See also Van Valin (forth.:196). However, it does seem possible for nuclear_n coordination to occur. In (i), for example, the adjectival modifier *big* modifies only the first noun *game*, while in (ii) below it has scope over both nouns (an instance of cosubordination).

(i) the two [big [game]] hunters	NUCLEAR_N COORDINATION
(ii) the two [big [game hunters]	NUCLEAR_N COSUBORDINATION

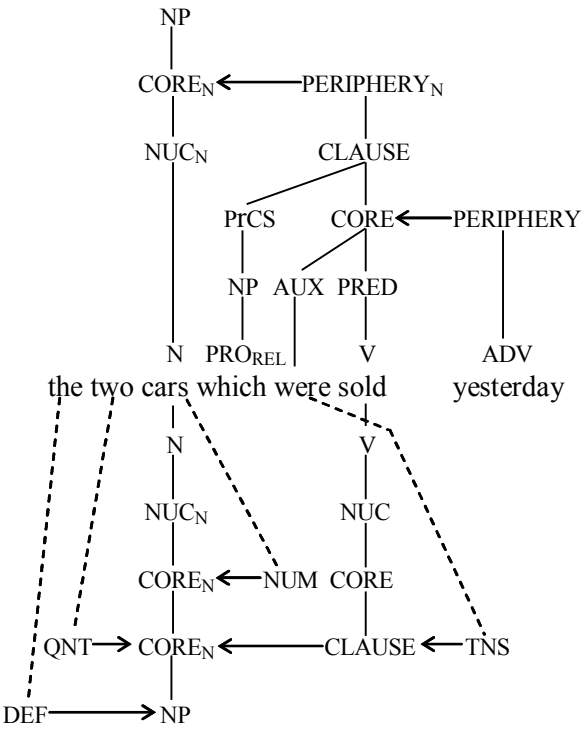


Figure 4.14 LSC for English restrictive relative clauses (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:499)

Restrictive relative clauses are an example of NP subordination; they are "non-argument, *i.e.* peripheral, modifiers of the nominal core and are structurally analogous to adverbial subordinate clauses [*e.g. Kim saw Bob after she arrived at the party*]" (Van Valin forth.:196). Where the relative clause contains an initial relative pronoun, this appears in the precore slot within the peripheral clause, the same structural position as the WH-word in questions (see (18a-b)).

(18) a. the place <u>where</u> Sam lives NP CONTAINING RESTRICTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSE
b. <u>Where</u> does Sam live? WH-QUESTION

As noted in section 2.0, English also has the option of using the complementizer *that* in place of a relative pronoun in relative clauses. In this case, the *that* is treated as a 'clause linkage marker', an arrow indicating its function in marking the subordination of a clause. This is the same as the treatment of *that* when marking complement clauses in sentences such as *Maria decided <u>that</u> she would go to the party*. The structure of

relative clauses with *that* is illustrated in the abbreviated constituent projection in Figure 4.15.

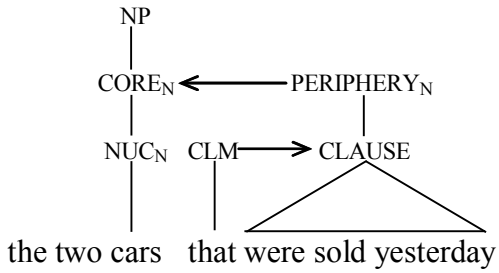


Figure 4.15 LSC for English restrictive relative clause with complementizer that

Non-restrictive relative clauses are assigned a structure that differs slightly from that for restrictive relative clauses. Their internal structure is the same but their relationship to the head noun is not as a restrictive modifier, that is, "their information content is additional information about the head noun, not information used by the interlocutor to determine the reference of the head noun" (Van Valin forth.:198). The structure for English non-restrictive relative clauses is given in Figure 4.16.

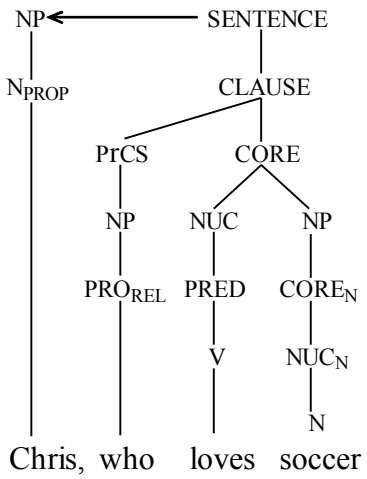


Figure 4.16 Structure of English non-restrictive relative clauses (Van Valin forth.:198)

Non-restrictive relative clauses often appear as adjuncts to proper nouns that, along with pronouns, have no internal layered structure (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:56) and therefore no internal core$_n$. They are therefore adjuncts at the NP level, as Figure 4.16 shows. Van Valin states that non-restrictive relative clauses are

sentences rather than clauses since they have their own illocutionary force operator (forth.:198). Appositive noun phrases (*the Prime Minister* in (19), for example) are treated in the same way, as NP level modifiers.

(19) Tony, the Prime Minister, likes Cocoa Puffs for breakfast.

4.2 Semantic structure

The Role and Reference Grammar approach to semantic structure, the lexicon, and their interaction with syntactic structure, is centred on the concepts of lexical representation and semantic roles. The semantic representation is based on two aspects of the communicative function of language: reference and predication. Verbs and other predicating elements usually describe situations or 'states of affairs', while referring expressions denote the participants. Section 4.2.1 presents the Role and Reference Grammar approach to classifying verbs according to the type of state of affairs they describe. The participant roles follow from the verb type they occur with. The grouping of thematic relations (participant roles) into generalized macroroles is discussed in section 4.2.2.

4.2.1 Verb classes and logical structure

Role and Reference Grammar adopts the *Aktionsart* verb classification system originally proposed by Vendler (1967). The system (illustrated in (20) below) comprises states, activities, achievements and accomplishments, plus causative versions of each of the four main types. These classes were originally based on English but have been shown to have a high degree of cross-linguistic validity (see Van Valin forth.:28 for references). Semelfactives are added to these classes; these are described as punctual (instantaneous) events without a result state, for example *John coughed*

(forth.:29).[10] Active accomplishments correspond to telic activities; the addition of a definite noun phrase or prepositional phrase to an activity can create the interpretation of an endpoint (see (20f); Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:100). The six non-causative classes of verbs are defined in terms of four features: [± static], [± dynamic], [± telic] and [± punctual]. The application of these features to the verb types is shown in (20) with English examples (Van Valin forth.:29).

(20) a. State: [+ static], [– dynamic], [– telic], [– punctual]
E.g. be cold, be dead, know, hear

b. Activity: [– static], [+ dynamic], [– telic], [– punctual]
E.g. march, walk, roll (the intransitive versions); *swim, write, drink*

c. Achievement: [– static], [– dynamic], [+ telic], [+ punctual]
E.g. pop, explode, collapse, shatter (intransitive)

d. Semelfactive: [– static], [± dynamic], [– telic], [+ punctual]
E.g. cough, sneeze, flash (as in *The light flashed*)

e. Accomplishment: [– static], [– dynamic], [+ telic], [– punctual]
E.g. melt, freeze, dry (the intransitive versions); *learn*

f. Active accomplishment: [– static], [+ dynamic], [+ telic], [– punctual]
E.g. eat (as in *William ate the fruit*)
(N.B. Activity: *William ate fruit*).

These verb classes are translated into logical structure (LS) representations reflecting the differences between them as Table 4.2 shows (including the causative structure). States and activities form the two basic classes around which the others are built. For example, BECOME, used to represent accomplishments, represents a [+telic] [-punctual] interpretation of a basic activity or state (see below).

[10] Van Valin also distinguishes 'processes' (represented in logical structure as PROC **predicate´**). These are processes independent of a possible endpoint, as distinct from accomplishments, which are processes with an inherent endpoint (forth.:39).

STATE	**predicate´** (x) or (x, y)
E.g. The cup is shattered.	**shattered´** (cup)
Leon is a fool.	**be´** (Leon, [**fool´**])
ACTIVITY	**do´** (x, [**predicate´** (x) or (x, y)])
E.g. Carl ate pizza.	**do´** (Carl, [**eat´** (Carl, pizza)])
ACHIEVEMENT	INGR **predicate´** (x) or (x, y) or INGR **do´** (x, [**predicate´** (x) or (x, y)])
E.g. The balloon popped.	INGR **popped´** (balloon)
SEMELFACTIVES	SEML **predicate´** (x) or (x, y) or SEML **do´** (x, [**predicate´** (x) or (x, y)])
E.g. Mary coughed.	SEML **do´** (Mary, [**cough´** (Mary)])
ACCOMPLISHMENT	BECOME **predicate´** (x) or (x, y) or BECOME **do´** (x, [**predicate´** (x) or (x, y)])
E.g. The snow melted.	BECOME **melted´** (snow)
ACTIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT	**do´** (x, [**predicate$_1$´** (x, (y))]) & INGR **predicate$_2$´** (z, x) or (y)
E.g. Chris ran to the park.	**do´** (Chris, [**run´** (Chris)]) & INGR **be-at´** (park, Chris)
CAUSATIVE	á CAUSE â, where á, â are LSs of any type
E.g. Max broke the window.	[**do´** (Max, ∅)] CAUSE [BECOME **broken´** (window)][11]

Table 4.2 Verb types and their logical structures with English examples (Van Valin forth.:40-41)[12]

Operators are given a place in the semantic representation that reflects their scope (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:171). This is illustrated in (21). (Operators with no specification have been omitted.)

(21) Kate has been sleeping.

⟨$_{IF}$*DEC* ⟨$_{TNS}$*PRES* ⟨$_{ASP}$*PERF PROG* ⟨**do´** (Kate, [**sleep´** (Kate)])⟩⟩⟩⟩

For the purposes of the analysis in chapter 6, operator representation in the semantic logical structure is generally omitted unless directly relevant.

[11] The symbol Ø represents an unspecified argument, in this case an unspecified action by 'Max'.
[12] The symbol '&' indicates 'and then'.

4.2.1.1 Noun phrases

Nouns are analysed in Role and Reference Grammar following Pustejovsky's (1991, 1995) theory of nominal qualia: the meaning is broken down into four roles. A brief summary of the four aspects is given in (22) and the example in (23) provides Pustejovsky's representation of the noun *novel* (Pustejovsky 1991:426-7, cited in Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:185). The semantic properties of nouns contribute to the meaning of a sentence.

(22) *Qualia theory*

a. Constitutive Role: the relation between an object and its constituents, or proper parts
b. Formal Role: that which distinguishes the object within a larger domain
c. Telic Role: purpose and function of the object
d. Agentive Role: factors involved in the origin or "bringing about" of an object

(23) **Novel** (x)

a. Constitutive: **narrative´** (x)
b. Form: **book´** (x), **disk´** (x)
c. Telic: **do´** (y, [**read´** (y, x)])
d. Agentive: **artefact´** (x), **do´** (y, [**write´** (y, x)]) & INGR **exist´** (x)

Nominal operators are represented in a manner similar to that for verbal operators, reflecting their scope ordering. Quality modifiers such as attributive adjectives are represented as predicates associated with the head noun through the predicate **be´**; the head noun is indicated by underlining when this logical structure represents a noun phrase (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:195).[13] Example (24) gives the logical structure, including nominal operators, for the English noun phrase *the blue dress*.

(24) ⟨$_{\text{DEF}}$+ ⟨$_{\text{NEG}}$*Ø* ⟨$_{\text{QNT}}$∃ ⟨$_{\text{NUM}}$*SG* ⟨$_{\text{NASP}}$*COUNT* ⟨$_{\text{QLT}}$[**be´** (<u>dress</u>, [**blue´**])]⟩⟩⟩⟩⟩⟩⟩

In noun phrases containing relative clauses, the **be´** predicate is again used, and the relative clause forms its second argument. The examples in (25) give the logical

[13] That is, in contrast to the representation for a sentence such as *The dress is blue* where *dress* would not be underlined.

structure for the noun phrase *the cars which/that were destroyed*. Where *that* appears in place of the relative pronoun, the lexically-unfilled argument is represented by 'x'. The WH word or 'x' is marked as coindexed with the first argument of **be´** using subscript 'i'.[14]

(25) a. the cars which were destroyed
be´ (cars$_i$, [[**do´** (Ø, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **destroyed´** (which$_i$)]])

b. the cars that were destroyed
be´ (cars$_i$, [[**do´** (Ø, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **destroyed´** (x$_i$)]])

4.2.1.2 Adpositions and adverbs

Section 4.1.1.1 described the constituent structure of three types of adpositional phrases: argument-marking, adjunct, and argument-adjunct. The first relevant distinction is whether the adposition is predicative, and if it is, then secondly whether its logical structure is a sub-part of the logical structure of the main verb (argument adjunct) or stands as a peripheral modifier to the main core (adjunct). The semantic representation of the three types, as exemplified by English prepositions, is described in this section.

i) Argument-marking prepositions – e.g. Rae gave the cake to Pete.

Argument-marking prepositions are not predicative (and thus their prepositional phrases have no internal layered structure, see Figure 4.4b). They mark arguments as oblique and the choice of preposition can be predicted from the logical structure of the verb. In English, for example, the preposition *to* marks the first argument of BECOME **pred´** (x, y) when that argument is not undergoer (as stated in (26c)); in (26a) below *Fred* is a non-macrorole argument and the first argument of BECOME **have´** and

[14] Possessive noun phrase structures are created in a similar way; they are based on **have´** (x, y). The possessive noun phrase *the woman's book* is represented **have´** (woman, book); again, the head noun is underlined (Van Valin forth.:47).

therefore is marked with *to* (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:157-8).[15] Argument-marking prepositions do not appear in the logical structure of the sentence (see (26b)).

(26) a. Bill gave the book to Fred.
b. [**do´** (Bill, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **have´** (Fred, book)]
c. Assign *to* to non-macrorole *x* argument in logical structure segment:
…BECOME/INGR **predicate´** (x, y)

ii) Adjunct prepositions – Rae baked a cake <u>in</u> the kitchen/<u>after</u> work.

Adjunct prepositions are syntactically peripheral to the core and are always semantically predicative. They modify the core; thus in their semantic representation they take the logical structure of the main core as their second argument and the noun phrase within the prepositional phrase as the first; this is illustrated in (27).

(27) a. [Rae baked a cake]$_{\text{CORE}}$ [in the kitchen]$_{\text{PERIPHERY}}$.
b. **be-in´** (kitchen, [[**do´** (Sam, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **baked´** (cake)]])

iii) Argument-adjunct prepositions – Rae put the cake under the box.

Argument-adjunct prepositions are predicative and appear within the logical structure of the main verb (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:160). As noted above, some verbs can take one of a selection of prepositions and so the logical structure for this type of verb contains the general predicate **be-LOC´** (see (28a)). The example in (6) is repeated here as (28b) with its logical structure.

(28) a. [**do´** (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **be-LOC´** ((y), z)]
b. Kim put the book in (/on/next to/behind/on top of/under) the box.
[**do´** (Kim, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **be-in´** (box, book)]

Adverbs are treated as one-place predicates that have the logical structure (or part of the logical structure) of the clause they modify as their argument (following Jackendoff 1972). Peripheral temporal adverbs, epistemic adverbs (*e.g. probably*) and

[15] 'Undergoer' and 'actor' are semantic macroroles representing 'patient-like' and 'actor-like' groups of thematic roles. These are discussed below in section 4.2.2.

evidential adverbs (*e.g. evidently*) modify the clause and take the whole logical structure of the core as their scope, as illustrated in (29) (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:162).

(29) Sam baked a cake yesterday.
yesterday´ ([**do´** (Sam, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **baked´** (cake)])

Manner, pace and aspectual adverbs (*e.g. violently, quickly, completely* respectively) modify subparts of the logical structure of the verb (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:164). Example (30) illustrates that *completely* modifies the nucleus.

(30) Hamid crushed the box completely/Hamid completely crushed the box.
[**do´** (Hamid, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME [**complete´** [**crushed´** (box)]]]

Within the constituent projection, adverbs are shown as peripheral to the layer of the clause that they modify (Van Valin forth.:19). Figure 4.17 illustrates this, showing that adverbs (unlike operators) can appear either side of the verb.

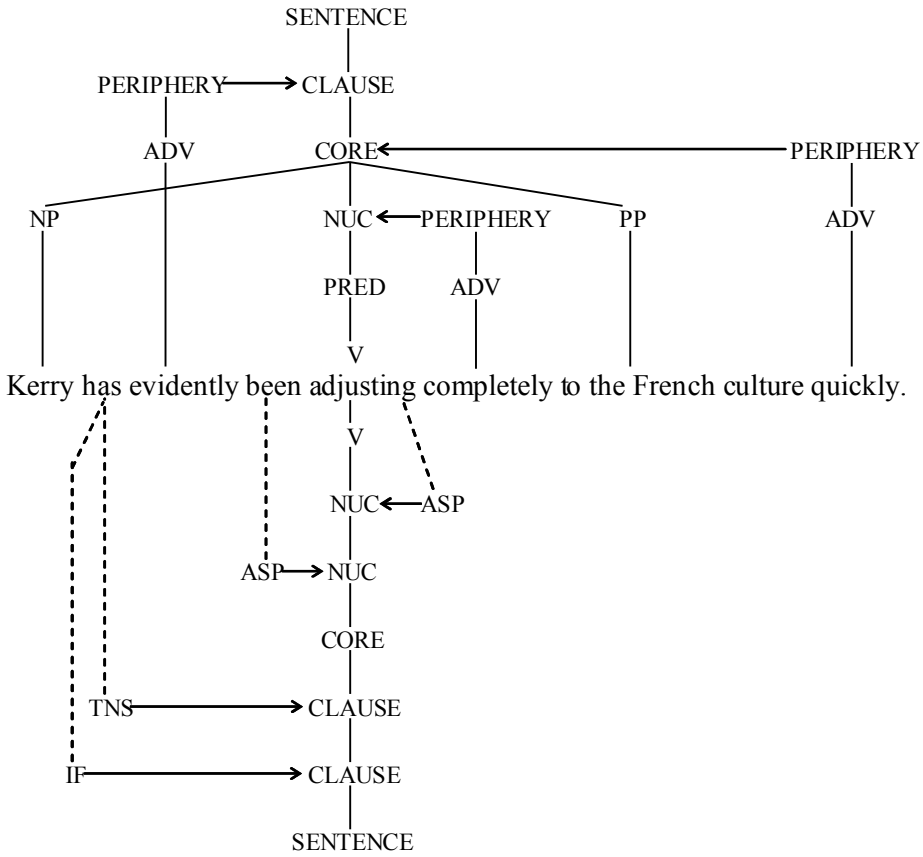


Figure 4.17 Representation of adverbs in constituent projection

As for operators, the ordering of the adverbs with respect to each other and the main verb is related to their scope, as (31) illustrates.

(31) a. Evidently$_{CLAUSAL}$, Kerry has quickly$_{CORE}$ been completely$_{NUCLEAR}$ adjusting to the French culture.
b. *Quickly, Kerry has completely been evidently adjusting to the French culture.
c. *Completely, Kerry has evidently been quickly adjusting to the French culture.

4.2.2 Semantic roles

As mentioned above, logical representations work together with semantic roles to form the Role and Reference Grammar semantic structure. The semantic roles that are significant in this approach are 'actor' and 'undergoer'; these represent generalized terms for conventional thematic relations, as discussed in this section.

4.2.2.1 Thematic relations

In Role and Reference Grammar traditional thematic relations (theme, patient, *etc*.) are considered to have "no independent status, they are really just mnemonics for the argument positions in L[ogical] S[tructure]s" (Van Valin 1996:287). For example, the thematic relation 'experiencer' – a sentient being that experiences an internal state – stands for "the first argument in the logical structure of a two-place state predicate of internal experience" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:114). In (32), for example, *Maria* is the first argument of **see´**, which is a two-place state predicate of internal experience.

(32) **see´** (x, y) **see´** (Maria, cat) *Maria saw the cat.*
↑ ↑ ↑
EXPERIENCER EXPERIENCER EXPERIENCER

Thematic relations can therefore be grouped into five categories based on their argument position in logical structures, as shown in Figure 4.18 (DO indicates lexicalized agency, *e.g. murder* in English). This means that "the interpretation of an argument depends, first and foremost, on the…predicating element it occurs with" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:113).

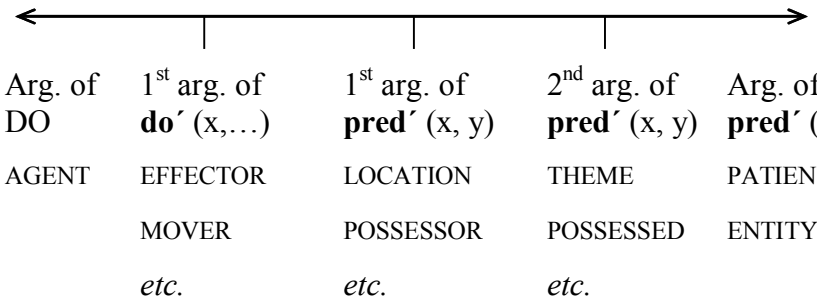


Figure 4.18 Thematic relations continuum in terms of logical structure argument positions (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:127, abbreviated)

Sentences such as (33) below are referred to as equational by Van Valin (forth.).

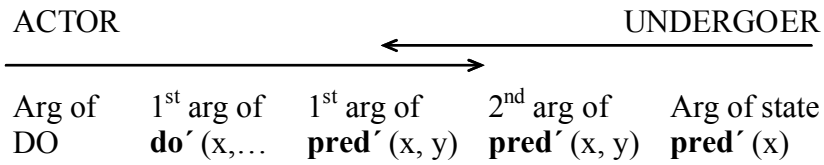
(33) Pat is the thief.
equate´ (Pat, thief)

According to Van Valin, "equational predicates are unique in that their two argument positions define the same semantic role. In a sense, these predications involve only referential identity, not semantic roles in the usual sense" (forth.:48). In other words, the argument positions in the logical structure of an equational sentence do not correspond to specific thematic relations as described above. The representation of 'equational' sentences provides an interesting exception to the generalization made above and is relevant for the analysis set out in chapter 6.

4.2.2.2 Semantic macroroles

Semantic macroroles are central to Role and Reference Grammar semantic theory. They are "the primary interface between the LS and syntactic representations" (Van Valin 1996:287). The two macroroles – actor and undergoer – correspond to "the two primary arguments in a prototypical transitive relation" (Van Valin 1996:287), the actor being the most 'agent-like' participant, and the undergoer the most 'patient-like' participant. Each macrorole subsumes a number of the thematic relations discussed above. The choice of an argument in a logical structure as actor or undergoer (or as

neither) is placed in order of likelihood (supported by cross-linguistic evidence) along a hierarchical scale (Figure 4.19).



['⟶' = increasing markedness of realization of argument as macrorole]

Figure 4.19 Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:146)

Following this hierarchy, for a logical structure with two macroroles such as in (34), one reads across from the left and assigns the first argument of '**do´** (x,…' as the least marked choice for actor; reading from the right the default undergoer is the second argument of '**pred´** (x, y)'.

(34) a. Bill hit Barry.

b. **do´** (Bill, [**hit´** (Bill, Barry)])
ACTOR UNDERGOER

'Markedness of realization' on the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy in Figure 4.19 captures the fact that while there are default assignments of actor and undergoer to particular arguments, languages can override this and use a marked selection of undergoer. An example of this is the 'dative shift' alternation illustrated in (35b) where the first argument of **have´** is undergoer, rather than the second. (The third argument is a non-macrorole core argument (NMR), prepositionally marked in (a) following the principle in (26c).)

(35) a. $\text{Pat}_{\text{ACTOR}}$ gave the $\text{book}_{\text{UNDERGOER}}$ to Chris.
[**do´** (Pat, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **have´** (Chris, book)]
ACTOR NMR UNDERGOER

b. $\text{Pat}_{\text{ACTOR}}$ gave $\text{Chris}_{\text{UNDERGOER}}$ the book.
[**do´** (Pat, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **have´** (Chris, book)]
ACTOR UNDERGOER NMR

The terms actor and undergoer are not the same as the conventional terms subject and object, the former being dependent on semantic factors, rather than syntactic position. Hence in (36), the 'subject' *dog* is an undergoer rather than an actor, as would be expected given the hierarchy above in Figure 4.19 (Van Valin 1996:288).

(36) The dog died.

BECOME **dead´** (dog)

The number and nature of macroroles that a verb takes can generally be predicted from the logical structure of the verb. This follows a number of default macrorole assignment principles given in (37) with examples (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:152-3).

(37) Default Macrorole Assignment Principles[16]

a. Number: the number of macroroles a verb takes is less than or equal to the number of arguments in its LS:

i. If a verb has two or more arguments in its LS, it will take two macroroles.

E.g. *Pat gave Chris the book.*

[**do´** (Pat, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **have´** (Chris, book)] → two MRs

ii. If a verb has one argument in its LS, it will take one macrorole.

E.g. *Sally coughed.*

[SEML **do´** (Sally, [**cough´** (Sally)])] → one MR

b. Nature: for verbs which take one macrorole:[17]

i. If the verb has an activity predicate in its LS, the macrorole is actor.

E.g. *Charlotte ran.*

[**do´** (Charlotte, [**run´** (Charlotte)])] → *Charlotte* = ACTOR

ii. If the verb has no activity predicate in its LS, the macrorole is undergoer.

E.g. *The window shattered.*

[**shattered´** (window)] → *window* = UNDERGOER

[16] There are exceptions to these principles: in the activity interpretations of predicates such as **eat´** (as in *Sally ate spaghetti*, in contrast to *Sally ate the spaghetti*, an active accomplishment) the second argument is non-referential; it "serves to characterize the action rather than pick out any of the participants" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:149). Hence, since "it does not refer to any specific participant in a state of affairs it cannot be undergoer" (1997:149). Van Valin and LaPolla note that in many languages this argument is incorporated into the verb rather than appearing as an independent noun phrase (1997:149).

[17] Verbs with more than one macrorole follow the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy (Figure 4.19).

4.2.3 The lexicon

In Role and Reference Grammar lexical entries for verbs are based around their logical structures and also contain idiosyncratic information; as discussed above, the thematic relations associated with a particular verb follow from its logical structure. If the number of macroroles a verb takes does not follow the default principles in (37), this is stated as [MRá] (where á = zero, one or two; see the structure for *seem* in (38d)).[18] Examples of lexical entries for English verbs are given in (38a-f).

(38) a. *kill* [**do´** (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **dead´** (y)]
b. *own* **have´** (x, y)
c. *receive* BECOME **have´** (x, y)
d. *seem* **seem´** (x, y) [MRØ]
e. *arrive* BECOME **be-at´** (x, y)
f. *be* **equate´** (x, y)

The example (38f) corresponds to the verb *be* only when it occurs with two referential arguments, as in (33) and in (39c) below. Predicative adjectives and nominals are represented as the second argument of the predicate **be´** (as in (39a) and (39b)).

(39) a. Jonathan is tall. ATTRIBUTIVE
be´ (Jonathan, [**tall´**])
b. Ed is a lawyer. IDENTIFICATIONAL
be´ (Ed, [**lawyer´**])
c. Ed is the lawyer. EQUATIONAL
equate´ (Ed, lawyer)

For verbs that belong to more than one *Aktionsart*, such as the verb *break* (40), Role and Reference Grammar adopts an analysis of these alternations in terms of generalized lexical rules, rather than having each variant of the verb listed separately.

(40) a. The toaster broke. ACCOMPLISHMENT
BECOME **broken´** (toaster)

[18] In broader terms, the lexicon is understood as being stored separately from the inventory of syntactic templates, as noted in section 4.1.3. This is discussed further in section 4.5.

b. Ben broke the toaster. CAUSATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT
[**do´** (Ben, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **broken´** (toaster)]

While postulating lexical rules adds complication, it simultaneously reduces the number of entries in the lexicon and enables generalized statements and predictions. In the case of *break*, for example, it is hypothesized that English has a lexical rule that derives the causative interpretation from the accomplishment, the latter being the meaning entered in the lexicon (see (41); Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:183-4).

(41) BECOME/INGR **predicate´** (y) → [**do´** (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME/INGR **predicate´** (y)]

The lexical entries for nouns are formed of the nominal qualia properties discussed above in section 4.2.1.1.

4.3 Grammatical Relations

4.3.1 Grammatical relations, privileged syntactic argument

Role and Reference Grammar differs substantially from many other theories in its view of grammatical relations. The traditional grammatical terms ‘subject’ and ‘object’ are argued to be non-universal in their application, in terms of their existence in all languages and in the sense that the labels cover a variety of syntactic functions. There are also no notions corresponding precisely to the grammatical terms ‘direct object’ and ‘indirect object’ in Role and Reference Grammar; these are referred to as ‘direct core argument’ and ‘oblique core argument’.

The one syntactic function or role is termed the “privileged grammatical function” and is carried out by the “privileged syntactic argument [PSA]” (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:275, 281). This is a construction-specific notion rather than a property of a language as a whole and is defined as “a restricted neutralization of semantic roles and pragmatic functions for syntactic purposes” (Van Valin 1996:289). In other words, in some constructions, the distinction between actor and undergoer is ‘neutralized’ or irrelevant for the question of how that argument affects either syntactic coding such as

verb agreement or syntactic behaviour such as determining the missing argument in a complex sentence (*e.g. Tom wants __ to go to Las Vegas*; see below). The neutralization is 'restricted' since only macrorole arguments (actor and undergoer) are neutralized.

Examples of restricted neutralization are given in (42) and (43) below and these illustrate the two facets of the privileged syntactic argument. Controllers are concerned with coding issues such as triggering verb agreement, as in (42), providing the antecedent of a reflexive pronoun, or supplying the referent of a coreferring, syntactically unexpressed argument in an linked unit (*Fiona* in (43)). In (42), the controller of verb agreement (the privileged syntactic argument) has to be defined syntactically since it can represent either macrorole (actor in (42a) and (b), undergoer in (42c) and (d)) and thus cannot be defined semantically.

(42) a. The author has/*have read the reviews. ACTOR OF TRANSITIVE VERB
b. The ballerina has/*have danced. ACTOR OF INTRANSITIVE VERB
c. The poet has/*have died. UNDERGOER OF INTRANSITIVE VERB
d. The reviews have/*has been read by the author.
UNDERGOER OF TRANSITIVE VERB [PASSIVE VOICE]

The term pivot usually refers to the syntactically unexpressed argument in a linked unit in complex sentences. In the examples in (43), the pivot is the privileged syntactic argument (or traditional 'subject') of the dependent clause. The semantic role of that argument as actor (as in (43a) and (c)) or undergoer (see (43b) and (e)) is 'neutralized'.

(43) a. Fiona$_i$ wants ___ $_i$ to dance on the stage. ACTOR OF INTRANSITIVE VERB
b. Fiona$_i$ wants ___ $_i$ to be cleverer. UNDERGOER OF INTRANSITIVE VERB
c. Fiona$_i$ wants ___ $_i$ to drink a martini. ACTOR OF TRANSITIVE VERB
d. *Fiona$_i$ doesn't want the reviewers to criticize ___ $_i$.
*UNDERGOER OF TRANSITIVE VERB [ACTIVE]
e. Fiona$_i$ doesn't want ___ $_i$ to be criticized by the reviewers.
UNDERGOER OF TRANSITIVE VERB [PASSIVE]

Grammatical relations only occur in a language if that language contains a construction where there is restricted neutralization of semantic roles. If syntactic behaviour and coding can be described in terms of semantic macroroles (if it could, for example, be said that the verb always agrees with the actor) then to add grammatical terminology is, in a sense, redundant. Within this framework, such a language is said to have no evidence for grammatical relations.[19]

As noted above, for there to be grammatical relations it is necessary that the neutralization be restricted since if there is unrestricted neutralization (that is, if any argument, macrorole or not, can control syntactic behaviour and coding) there are no constraints and thus no evidence for patterns of syntactic relations. The nature of this neutralization may vary between languages and between constructions within a language; in English, the concept of privileged syntactic argument subsumes the single argument of an intransitive verb (regardless of its semantic role; 'S'), the actor of a transitive verb ('A'), and the derived single argument of a passive (the undergoer; 'd-S'). Examples of these are given in (44).[20] (See Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:263-9 for descriptions of other patterns of restricted neutralization.)

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[19] This is the case for Acehnese (Indonesia; Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:255-6, citing data from Durie 1987). The verb agreement in (iii), where the single ('subject') argument is the undergoer, patterns like that for the undergoer (the 'object') in (i), and *un*like the actor 'subject' of (ii). In other words, the syntactic verb agreement is determined by the semantic role of the argument (see Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:250-263 for further discussion).

(i) (Gopnyan) geu-mat lôn.
(3SG) 3-hold 1SG
'(S)he holds me.'

(ii) (Lôn) lôn-mat-geuh.
(1SG) 1SG-hold-3
'I hold him/her.'

(iii) Lôn rhët(-lôn).
1SG fall(-1SG)
'I fall.'

(iv) *Lôn lôn-rhët.
1SG 1SG-fall.

[20] The single core argument of a passive is labelled 'derived subject' because the passive construction is marked, both in the sense that it involves extra morphosyntactic coding, and in

(44) a. Mary$_S$ sings.

b. Mary$_A$ climbs trees.

c. The trees$_{d\text{-}S}$ were climbed by Mary.

It is also possible for pragmatic factors to influence the choice of privileged syntactic argument in a particular construction, as in so-called "topic chaining" constructions (Dixon 1972, cited in Van Valin forth.). In English, for example, the topical referent can be the privileged syntactic argument (that is, is determining the 'missing' argument throughout; see (45)).

(45) Mary$_i$ walked into the department store, ___ $_i$ looked at a couple of dresses, ___ $_i$ bought one, ___ $_i$ went up to the coffee shop, ___ $_i$ ordered a cup of coffee and ___ $_i$ rested her weary feet. (Van Valin forth.:96)

Voice constructions (*e.g.* passive) are used to enable an undergoer to function as a privileged syntactic argument (see (42d) and (43e)). These reflect the hierarchy of markedness that affects the choice of semantic argument to function as privileged syntactic argument (see (46)). This hierarchy operates in terms of the position of the argument in the logical structure of the verb, where arguments towards the left of the hierarchy are 'higher ranking'.

(46) Privileged Syntactic Argument Selection Hierarchy (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:282)

arg of DO > 1st arg of **do´** > 1st arg of **pred´** (x, y) > 2nd arg of **pred´** (x, y) > arg of **pred´** (x)

It is no coincidence that this hierarchy arranges the arguments in the same order as the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy (Figure 4.19). The PSA selection hierarchy in (46) anticipates that "in a syntactically accusative language the unmarked choice for [PSA] of a transitive verb is the actor [(the highest ranking macrorole)], with the undergoer

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the sense that the undergoer appears as PSA in a nominative-accusative construction (see the PSA selection hierarchy in (46) below). The term 'derived' does not indicate movement from an 'underlying' form; 'marked subject' may be a more appropriate term.

being a marked choice possible only in a passive construction" (Van Valin 1996:289).[21]

For example, in an English transitive sentence with nominative/accusative patterning and two macroroles, the default, or unmarked choice for privileged syntactic argument, following (46), will be the actor (see (47a)). With the use of a marked passive voice construction, the undergoer can be the privileged syntactic argument (as in (47b)). Both privileged syntactic argument selection and macrorole choice are therefore made on the basis of the position of the argument in the logical structure.

(47) a. Kate_{PSA} kicked the car. **do´** (Kate, [**kick´** (Kate_{ACT}, the car_{UND})])

b. The car_{PSA} was kicked by Kate. **do´** (Kate, [**kick´** (Kate_{ACT}, the car_{UND})])

4.3.2 Case marking and agreement rules

Case marking and agreement rules depend on reference to macroroles and direct core argument status. Verb agreement in English has already been discussed in section 4.3.1: the rule for finite verb agreement in English (as well as other languages such as German, Russian and Icelandic) states that the "controller of finite verb agreement is the highest ranking macrorole argument (in terms of [the privileged syntactic argument selection hierarchy])" (Van Valin forth.:101). In other words, the controller of verb agreement is the macrorole argument whose position in the logical structure is represented furthest to the left-hand end (or 'highest end') of the PSA selection hierarchy (46). This correctly picks out *the author* rather than *the reviews* in (42a), for example, since *the author* is the first argument of the predicate **read´**.

In English, pronouns can be case marked and case marking is also exemplified by prepositional argument-marking on lexical noun phrases. Many prepositions can be assigned on the basis of general principles that refer to macrorole and core argument

[21] In a syntactically ergative construction, the undergoer would be the default choice for privileged syntactic argument, rather than the actor.

status; an example of the rule for assigning *to* in English has already been given in (26) (section 4.2.1.2).

4.4 Information Structure

To a large extent, the interpretation of information structure in Role and Reference Grammar draws from the recent work of Knud Lambrecht (*e.g.* 1994). There are two related aspects to information structure: the first is the cognitive or activation status of the referents and the second is the pragmatic relations established by and between those referents.

Regarding the first of these aspects, referents are divided into different types (following Lambrecht) according to their position in the hearer's consciousness. It is assumed that speakers use their awareness of the hearer's consciousness to the best of their ability in deciding which form to use. The types are as follows in Figure 1.1.

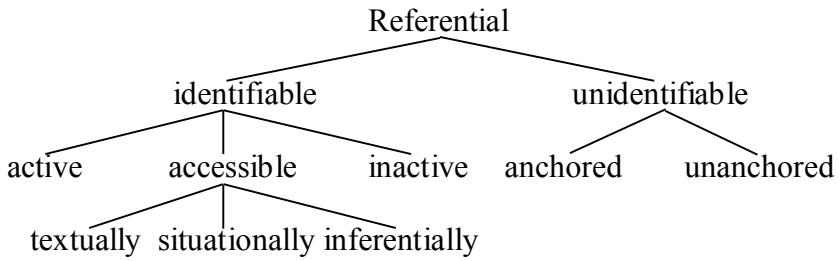

Figure 4.20 The cognitive states of referents in discourse (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:201)

The terms 'unidentifiable (or 'brand new') anchored' and 'unanchored' are taken from Prince (1981). An anchored referent is one presented with a link to a more identifiable referent, for example *a girl I know from work*; an unanchored referent does not come with such a link, for example *a girl*. The terms under identifiable in Figure 1.1 are introduced by Chafe (1987) and are illustrated by the exchange in (48).

(48) a. A: Did you hear about Jim_{INA} getting the sack?
b. B: I heard he_{ACV} was in danger of it. Doesn't his $\text{brother}_{\text{ACS}}$ own the company?
c. A: No. $\text{Richard Branson}_{\text{INA}}$ owns the company.

An active referent is one that is "the current focus of consciousness" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:200; *he* in (48b)). Accessible referents are available textually, situationally or inferentially but are not yet the current focus of consciousness (*his brother* in (48b)). Inactive referents are in the hearer's long-term memory (*Richard Branson* in (48c)).

The following sections relate to the second aspect of focus structure, namely the pragmatic relations established by and between the referents.

4.4.1 Topic and focus, assertion and presupposition

The role that referents play in the information structure of a sentence involves the notions of topic and focus. The discourse-pragmatic notion of topic is defined following Gundel as follows: "An entity, E, is the topic of a sentence, S, iff in using S the speaker intends to increase the addressee's knowledge about, request information about, or otherwise get the addressee to act with respect to E" (Gundel 1988:210, cited in Van Valin forth.:59). This relates closely to the notion of presupposition: what is presupposed in a particular sentence is the "not the topic itself…but the fact that the topic referent can be expected to play a role in a given proposition, due to its status as a center of interest or matter of concern" (Lambrecht 1994:151). In other words, the topic is the referent in the presupposition that "has the [pragmatic] function of naming the referent that the assertion is about" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:203).

It is also important to note that the assertion of a particular sentence is not the referent(s) in isolation, but the effect of a combination of 'old' and 'new'; it is the context of the old assumptions (the presupposition) and the addition of new information related in some way to those assumptions (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:201-2). This is reflected in the following definitions.

(49) Definition of terms

a. Pragmatic assertion – "proposition expressed by a sentence which the hearer is expected to know or believe or take for granted as a result of hearing the sentence uttered" (Lambrecht 1994:52).

b. Pragmatic presupposition – "set of propositions lexico-grammatically evoked in an utterance which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or believes or is ready to take for granted at the time of speech" (Lambrecht 1994:52).

c. Focus – "semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition" (Lambrecht 1994:213).

d. Focus structure – "the conventional association of a focus meaning with a sentence form" (Lambrecht 1994:222).

Focus structure interacts with the cognitive status of referents in affecting the form of the noun phrase that is selected to represent that referent. This hierarchical relationship is given in Figure 4.21.

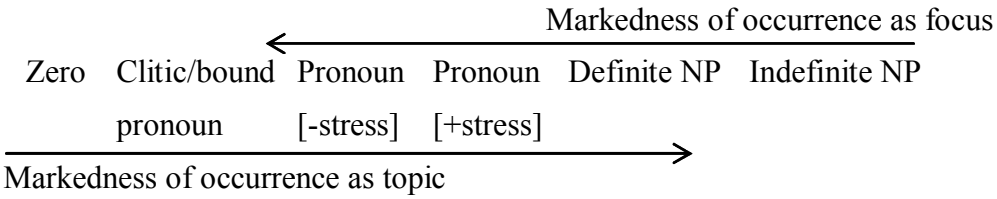

Figure 4.21 Coding of referents in terms of possible functions (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:205)

Thus, reading from left to right in the hierarchy, zero coding is the least marked way of coding a topic (see the 'topic chaining' example in (45)), whereas using an indefinite noun phrase would be the most marked method of coding a topic. A topic usually has some level of identifiability and thus is more likely to be coded with a definite noun phrase or pronoun than with an indefinite noun phrase (see section 1.4 regarding the relationship between definiteness and identifiability). In (48b) above, for example, the referent previously referred to as *Jim* can be referred to subsequently as a topic with the pronoun *he* as its cognitive status is now active for the hearer.

On the other hand (reading from right to left in the hierarchy), the focus introduces the asserted part of the sentence. Since this is 'new', the speaker cannot easily use a pronoun, for example, to code a referent as the hearer would be unlikely to be able to identify a previously unmentioned referent from a pronoun. The examples in (50) illustrate this (focused noun phrases underlined).

(50) a. What did Paul end up doing with his car?

b. He sold it to <u>a woman he knows from work</u>$_{\text{INDEF NP}}$.

b′. #He sold it to <u>her</u>$_{\text{PRON [-STRESS]}}$.

4.4.2 Focus types

The information structure of a sentence, that is, the pragmatic relations established between referents, can be signalled by morphological, intonational, and syntactic means. Following Lambrecht (1994), there are three basic types of focus structure that refer to the distribution of information in the sentence: narrow, predicate and sentence focus.[22] These are illustrated in (51) (focused elements underlined, small capitals indicate focal stress).

(51) <u>Focus types</u> (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:206-8)

a. Predicate focus:

Q: What happened to your car?

A: My car/It <u>broke DOWN</u>.

b. Sentence focus:

Q: What happened?

A: <u>My CAR broke down</u>.

c. Narrow focus:

Q: I heard your motorcycle broke down.

A: My <u>CAR</u> broke down/It was my <u>CAR</u> that broke down.

Predicate focus corresponds to 'topic-comment' sentences and is the unmarked, universal type; it is characteristic of sentences where the subject is the topic of the

[22] In English, focus structure is often conveyed through prosodic means, by intonational stress often termed 'focus'; that is a different use of the term from that used here.

sentence and the rest of the sentence expresses new information about that topic (see (51a)).[23] Sentence focus constructions, on the other hand, have no topic; the focus domain is the whole sentence (see (51b)). Finally, in narrow focus constructions such as (51c), the focus domain is a single constituent.

Lambrecht makes a distinction between marked and unmarked focus: he argues that predicate focus structure exemplifies the unmarked pattern since there are various readings available for a sentence with predicate focus structure. On the other hand, narrow (or sentence) focus structure is marked as there is no ambiguity. Lambrecht illustrates this with the following examples (intonational stress marked with small capitals 1994:297-8).

(52) a. Who saw John? BILL saw John/him.
b. Who did Bill see? Bill/he saw JOHN.
c. What did Bill do? Bill/he went straight HOME.
d. What happened? BILL went straight HOME.

There is some flexibility in the focus interpretations of the answers in (52b-d); the answer in (d), for example, could equally answer the question in (c), and the answer in (b) would be a valid response to the question in (c). On the other hand, the answer in (52a), with sentence-initial *Bill* intonationally marked as focal, can only have an interpretation with *Bill* in narrow focus; it cannot answer any of the other questions.

[23] As noted in section 4.1.1, the 'VP' unit is explained in RRG in terms of focus structure that "imposes…groupings on the constituent projection…[C]onstructions [such as VP fronting, deletion and anaphora] are sensitive to the pragmatically-motivated bracketings of the syntactic structure" (Van Valin forth.:70). For example, in the narrow focus answer in (i) below, the content of the 'VP' is topical and thus represented by the proform *did*; the subject is focal.

(i) Q. Who mowed the lawn?
A. DANA did.

4.4.3 Formal representation of focus structure

Languages have different levels of flexibility in terms of syntactic constituent order and also in terms of focus structure, and the interaction between these necessitates various strategies designed to meet the pragmatic needs of speakers; these strategies may involve intonation patterns, morphological marking or syntactic constructions. The consequent constraints in each language create potential focus domains (PFD) for each language where the focus could be allowed to occur. Within that potential focus domain, there is an actual focus domain (AFD) where the focus, in each construction, falls (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:212).

These two aspects of the focus structure of a particular sentence (PFD and AFD) are given a representation in the focus projection, which complements the syntactic and semantic projections of a particular sentence. The narrow focus construction in Figure 4.22 illustrates the focus projection (Van Valin forth.:67). 'Basic information units' indicate the minimal phrasal categories, which correspond to the "minimal focus domain" (Van Valin forth.:66). The language-specific potential focus domains and construction-specific actual focus domains refer to the distribution of information within a particular sentence, whether this is marked intonationally, morphologically or syntactically.

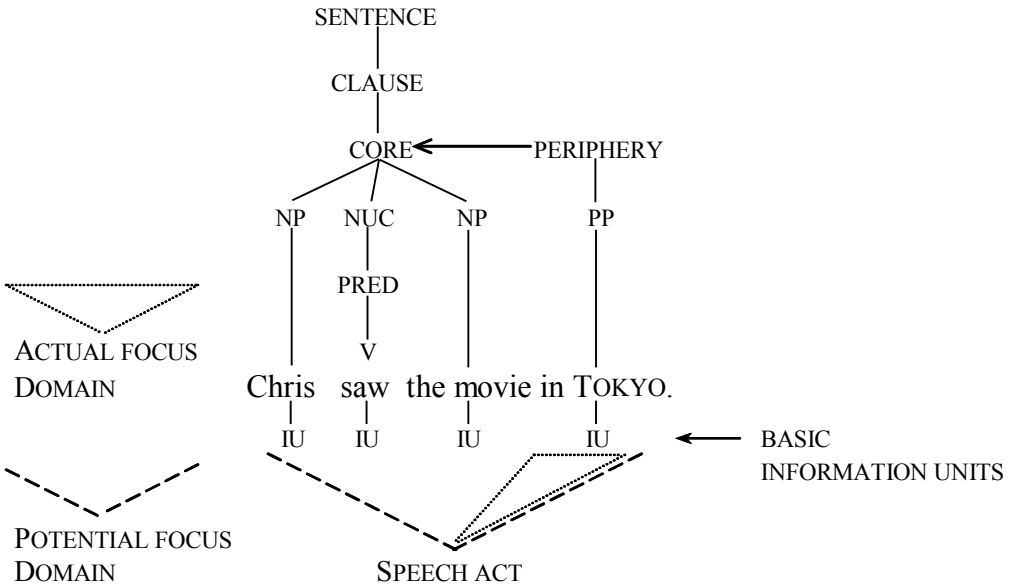

Figure 4.22 Constituent and focus projection example for English

In the sentence in Figure 4.23, the potential focus is still the whole sentence. Figure 4.23 illustrates a predicate focus reading (that is, one that could answer the question *What did Lisa do?*).

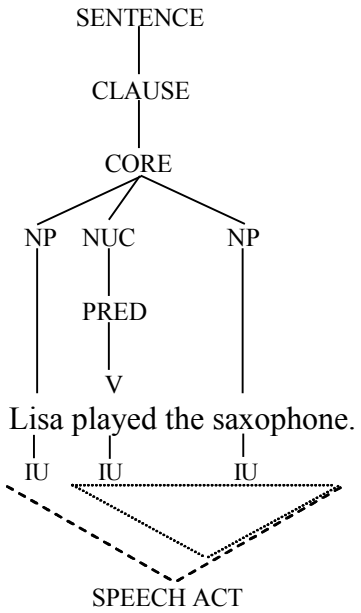

Figure 4.23 Predicate focus structure projection for SVO sentence

4.4.4 Interaction of focus structure with negation and pronominalization

Examining the interaction with negation and pronominalization highlights the importance of integrating information structure with syntactic and semantic structure in language analysis. The focus structure of a sentence determines what is negated since only asserted parts of an utterance can be negated. In the sentences in (53), for example, the focused constituent is what is within the scope of the negation.

(53) a. RIDGE didn't marry Brooke (…THORN did).
b. Ridge didn't MARRY Brooke (…he BROKE UP with her).
c. Ridge didn't marry BROOKE(…he married TAYLOR).

Within Role and Reference Grammar, the principles governing intrasentential pronominalization are also a result of the interaction between syntax and information structure. The principle governing coreference between a lexical noun phrase and a pronoun within a sentence is in (54).

(54) Principle governing intrasentential pronominalization (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:227)
Coreference is possible between a lexical NP and a pronoun within the same sentence if and only if
a. the lexical NP is outside of the actual focus domain, and
b. if the pronoun is in a syntactic argument position and precedes the lexical NP, there is a clause boundary between the pronoun and the lexical NP.

The examples below in (55) illustrate the two aspects of this principle (subscript 'i' indicates coreference, focus domain indicated by underlining). In (55a), the narrow focus on *Bill* implies that the referent is different from the referent of *him* and thus the coreferential reading is not possible. In (55b), on the other hand, the pronoun precedes its antecedent, but since there is a clausal break (marked by a comma) before *Mary*, coreference is permitted. (Reflexivization is discussed in section 6.2.2.)

(55) a. It was my punching BILL$_i$ that annoyed him$_{*i/j}$.
b. When she$_i$ was six years old, Mary$_i$ learned to swim.

4.5 Linking

The Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy (Figure 4.19), the privileged syntactic argument selection hierarchy (46) and the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy (Figure 4.13) given above have already indicate a level of patterning in the relationship between syntax, semantics and pragmatics. These relationships are formally expanded into the linking aspect of the theory, which connects the representations of syntactic form and semantic structure in language-specific ways. Figure 4.24 is a more detailed version of Figure 4.1, indicating how the elements described above fit into the broader linking schema. Constructional templates are explained below in 4.5.1.

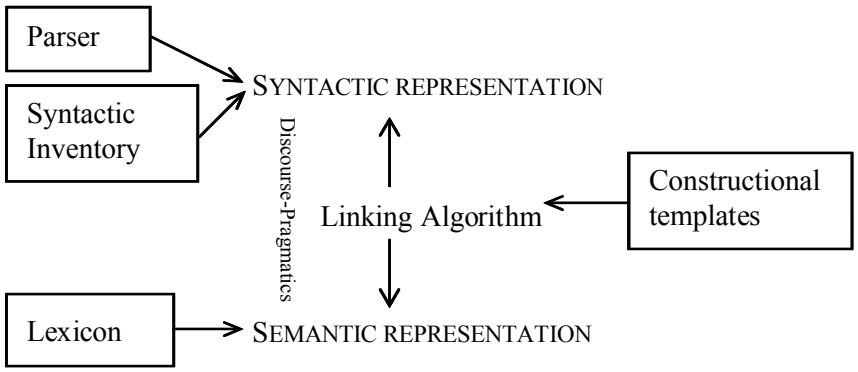

Figure 4.24 Organization of Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valin forth.:124)

The Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy is the primary interface between semantics and syntax; it facilitates the mapping between the syntactic and semantic representations while also allowing for the interaction of discourse-pragmatic factors. The lexical entries for the predicates and the nouns form the semantic representation of the sentence, and the arguments in these logical structures are mapped onto macroroles. From the syntactic side, a syntactic template (or a combination of templates) is selected. The macroroles and other arguments are mapped onto the syntax and the privileged syntactic argument is determined. These phases can be followed in either direction, linking to semantics from syntax or vice versa, since the

representations are not derived from the other, only linked (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:317).

Figure 4.25 below represents the linking system and its components; as it indicates, the semantic aspects of the linking system are universal, as are the syntactic constituent units. On the other hand, the syntactic expression of these units and the way they are linked to the semantic representation is language-specific.

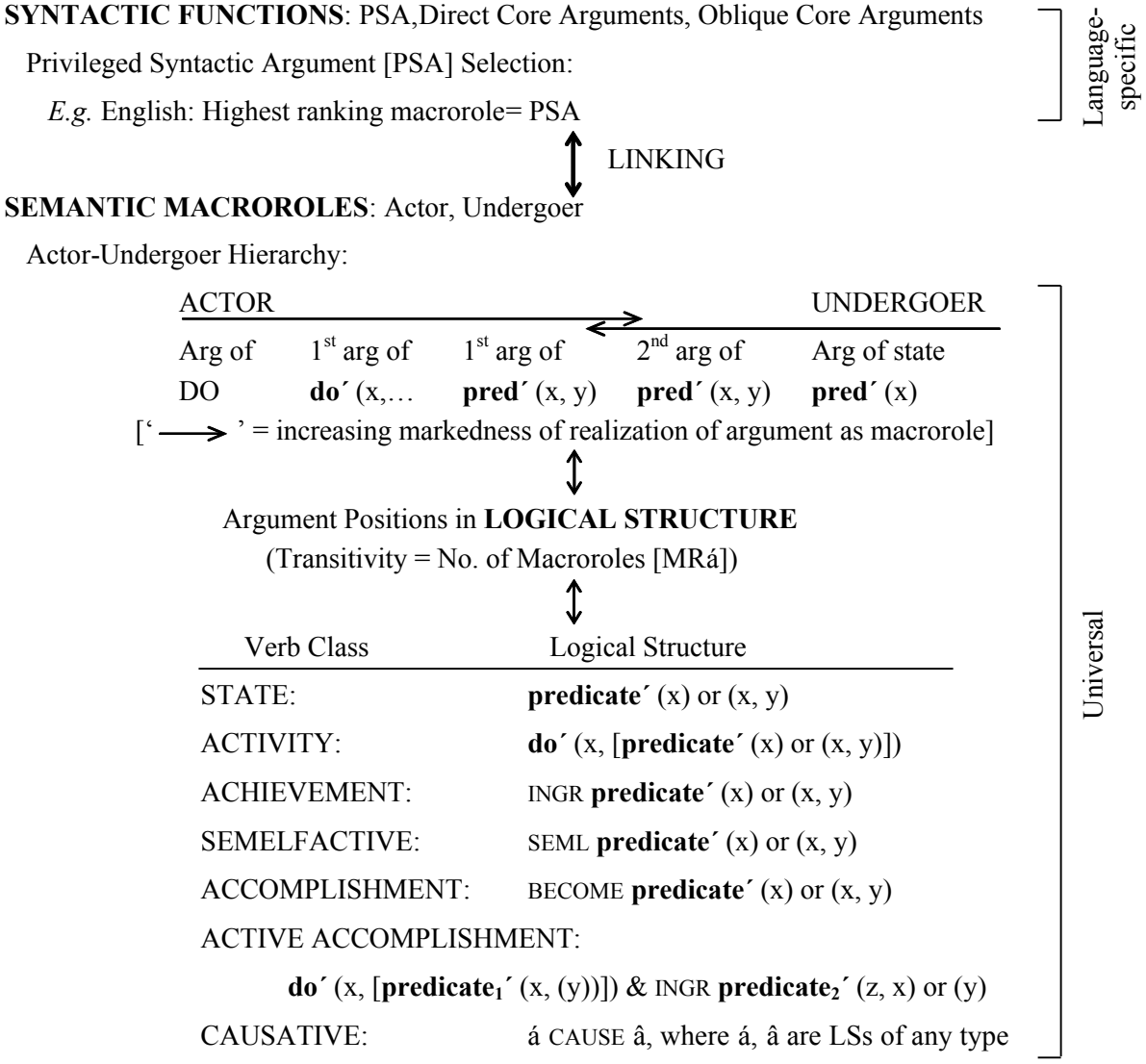

Figure 4.25 Role and Reference Grammar linking system (Van Valin forth.:118)

4.5.1 Constructional templates

General cross-linguistic and cross-constructional principles and rules for the form of the syntactic and semantic representations and their linking in each direction are given in terms of linking algorithms (see section 4.5.2) and the constraints that feed into them (particularly the Actor-Undergoer hierarchy (Figure 4.19), the PSA selection hierarchy (46), and the syntactic template selection principles (11)). Idiosyncratic, language-specific features of grammatical constructions are captured in constructional templates that display the relevant syntactic, morphological, semantic and pragmatic information. Table 4.3 gives the constructional template for English WH-questions.

CONSTRUCTION: English WH-question
SYNTAX: Template(s): Pre-core slot (see Figure 4.11), following syntactic template selection principles (11a), (11c.iii) PSA: None Linking: WH-XP to PrCS
MORPHOLOGY: Default
SEMANTICS: Contains an open proposition with a variable á, WH-XP = á
PRAGMATICS: Illocutionary force: Interrogative Focus structure: Narrow focus on PrCS

Table 4.3 Constructional template for English WH-questions (Van Valin forth.:123)

Constructional templates have an important function in the linking between the syntactic and semantic representations and serve to "guide the interpretive process" (Van Valin forth.:125).[24] The role of the constructional templates depends on the

[24] The proposal that grammatical structures are stored as constructional templates is also made by Construction Grammar (Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor 1988). Role and Reference Grammar differs from Construction Grammar in seeking to be psychological adequate (as explained above in section 4.0), a goal not adopted by Construction Grammar (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:13). Thus, in Role and Reference Grammar, the syntactic inventory of a language is

direction of the linking: "for the semantics-to-syntax linking they supply the language-specific and construction-specific details which are required for the correct encoding of meaning in the morphosyntax" (Van Valin forth.:124). On the other hand, "[in] the syntax-to-semantics linking…they specify what the privileged syntactic argument is in the construction, which is central to the linking" (forth.:124).

4.5.2 Linking algorithms

In both directions of the linking, Role and Reference Grammar provides an overriding 'Completeness Constraint' that stipulates that semantic and syntactic arguments should be mirrored and linked to each other, leaving none unaccounted for; this is given here as (56):

(56) Completeness Constraint (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:325)
All of the arguments explicitly specified in the semantic representation of a sentence must be realized syntactically in the sentence, and all of the referring expressions in the syntactic representation of a sentence must be linked to an argument position in a logical structure in the semantic representation of the sentence.

4.5.2.1 Linking from semantics to syntax

The general linking principles from semantics to syntax take the logical structure of the main predicate as the base and proceed through the steps given in (57) below to link up eventually with the syntactic representation of the sentence (LS = logical structure; a fuller explanation of the linking algorithms is presented in Van Valin forth.:125-138).[25]

(57) Linking algorithm: semantics → syntax (Van Valin forth.:247).
1. Construct the semantic representation of the sentence, based on the LS of the predicator.
2. Determine the actor and undergoer assignments, following the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy (Figure 4.19).

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separate from the lexicon since the bi-directional linking between the two reflects the psychological processes of production and comprehension.

[25] See also Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:623-4.

3. Determine the morphosyntactic coding of the arguments.
    a. Select the privileged syntactic argument (PSA), based on the PSA selection hierarchy (46); for accusative constructions, PSA is highest ranking direct core argument in terms of (46).
    b. Assign the XPs the appropriate case markers and/or adpositions.
    c. Assign the agreement marking to the main or auxiliary verb, as appropriate.
4. Select the syntactic template(s) for the sentence following the selection principles in (11).
5. Assign XPs to positions in the syntactic representation of the sentence.
    a. Assign the [-WH] XPs to the appropriate positions in the clause.
    b. If there is a [+WH] XP in the LS of a clause in the potential focus domain,
        i. assign it to the normal position of a non-WH-XP with the same function, or
        ii. assign it to the precore or postcore slot, or
        iii. assign it to a position within the potential focus domain of the clause (default = the unmarked focus position).
    c. A non-WH XP may be assigned to the precore or postcore slot, subject to focus structure restrictions (optional).
    d. Assign the XP(s) of LS(s) other than that of the predicator in the nucleus to
        i. the periphery (default), or
        ii. the precore or postcore slot, or
        iii. the left-detached position.

The diagram below in Figure 4.26 illustrates the semantics to syntax linking process for the sentence *Sandy presented the flowers to Chris at the party*, with the steps indicated by large numbers in bold. In step 1, the logical structure of the verb *present* is retrieved, plus that for the predicative preposition *at*. In addition, since the representation is of the speaker's "specific communicative intention" (Van Valin forth.:126), operators such as illocutionary force and tense are also represented at this stage (not shown in Figure 4.26). Using the logical structure and the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy, the macroroles are determined in step 2. Step 3 concerns syntactic aspects such as privileged syntactic argument selection and case/adposition assignment. Following the relevant selection principles (see (11)), step 4 leads to the selection of the syntactic template and the final step, step 5, links up the arguments in the semantics with those in the syntax (Van Valin forth.:126-128; NMR = non-macrorole argument).

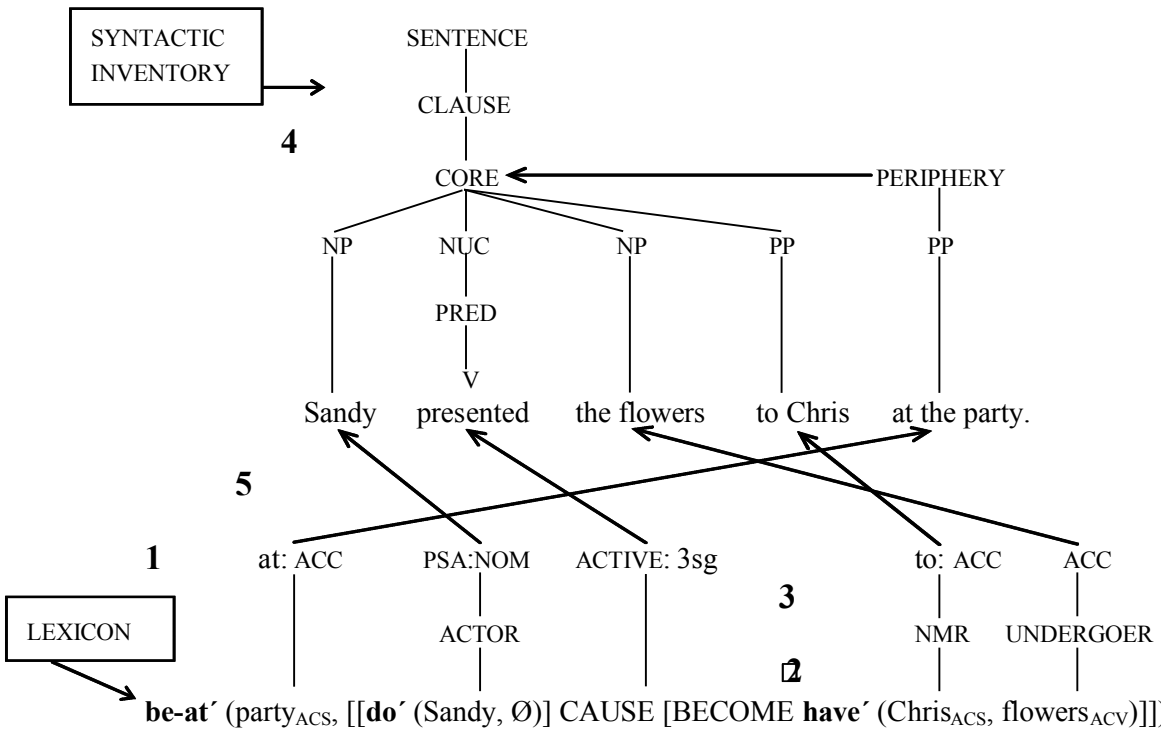

Figure 4.26 Illustration of linking from semantics to syntax (Van Valin forth.:130)

4.5.2.2 Linking from syntax to semantics

The syntax to semantics linking algorithms are more complex than those for the linking from semantics to syntax. This is partly because they involve the complex process of deducing semantics from the syntactic form of the sentence and partly because they seek to account for a wide range of cross-linguistic phenomena; a particular language and construction only makes use of the particular steps relevant to it. An abbreviated form of the linking algorithms, containing details pertinent to English, is given in (58). (See Van Valin forth.:139-146 for a fuller description and explanation.)

(58) Linking algorithm: syntax → semantics (Van Valin forth.:248-9)

1. Determine the macrorole(s) and other core argument(s) in the clause (depends partly on voice of verb).
   a. If the verb is intransitive, assign the PSA either macrorole or direct core argument status, depending upon the language (language-specific)
   b. If the language lacks voice oppositions, […] (language-specific).

c. If the language has voice oppositions, determine the voice of the transitive verb: (language-specific)
   i. If the construction is syntactically accusative,
      1. if it is the unmarked voice, the PSA is actor.
      2. if it is passive, the PSA is not the actor of the predicate in the nucleus;
         a. the actor may appear as a direct core argument (language-specific); or
         b. the actor may appear in the periphery marked by an adposition or an oblique case (language-specific); or
         c. if there is no actor in the core or the periphery, replace the variable representing the highest ranking argument in the LS with 'Ø'.
   ii. if the construction is syntactically ergative: […]
   iii. assign macrorole status to the other direct core argument, if it is not dative or in an oblique case (language-specific).

d. If the language is head-marking […] (language-specific).

2. Retrieve from the lexicon the LS of the predicate in the nucleus of the clause and with respect to it execute step (2) from (57) above, subject to the following provisos:
   a. If the language allows variable undergoer selection and if there is more than one choice for undergoer, do not assign undergoer to an argument in the LS.
   b. Determine the linking of the non-macrorole core argument.
      i. If there is a two-place state predicate in the LS and if the non-macrorole core argument is marked by a locative adposition or dative/locative-type case, link it with the first argument position in the state predicate LS and link the other non-actor core argument (if there is one) to the second argument position; or
      ii. if there is a two-place state predicate in the LS and if the non-macrorole core argument is not marked as dative/locative, link it with the second argument position in the state predicate and link the other non-actor core argument (if there is one) to the first position.
      iii. Otherwise, link the animate NP with the first argument position in the state predicate.
3. Link the arguments determined in step 1 with the arguments determined in step 2 until all core arguments are linked.
4. In non-subordinate core junctures, one of the arguments of the matrix core must be linked to an argument position in the embedded LS.
   a. If the matrix predicate is a control verb, this follows the Theory of Obligatory Control: 1. Causative and jussive verbs have undergoer control. 2. All other (M-) transitive verbs have actor control (Van Valin forth.:213).
   b. If the matrix predicate is not a control verb, link the unlinked syntactic argument in the matrix core to the LS argument position of the pivot of the linked core.
5. If there is a predicative adpositional adjunct, retrieve its LS from the lexicon, insert the LS of the main core as the second argument in the LS and the object of the adposition in the periphery as the first argument.

6. If there is an element in the pre- or post-core slot (language-specific), or a WH-word *in situ* (language-specific),
   a. assign it the remaining unlinked argument position in the LS of the sentence, provided that the LS to which it is linked is for a clause in the potential focus domain.
   b. if there are no unlinked argument positions in the sentence, treat the WH-word like a predicative preposition and follow the procedure in step 5, linking the WH-word to the first argument position in the LS.
      i. Treat the entire LS of the sentence as the second argument of the predicative preposition (default); or
      ii. If the embedded clause is within the potential focus domain, treat only the LS of the embedded clause as the second argument of the predicative preposition (optional).

The syntax to semantics linking algorithms are illustrated with the English sentence *Kim broke the glass* in Figure 4.27.

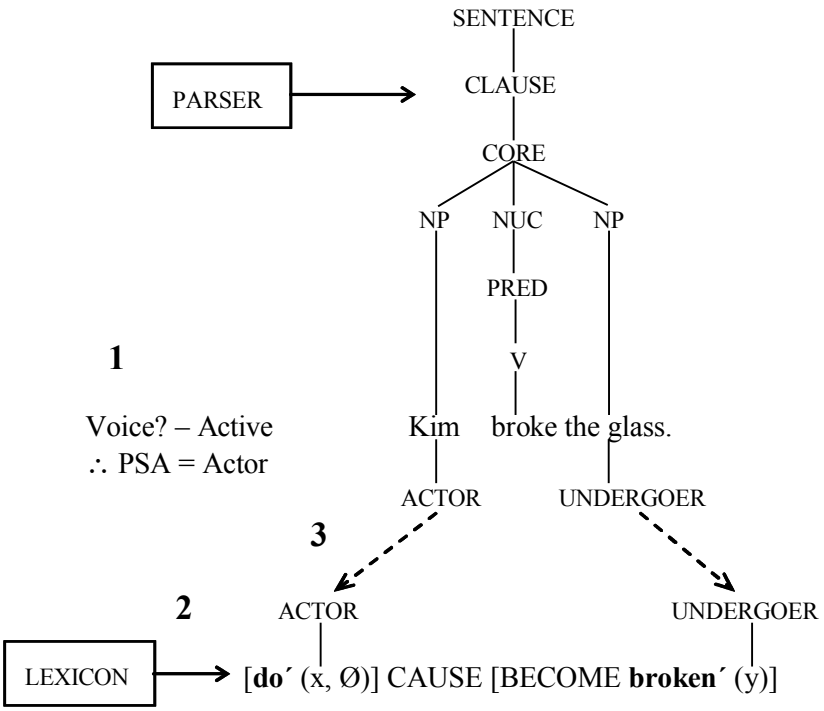

Figure 4.27 Illustration of linking from syntax to semantics (Van Valin forth.:141)

The first step is to identify the verb and its voice: the verb *broke* is identified as transitive and in active voice in step 1, and so the privileged syntactic argument is identified as the actor. The other noun phrase following the verb is a direct core (referring) argument, and is therefore the undergoer. For step 2, the logical structure of

break is retrieved from the lexicon, and assigned macroroles: 'x' is the actor and 'y' is the undergoer. Step 3 links the arguments in the syntactic representation with the logical structure arguments.

Certain constructions, such as relative clauses, have special conditions on their syntax to semantics linking. The conditions applying to relative clauses (and adapted for use with *it*-cleft constructions) will be introduced in chapter 6.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented an overview of Role and Reference Grammar theory. It has placed the theory in the context of other syntactic theories in general and other 'communication-and-cognition' theories in particular. Many elements of Role and Reference Grammar are crucial for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction presented in the following chapters. At a broad theoretical level, the emphasis Role and Reference Grammar places on communicative intent and the influence of information structure enables the study of the *it*-cleft construction to move beyond a purely syntactic structural analysis. The formal components of the theory, in particular the notion of syntactic nucleus, operators, and the semantic logical structures, form the basis for a clear and explanatory account of the various characteristics of the *it*-cleft construction.

These first four chapters have provided a background for the discussion and analysis in subsequent chapters. Syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features of the *it*-cleft construction have been described in chapter 2. From the review of the literature on *it*-clefts from various theoretical perspectives given in chapter 3, several unresolved issues emerged. Finally, the theoretical framework utilized for the analysis in this study has been described in detail in this chapter. The following chapters build on these first four chapters by investigating the issues presented by the *it*-cleft

construction in greater detail and proposing an account within a Role and Reference Grammar framework.

PART TWO: ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapters lay the theoretical and descriptive foundation for an integrated analysis of the *it*-cleft construction. The following chapters present a discussion and analysis of the issues raised in the previous sections. In them, I reanalyze those issues and draw out new insights and explanations in addition to proposing an analysis of the *it*-cleft construction from a Role and Reference Grammar theoretical perspective.

In chapter 5, I present a detailed, theory-neutral examination of various elements and patterns exhibited by the *it*-cleft construction and address the issues these raise. Firstly, there is a discussion of the main constituents of the *it*-cleft construction: the cleft pronoun, the clefted constituent and the cleft clause. This discussion clarifies their syntactic, semantic and pragmatic form and function. I also closely compare *it*-cleft and *there*-cleft constructions and propose reasons behind the differences and similarities between these constructions. The discussion of these constituents leads, secondly, to an examination of the cleft construction as a whole in terms of its copular nature and its patterning with relative clauses. I demonstrate that the *it*-cleft construction involves the interaction of both of these features in its interpretation, and consequently that both aspects of the *it*-cleft must be featured in an analysis of the construction.

In chapter 6, I propose an analysis of the *it*-cleft construction using Role and Reference Grammar analysis, a framework that provides for the interaction between syntax, semantics and pragmatics central to the interpretation of the *it*-cleft construction. I present a representation for the *it*-cleft construction in a Role and Reference Grammar framework that reflects its key features, and enables an explanatory comparison with pseudoclefts, *there*-clefts, and relative clause constructions in particular.

Finally, chapter 7 contains comments on the *it*-cleft construction from a typological perspective. I examine the implications of cross-linguistic study of the *it*-cleft construction in terms of its functional and formal characteristics. I also illustrate the advantages of cross-linguistic comparison in highlighting universal aspects of the *it*-cleft construction that are iconically motivated, on the one hand, and features that are language-specific on the other. Chapter 8 summarizes the conclusions of the analysis.

5. DETAILED EXAMINATION OF THE *IT*-CLEFT CONSTRUCTION

Chapters 2 and 3 presented key features of the *it*-cleft construction and the issues they raise for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction. This chapter and chapter 6 aim to address those issues. This chapter contains a detailed discussion of the components of the construction and the way they interact. Following this theory-neutral examination, chapter 6 highlights advantages of framing the analysis within a Role and Reference Grammar framework.

5.1 Elements of the *it*-cleft construction

This section examines each constituent of the *it*-cleft construction – cleft pronoun, cleft clause, and clefted constituent – and examines their role in the interpretation of the construction as a whole.

5.1.1 Cleft pronoun

The cleft pronoun of an *it*-cleft construction is generally considered to be a syntactic argument within the matrix clause and most accounts assume that it is not a semantically referring expression.[1] This assumption needs some justification, particularly in the light of studies that attribute referring qualities or a determiner function to the cleft pronoun in the *it*-cleft construction. Two such studies are Hedberg (2000) and Davidse (2000), which are described in detail in section 3.1.3. Davidse (2000) compares *it*-cleft constructions to *there*-clefts and *have*-clefts such as (1a) and (1b) and suggests that the cleft pronoun quantifies the clefted constituent (as outlined in section 3.1.3). Hedberg (2000), on the other hand, compares *it*-cleft constructions with *this*-clefts and *that*-clefts such as (2a) and (2b) and seeks to show the link between the cleft pronoun as a type of determiner and the cognitive status of the description in the cleft clause.

[1] In the sense that it does not denote or describe a referent (see section 1.4).

(1) a. There's John who's causing us trouble.
b. We have John who's causing us trouble. (Both from Davidse 2000:1101)
(2) a. This was John that I saw.
b. That was John that I saw. (Both from Hedberg 2000:892)

In this section, I extend the comparison of *it*- and *there*-cleft constructions, highlighting the fact that the choice of pronoun in otherwise syntactically identical constructions reflects differences in meaning between them. I also develop the connection between the form of the pronoun and the cognitive status of the presupposition. These factors show that it is simplistic to characterize the cleft pronoun as a 'dummy', expletive element.

5.1.1.1 A 'quantificational' role for the cleft pronoun

This section focuses on the comparison of *it*-cleft and *there*-cleft constructions in order to assess Davidse's (2000) quantificational role for the cleft pronoun. There is clearly a structural resemblance between the *it*-cleft and the *there*-cleft: both contain a copular matrix clause with an initial pronoun and a post-copular element, and the latter is coindexed with an element in the cleft clause. However, there can be differences in intonation patterns. These differences reflect the fact that the 'list' of possibilities given by the clefted constituent in a *there*-cleft can be either complete or incomplete, just as in other *there*-sentences. Rando and Napoli (1978) give two examples of what they term 'list' *there*-sentences that illustrate the two possible interpretations. (The acute and grave accents indicate rising and falling intonation respectively.)

(3) a. A: I don't have any friends.
b. B: Oh, don't be silly. There's Jóhn and mé and Súsan and Péggy. (Rando and Napoli 1978:308)
(4) a. A: What's worth visiting here?
b. B: There's the párk, a very nice réstaurant, and the lìbrary. That's all as far as I'm concerned. (Rando and Napoli 1978:300-1)

The rising intonation at the end of the *there*-sentence in (3b) creates the implication that 'A' may have other friends in addition to those that 'B' lists. The falling intonation in (4b), on the other hand, creates the implication that the list is complete. Davidse illustrates these interpretations for the *there*-cleft construction specifically (see (5), Davidse 2000:1121). She argues that the default interpretation is that the list is incomplete (as in (5b)) but that a complete reading is also possible (as in (5a)). However, the two readings are not available for the *it*-cleft construction; the only interpretation available is that the 'list' is complete (as (6a) and (b) illustrate).

(5) a. There's Júles and Jìm that got away with it. COMPLETE
b. There's Júles and Jím that got away with it. INCOMPLETE

(6) a. It's Davíd and Bòb that like football. COMPLETE
b. *It's Davíd and Bób that like football. INCOMPLETE

As Davidse's own examples suggest, the incomplete interpretation of *there*-clefts seems to be the default interpretation; in other words, there is no inherent implication of exhaustiveness. To promote or disambiguate a 'complete' reading, the use of *only* is common, as shown in (7a). This contrasts with *it*-cleft constructions, which do have an implication of exhaustiveness (discussed above in section 2.2.4); with the use of *only* (as in (7b)), the exhaustiveness becomes not only implied but also asserted (DeClerck 1988:36).

(7) a. Put something up? – There's only the council can do that. (Davidse 2000:1126)
b. It's only the council that can do that.

The use of *only* in *there*-clefts is thus different from its use in *it*-clefts, and this is due to the meaning and presuppositions associated with the two constructions. The *it*-cleft construction is specificational, providing the value for a presupposed variable. The *there*-cleft construction, on the other hand, is existential (or presentational), it "present[s] or introduc[es] a referent into the "place" or "scene" of the

discourse…rather than…asserting its mere existence" (Lambrecht 1994:179, 2001:508). In other words, the *there*-cleft construction asserts the existence (or non-existence) in the discourse of some referent(s) as corresponding to the description in the subordinate cleft clause. In contrast, the *it*-cleft takes the existence of a referent as described in the subordinate cleft clause as presupposed; its assertive function is to specify exhaustively the identity of that referent. The examples in (8) and (9) below further illustrate this difference: both the *it*-cleft and the *there*-cleft share the presupposition that someone (or 'x') was seen, though their assertions differ.[2] The respective assertions of the constructions can also be expressed with the use of the logical operators ∀ (universal quantifier), and ∃ (existential quantifier).

(8) a. It was John that I saw. 'SPECIFICATIONAL' *IT*-CLEFT
b. Presupposition: I saw x.
c. Assertion: x = John. ∀x (x = John)

(9) a. There was John that I saw. 'EXISTENTIAL' *THERE*-CLEFT
b. Presupposition: I saw x.
c. Assertion: an example of x is John. ∃x (x = John)

Thus, in (8) the assertion is that for all 'x', 'x' equals 'John'; in other words, John is specified as 'all and only' the referent(s) corresponding to 'x'. In the *there*-cleft construction in (9), on the other hand, the assertion is that there exists an 'x' that has the value 'John'.

The fact that the *there*-cleft construction asserts the referent of the clefted constituent as corresponding to the 'x' variable, rather than merely asserting the existence of the clefted constituent, is reflected by the fact that proper names can appear as the clefted constituent in *there*-cleft constructions.[3] For proper names to be used

[2] I examine the referential status of this 'someone' in section 5.1.3.
[3] The acceptability of proper nouns in this position suggests a difference between *there*-clefts and indefinite noun phrases with restrictive relative clauses (analogous to the difference between *it*-clefts and definite noun phrases with restrictive relative clauses). The modifying

felicitously, the existence of their referent must be presupposed and already known to the hearer; as Langacker notes, "mention of the name itself is presumed capable of establishing mental contact with the unique instance of the type" (1991:102; see also Lambrecht 1994:179, 2001:508). The examples in (10) illustrate proper names as clefted constituent in *there*-clefts.

(10) a. There's John who likes football.
b. *Is there John who likes football?

The *there*-cleft construction in (10a) does not assert the 'existence' of 'John' since (through the use of a proper noun) this referent is presented as already 'existing' or identifiable. Rather, it asserts his existence as corresponding to the description in the cleft clause (that is, as someone who likes football). This function of the *there*-cleft is made clear by the ungrammaticality of (10b). This sentence questions the existence of 'John' as someone who likes football, but this contradicts the presupposition (created by the use of a proper noun) that the referent exists.

In both the *there*-cleft and the *it*-cleft construction, the choice of cleft pronoun has been shown to reflect a difference between the meaning of the constructions, their presuppositions, and the respective relationships between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause. While the structural relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause arguably remains the same in both constructions, the nature of the cleft pronoun reflects the basic semantic/pragmatic function of the sentence as existential or specificational.[4]

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function of the relative clause means that *Lucy* is interpreted as one among other 'Lucys' in (i). In the *there*-cleft, on the other hand, there is no implication of other 'Lucys', only of the possibility of other individuals that the speaker likes. Section 5.2.2 further compares relative clauses and cleft constructions.

(i) a 'Lucy' that I like INDEFINITE NP WITH RESTRICTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSE
(ii) There's Lucy that I like *THERE*-CLEFT

[4] Section 5.2.2 characterizes the precise nature of this relationship as different from that in both non-restrictive and restrictive relative clauses.

These observations show that the form of the cleft pronoun has an impact on the meaning of the sentence as a whole, rather than merely operating on, or modifying the clefted constituent as Davidse suggests (2000:1125). Further evidence of this comes from the correlation between the form of the cleft pronoun (as *there* or *it*) and the relative cognitive status of the clefted constituent and the cleft clause: the *there*-cleft construction, as a presentational construction, "serve[s] to introduce not-yet activated referents into a discourse" (Lambrecht 1994:143). In contrast, the function of the *it*-cleft construction is not to introduce a referent, but only to identify it as the value for a variable. A referent with an inactive cognitive status appearing as clefted constituent would motivate the use of a *there*-cleft construction rather than an *it*-cleft.[5]

In this section, significant comparisons between the *it*-cleft and *there*-cleft construction have indicated that the choice of pronoun in an otherwise structurally identical construction can indicate a fundamental difference in the meaning and function of the sentence, showing the cleft pronoun to be more than a 'dummy' element.

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[5] Examples in the literature suggest that the listing interpretation (as an incomplete or complete list) correlates with the cognitive status of the cleft clause and the clefted constituent, as illustrated in (i). The referent of the proper noun *Jim* should be identifiable to the hearer. If the presupposition that someone makes the coffee is not cognitively active, the interpretation will be that while Jim makes the coffee, someone else makes the tea, for example (see (a)). If, on the other hand, the presupposition is active, the interpretation may be that Jim is one among others who makes the coffee (as in (b).

(i) There's Jim who makes the coffee. (Davidse 2000:1120)
  a. …and there's Nora who makes the tea.
  b. …and there's Janet who makes the coffee (too).

In contrast, in a *there*-cleft such as (ii), with an indefinite noun phrase as clefted constituent, there is no real listing interpretation available: the (indefinite) clefted constituent is being introduced into the discourse, as corresponding to the description of someone who kept interrupting.

(ii) There was one man who kept interrupting. (Huddleston 1984:469)
  a. …and there was another man who listened attentively the whole way through.
  b. …?and there was another man who kept interrupting (too).

Huddleston notes that definite noun phrases tend only to occur in "be + locative" *there*-sentences when listing or answering questions (1984:467), that is, when the variable element is active (see (iii)).

(iii) What's on at the cinema this week? – Well, there's *My Fair Lady* at the Odeon. (Huddleston 1984:467)

5.1.1.2 The cleft pronoun as a 'definite determiner'

The comparison between *it*-cleft and *there*-cleft constructions above demonstrates that, as Davidse (2000:1121) suggests, a parallel exists between these constructions and noun phrases: the *there*-cleft is similar to indefinite noun phrases while the *it*-cleft is analogous to definite noun phrases. Cleft constructions with *it* as cleft pronoun presuppose the existence of a "uniquely identifiable" (Gundel *et al*. 1993:275) entity corresponding to the description (generally) given in the cleft clause, just as the use of the definite determiner *the* in a noun phrase presupposes the existence of the identifiable referent it operates on (as discussed above in section 1.4).[6]

In parallel to this comparison, the use of *there* as cleft pronoun asserts the existence in the discourse of an entity corresponding to the description in the cleft clause, just as the use of indefinite determiner *a(n)* correlates with unidentifiable referents newly introduced into the discourse. Lyons states that the essentially quantificational difference between indefinite and definite noun phrases is connected to the relationship between the functions of denotation and description: "definites and indefinites [both] describe, and denote [either] whatever meets the description (definite) or something which meets the description (indefinite)" (1999:166). In the analogous case of *it*- and *there*-clefts, these two functions of denotation and description are carried out by the clefted constituent and (generally speaking) the cleft clause respectively. In other words, the cleft clause in these constructions describes, and the clefted constituent denotes either whatever meets the description (*it*-clefts) or something that meets the description (*there*-clefts).

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[6] More precisely, it carries the sense that "the speaker assumes that [the referent] has a certain representation in the mind of the addressee which can be evoked in a given discourse" (Lambrecht 1994:78), or one that the hearer will be willing to take for granted.

One characteristic that the *it*-cleft construction shares with definite noun phrases is an exhaustive or inclusive sense. In a specificational *it*-cleft, the clefted constituent value specifies all and only the referent(s) corresponding to the variable. Huddleston observes an analogous exhaustiveness condition in definite noun phrases: "the selection of *the* indicates that [the] description [provided by the head noun] is presented as one which is sufficient to define the referent, to distinguish it from everything else" (1984:249). DeClerck also states, "definite NPs implicate 'inclusiveness' (*i.e.* the idea that all the items in the set satisfying the referring description are being referred to" (1988:20). As noted above, in cleft sentences the 'items in the set' and the 'referring description' are expressed as separate yet coreferential referring expressions, the clefted constituent and the cleft clause respectively.

In contrast to definite descriptions, DeClerck describes indefinite noun phrases as suggesting, "the idea that there are other entities satisfying the referring description besides the one actually referred to" (1988:21 fn). As indicated above, this 'incomplete' interpretation is also the default reading of presentational or existential *there*-cleft constructions.

Hedberg (2000) takes this similarity in patterning between *it*-cleft constructions and definite noun phrases as indicating a direct correlation between the two constructions. Section 5.1.3 below discusses the issue of the referential status of the cleft clause. What is at issue here is a possible determiner role for the cleft pronoun, in conjunction with the description in the cleft clause. As already described, Hedberg extends the comparison of *it* and *the* to include cleft sentences that have *this* or *that* as cleft pronoun. Hedberg's examples suggest that there is a relationship between the use of *this* and *that* as cleft pronoun on the one hand and the cognitive status of the presupposed part of the sentence on the other, in as much as the cleft pronoun can have

a discourse-deictic function. For example, a *this*-cleft may "signal a topic shift" and a *that*-cleft may "signal the closing of a discourse segment by reflecting back" (Hedberg 2000:900). The example in (11) illustrates a *that*-cleft.

(11) I mean, that was the platoon sergeant that said that. I call that a pretty good guy. (Hedberg 2000:900)

However, it is not clear that the relationship between these information units corresponds to one between the structural units of cleft pronoun and cleft clause and leads necessarily to the assertion that they function as a "discontinuous referring description" semantic constituent (Hedberg 2000:898). As noted above (in section 3.1.3), there are difficulties in drawing close analogies between the description in a cleft clause and that in a referring noun phrase. This is particularly the case when elements of the clefted constituent as well as the cleft clause are included in the presupposed description, as in (12).

(12) It was Angela and CARLOS who got married.
Presupposition: Angela and someone else got married.

Nevertheless, Hedberg's (2000) focus on the cleft pronoun demonstrates once again that its function is as more than a 'dummy' syntactic place-filler. What differentiates cleft constructions (with noun phrases as clefted constituents) from definite noun phrases is that in cleft constructions the clefted constituent has the function of denoting the value for a descriptive, identifiable variable. In noun phrases, on the other hand, the head noun serves to both denote and describe the referent.[7] Because this dual function is split between two constituents in cleft constructions, the 'determiner-type' role of the cleft pronoun is to quantify or operate on the whole of the rest of the construction, rather than only the cleft clause or clefted constituent.

[7] Noun phrases containing relative clauses are an exception to this generalization. I compare them to cleft constructions in section 5.2.2.

The discussion in this section has focused on the role of the cleft pronoun in the cleft sentence, making use of observations made by Davidse (2000) and Hedberg (2000). I have demonstrated that comparisons between *it*-clefts and *there*-clefts on the one hand, and between *it*-, *this*- and *that*-clefts on the other, can be combined as aspects of the same patterning. The *there*-cleft can be interpreted as correlating to a degree with the function and interpretation of indefinite noun phrases and the *it*-cleft with definite noun phrases. The form of the pronoun in a particular cleft construction is a reflection of the presuppositions associated with the cleft construction as a whole. In a related manner, *this*- and *that*-clefts, which have the same types of presuppositions as *it*-cleft constructions, exploit the cleft pronoun position to indicate the cognitive status of the presupposed information in the sentence. This account avoids structurally aligning the cleft pronoun with either the clefted constituent or the cleft clause constituents, which do not correlate precisely with the focus and presupposition of the construction. Cleft constructions highlight a relationship rather than a particular syntactic constituent. It is the nature of this relationship that is reflected by the use of *it* or *there* as cleft pronoun.

Comparisons of cleft sentences containing different cleft pronouns are important in clarifying the difference in meaning and function between the otherwise structurally similar cleft constructions. In particular, accounts that give a 'dummy', or merely pragmatic focus-marking function, to the cleft pronoun lack an account for the distinctions in meaning and pragmatic function between the *it*-, *this*-, *that*-, and *there*-clefts.

Kiss (1998), for example, proposes a derivational analysis of the *it*-cleft construction whereby its focus properties fall out from its formal structure. She distinguishes identificational focus (expressing exhaustive identification and occupying the specifier of a functional projection) from information focus (conveying new

information and involving no syntactic reordering; 1998:246). She then claims (as described above in section 3.1.2), "the cleft[ed] constituent is the *realization* of identificational focus in English" (1998:245, emphasis added). The clefted constituent is in the specifier position of a "functional projection called focus phrase", which must represent identificational focus (1998:255) (see Figure 3.3, section 3.1.2). However, it is clear that while 'identificational focus' can be expressed through the use of a *it*-cleft construction, the cleft construction with *there* as cleft pronoun does not have identificational focus, and therefore contradicts its position as the specifier of an (identificational) focus phrase. Kiss' (1998) structure thus only applies to one sub-type of cleft construction.

The cleft pronoun is a 'dummy' argument only in the sense that it is a syntactic argument but not a referring semantic argument. The cleft pronouns *it* and *there* nonetheless correspond to specificational and existential constructions respectively and an analysis of these constructions should include the participation of the cleft pronoun in marking the basic semantic/pragmatic function of the construction.

This discussion of the role of the cleft pronoun has illustrated one way in which the interaction of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic factors must be taken into consideration in an analysis of the *it*-cleft construction. In the Role and Reference Grammar analysis in chapter 6, the syntactic and semantic representations of the cleft construction and the constructional template for both the specificational and existential cleft construction incorporate and specify these features of the cleft pronoun.

5.1.2 Clefted constituent

The second constituent of the *it*-cleft construction I discuss here is the clefted constituent. This section focuses primarily on noun phrases as clefted constituents.[8]

[8] I discuss the question of other clausal constituents as clefted constituent below in this section.

Along with the cleft clause and cleft pronoun, the clefted constituent has different interpretations and analyses in the literature. This variation exists because the clefted constituent functions simultaneously as a semantic argument (if a noun phrase) and, arguably, as some type of predicate. In formal terms, it participates in the structure of the matrix clause while also being coindexed with a variable in the cleft clause, as diagrammed in (13).

(13) [It was Kurt $_i$] that $\_\__i$ won the competition.
MATRIX CLAUSE

5.1.2.1 Referential status of clefted constituent

When the clefted constituent is a definite noun phrase (coding an identifiable referent), it is usually used referentially.[9] In other words, as in the definition of referentiality in section 1.4, the clefted constituent refers to an entity that the hearer can identify through hearing the expression. An implication of this referential identifiability is inclusiveness. In other words, the referent that is described is the only one that corresponds to the description in the cleft clause. These features correlate with the role of the clefted constituent as the value in a specificational sentence: the function of the *it*-cleft construction is to enable the hearer to pick out a particular entity in the world. While the referent of the clefted constituent may not be highly cognitively active, I would argue that it is always identifiable to some degree (rather than 'brand new'), and specific, because of its role as value for the coindexed, identifiable variable.

The inherent specificity associated with the clefted constituent of the *it*-cleft construction is reflected in the interpretation of indefinite noun phrases as clefted constituent. As shown above in the discussion of specificity, indefinite noun phrases can be used in a specific, referential sense (see (14a)), a specific non-referential sense (see

[9] There are exceptions to this, as noted below. The speaker may not be able to make a full identification of the referent although they nonetheless always add information through the description given in the clefted constituent. See example (18) below, for example.

(14b)), or a non-specific, non-referential (attributive) sense (as in (14c)) (among others, see Table 1.1, section 1.4).

(14) a. A dog is eating your shoe. SPECIFIC REFERENTIAL
b. A friend of mine gave me this hat. SPECIFIC NON-REFERENTIAL
c. A computer expert will fix it. (…but I don't know which one)
NON-SPECIFIC, NON-REFERENTIAL ('ATTRIBUTIVE')

When indefinite noun phrases appear as the clefted constituent in an *it*-cleft construction they are interpreted as specific but not as referential. Thus, in (15a), for example, the noun phrase *a dog* cannot have the interpretation 'a specific dog that the hearer can identify as a result of hearing the sentence', which is the interpretation it has in (14a).

(15) a. It is a dog that is eating your shoe. (…not a cat)
b. A DOG is eating your shoe. (…not a cat)

Instead, what is being highlighted is the fact that it was "something [specific] that meets the description" (Bennett 2002:169) 'dog' and not some other description that is eating the hearer's shoe. The same restriction occurs if the specificational function is marked through intonation (as in (15b)); this patterning suggests that the constraint on interpretation results from the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction.

The specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction entails that the focused clefted constituent makes the entity described by the cleft clause 'referential' for the hearer by uniquely specifying its identity. In other words, it presupposes a specific, identifiable entity and completes the referring process for that entity so that the hearer can make a full(er) identification, can 'pick it out' (at least to the degree that the speaker can). The clefted constituent in an *it*-cleft construction is 'already' identifiable to an extent (and therefore specific) through coindexation with the identifiable discourse referent expressed by the variable.

The use of an referential indefinite noun phrase, on the other hand, prompts the speaker to construct a 'new' representation of a previously unidentifiable entity, or referent, as one possible denotation for the coindexed variable, rather than directing him/her to add the information to an existing representation. Thus, the referential use of indefinite noun phrases conflicts with the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction. In other words, if the clefted constituent is an indefinite noun phrase, it cannot be interpreted in its referential sense as assisting the hearer to create a new representation of a particular entity, but can only be interpreted as giving descriptive information about an identifiable entity.

As clefted constituents, therefore, indefinite noun phrases present one property of the 'value', rather than its identity, to the hearer. As a result, they are often perceived as "fail[ing] to provide really identifying information…[as] 'reticent' or 'evasive'… reflecting that the speaker does not really have the full identifying information himself, or that he does not wish to reveal all of it" (DeClerck 1988:11). It may also be that the speaker feels that the full identification of the referent is not necessary at that point, as could be the case in (16).

(16) It was a friend of mine that gave that to me.

The claim made above that the clefted constituent in an *it*-cleft construction is always identifiable contradicts the commonly held assumption that the clefted constituent is 'new'. In terms of its role in the information structure of the cleft construction as a whole, the clefted constituent is within the focus domain. It is always 'new' in the sense that the identification of the clefted constituent referent as corresponding to the usually 'old' presupposed variable in the cleft clause is "unpredictable or unrecoverable from the context" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:202). However, the referent of the clefted constituent is not usually 'new' in the sense of

being cognitively inactive or inaccessible. Firstly, as discussed above, narrow focus on an unidentifiable referent is a marked choice because it conflicts with the (specificational) purpose of narrow focus constructions, which is to provide information that aids the unique identification of a referent to the exclusion of others. In addition, in a general sense, a referent with an unidentifiable cognitive state (in the discourse context) is generally a marked choice for focus, as it requires more processing effort (as discussed above in section 4.4). The hearer would have to both form a representation of a referent matching the description, and process its role within the assertion of the utterance.

I have argued that the clefted constituent referent is identifiable due to its relationship with the variable. The variable, as described largely by the cleft clause, is generally presupposed to be identifiable, to some degree, to the hearer (although they cannot make a full identification). On the other hand, the degree of identifiability of the clefted constituent referent is, to some degree, independent of the identifiability or cognitive status of the variable in the cleft clause (see the examples below in (17)). In other words, the cognitive status of the variable is not determined by the cognitive status of the clefted constituent value and vice versa.[10] I would suggest that this is because the cleft clause and the clefted constituent are separate, though coreferential, semantically referring arguments. (I examine the status of the cleft clause as a referring expression in section 5.1.3.2.)

In the *it*-cleft construction in (17a), for example, the referent of the clefted constituent pronoun *they* is active, having been given in the immediately preceding sentence, while the content of the cleft clause (and the variable it describes) is new to

[10] This distinguishes *it*-clefts from restrictive relative clauses where the head noun and relative clause together form one referring expression. I discuss this comparison further in section 5.2.2 below.

the discourse.[11] In (17b), on the other hand, the referent 'Bob Monkhouse' is inactive at the time of utterance while the variable description is active.

(17) a. (The leaders of the militant homophile movement in America generally have been young people.) It was they who fought back during a violent police raid on a Greenwich Village bar in 1969. (Cited in Prince 1978:898)

b. R: People laughed when I told them I was going to be a comedian. They're not laughing now. I made that joke up, you know.
S: No, you didn't; it was Bob Monkhouse that wrote that joke.

These examples illustrate that in both cases, and in *it*-cleft constructions in general, it is the establishment of coreference between the two semantic arguments that is asserted or 'new' in an *it*-cleft construction. The participation of the clefted constituent value and the variable in different pragmatic functions within the construction is possible because each is an independent referring expression.

It is worth noting that the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction does not always lead to a referential interpretation of the clefted constituent (as the term is defined in section 1.4); the hearer may not make a full identification. However, it is always the case that the clefted constituent adds identificational information. Thus DeClerck (1988) notes that a speaker may use a definite noun phrase as a clefted constituent with a non-referential interpretation (that is, without conveying the precise referent) as long as this description adds information to that in the variable. In (18), for example, the speaker may not be in a position to make a full identification of the referent in the sense of being able to 'pick out' an individual. S/he nonetheless provides a value for a variable.

(18) It's the man that robbed the bank that the police are looking for.

[11] Prince suggests the content of the cleft clause in these 'informative presupposition' *it*-clefts is in fact presented as "a known fact, unknown only to the readership" (Prince 1978:898).

This discussion has shown that it is important to distinguish the cognitive status of the clefted constituent referent from its role as the focused element in the sentence. In addition, the presentation of the specificational cleft construction, a bi-clausal structure containing a variable corresponding to a value, reflects the independent status of the clefted constituent value and of the variable as referring expressions, both in terms of the syntactic and semantic representations.

In this context, it is illuminating to re-examine the differences and similarities between the *it*-cleft and the *there*-cleft construction, particularly in terms of the interpretation of the clefted constituent. Both types of cleft construction contain two coindexed semantic arguments represented by two clauses. The difference in semantic/pragmatic function between the two constructions leads to different interpretations and constraints on the clefted constituent.

As in an *it*-cleft construction, the cleft clause in a *there*-cleft describes a variable and this variable is coindexed with the clefted constituent. In contrast to *it*-cleft constructions, however, the clefted constituent in the existential or presentational *there*-cleft construction can present either an unidentifiable referent or an identifiable referent (such as a proper name) as the focused value. *There*-cleft constructions give the clefted constituent as one possible value corresponding to the variable and its description, rather than as 'completing' the unique (inclusive) identification of the variable. Therefore, *there*-clefts can have an indefinite noun phrase as clefted constituent without it necessarily being interpreted as non-referential, unlike in the *it*-cleft construction (see above). The examples in (19) illustrate this contrast.

(19) a. It's a man who teaches my yoga class.(…*e.g.* not a (person with the property of being) a woman).[12] *IT*-CLEFT

b. (All kinds of new people have signed up for my yoga class…)
There's a tall man who constantly falls over. (…*e.g.* and an (specific) old lady who is surprisingly agile). *THERE*-CLEFT

The use of *a man* in (19a) implies either that the speaker is holding additional information back, or that they are wishing to highlight the gender of the referent, since it can only be interpreted non-referentially. (Since *it*-clefts have an inclusive sense a sentence such as *It's a tall man who comes* could imply that there is only one person in the yoga class in addition to the speaker.) In the *there*-cleft in (19b), on the other hand, the indefinite noun phrase can be interpreted referentially (and specifically) as one value (potentially among others)[13] for the variable 'x who constantly falls over'.

This comparison between the interpretation of clefted constituents in *it*-cleft and *there*-cleft constructions serves to reiterate that while it is important to separate the cognitive status of the clefted constituent from its role in the wider cleft construction, the function of that cleft construction can affect its interpretation.

A further difference between the clefted constituents of *there*-cleft and *it*-cleft constructions is the possibility for negative pronouns (such as *nothing* and *no one*) to appear in *there*-cleft constructions, as illustrated in (20).

(20) a. There's nothing that's that shape. *THERE*-CLEFT

b. There's no one who interrupts.

(21) a. *It's nothing that's that shape. *IT*-CLEFT

b. *It's no one who interrupts.

[12] Although these indefinite noun phrases as clefted constituents highlight a 'property' they are different from the use of nouns as nominal predicates since in this case the indefinite noun phrase is a referring expression.

[13] As noted above in footnote 5, this 'incomplete listing' interpretation is more likely with definite noun phrases as clefted constituent in a *there*-cleft.

As noted in section 2.2.1.2, the *it*-cleft (see (21)) does not allow negative pronouns as clefted constituent. As explained above, this is because the function of the *it*-cleft construction is to 'complete' the identity of a presupposed variable; a negative pronoun as the asserted element of the sentence is prohibited as it negates the existence of the variable.

The sentences in (20), on the other hand, simply assert that no entity in the world of discourse exists that corresponds to the given description. In other words, the function of the *there*-cleft construction is to "enumerate instances…of a contextually given type, such as 'things that [are that shape]'" (Davidse 2000:1121); in the case of the examples in (20), there are no instances. The negative pronoun (as the clefted constituent in *there*-clefts) has no presupposition of existence attached to it, while the variable with which it is coindexed is presupposed. Thus, the fact that negative pronouns can occur as clefted constituents in *there*-cleft constructions reinforces the proposal that *it*- and *there*-clefts contain two independent yet coindexed expressions.

I mentioned above that not all clefted constituents are noun phrases. The sentences in (22) illustrate other types of clefted constituents (marked by square brackets).

(22) a. It was [with George]$_{PP}$ that she eloped. (Gundel 1977:548)
b. It was [under the bed]$_{PP}$ that we found the key. (Gundel 1977:551)
c. It was [yesterday]$_{ADV}$ that Holly left town.
d. It's [drunk]$_{ADJ}$ that John sounds intelligent. (Heggie 1993:45)
e. It's [blue]$_{ADJ}$ that they painted the house. (Heggie 1993:55)
f. It was [Fred's losing the race]$_{CORE}$ that Mary regretted.
(Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:462)
g. It's [that Jennifer loves Ben]$_{CLAUSE}$ that the press can't believe.

The clefted constituent in (22a) is an argument-marking prepositional phrase, in (b) it is a predicative prepositional phrase, and in (22c) a predicative adverb. In (22d) and (e),

the clefted constituent is a predicate. In (22f), it is a 'core': the verb *lose* and its arguments form a unit that serves as a semantic argument of the verb *regret*. In (22g), a *that*-clause (a semantic argument of *believe*) is the clefted constituent.

In (22a)-(g), the clefted constituent is still carrying out the function of specifying the value for a variable; the specificational function is thus not restricted to noun phrases. This function is illustrated for sentence (22f) in (23) below.

(23) a. It was [Fred's losing the race] that Mary regretted.
b. Presupposition: Mary regretted x.
c. Assertion: x = 'Fred's losing the race'.
d. Value: '(was/is) Fred's losing the race'.

Thus, as noted by Davidse, there is a sense in which these clefted constituents are "rank-shifted into the nominal complement slot [and they] discharge basic NP functions such as 'identification'" (Davidse 2000:1116). In Role and Reference Grammar theory, all the clefted constituents, whatever their internal form, form the nucleus node of matrix clause since they function, I argue, as a type of 'pragmatic predicate'.[14]

Another type of cleft construction attested cross-linguistically (Delahunty 2001) is exemplified by (24), where the focus is a *that*-clause. These are termed 'inferential clefts' by Delahunty; he defines them as "metalinguistic devices for instructing the audience to reject certain inferences and draw others" (2001:521).[15]

(24) It's not [that he is stupid]. It's simply [that he can't explain the use of clefts].
(Lambrecht 2001:503)

These constructions, containing a copular verb and 'dummy subject', are structurally similar to other *it*-cleft constructions; in addition, both can occur with a cleft clause, although Delahunty (2001) reports that this is rare with inferentials. Lambrecht

[14] This 'pragmatic predicate' function is discussed further in the following section (5.1.2.2).
[15] These sentences are also referred to as 'sentential focus' clefts by Horn (1989:435, cited in Delahunty 2001:521).

argues that the discourse function of 'inferential clefts' is different from that of *it*-clefts. The inferential cleft, he suggests, "has the evidential function of presenting an assertion as a personal evaluation by the speaker" (Lambrecht 2001:504).

5.1.2.2 Predicational nature of clefted constituent

The distinctive nature of the clefted constituent is such that, as well as generally being interpreted referentially (if a referring expression), it arguably also functions as a type of predicate. This mismatch between the properties and the function of the clefted constituent, and the consequent conflict between syntax and semantics has long been noted in the literature as a feature of the cleft construction (*e.g.* Huddleston 1984, Sornicola 1988 and Lambrecht 1994). Sornicola notes, "these constructions have a specificity of form which cannot be dealt with using absolute discrete notions" (1988:344). She also notes that the clefted constituent exhibits 'subject' properties and yet "has the pragmatic properties of predicators" (1988:378).

In order to describe the 'predicative' function of the clefted constituent, the notion of predicate needs to be clarified. The notion of semantic predicate has traditionally been described as 'what is said about the subject'. This definition "was dictated by unconscious pragmatic considerations… [and became] naturally equated with the topic-comment relation" (Lambrecht 1994:232). However, for narrow focus constructions that specify a value for a variable (*e.g. STUART runs the garage*) this analogy fails since the 'subject' is non-topical and has the specificational function of 'saying something about' the rest of the sentence.[16] Thus, the two concepts of semantic and pragmatic 'predication' need to be distinguished. The *it*-cleft construction illustrates this difference

[16] The term 'predicate' has also been defined structurally in traditional grammar. Trask, for example, defines 'predicate' as "that constituent of a sentence, most typically a verb phrase, which combines with the subject NP to make up the complete sentence" (1993:213). Within Role and Reference Grammar, the predicate, or predicating element, is a semantic notion that underlies the syntactic unit of nucleus (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:26). Thus, I adopt a semantically based notion.

particularly well since its particular syntactic construction is associated with narrow focus on an element that has a specificational, 'pragmatically predicative' function and yet is not semantically predicational.

One possible way of drawing a connection between the seemingly incongruous syntactic and semantic characteristics of the clefted constituent is through Lambrecht's (1994) concept of pragmatic predicate outlined above in section 3.1.3 and illustrated in (25).

(25) Sentence: *It was JOHN that I saw.*
Presupposition: "I saw x"
Assertion: "x = John"
Focus: "John"
Focus domain: NP
Pragmatic predicate: (is) John

In defining the notion of pragmatic predicate, Lambrecht states that in narrow focus (that is, specificational) sentences, the "focus [(the value)] is in fact construed as a predicate, …the designatum of…[this element]…is construed simultaneously as an argument on the level of semantics and as a predicate on the level of information structure" (Lambrecht 1994:231). 'Pragmatic predication' is therefore the main predicative function of the sentence, and the focus or value is the (pragmatic) predicate.

Unlike in a narrow focus construction marked by intonation *(e.g. My CAR broke dow*n), in an *it*-cleft construction the 'is' within the pragmatic predicate appears as the copula verb in the syntactic form of the sentence.[17] Thus, I suggest that the focused clefted constituent of the *it*-cleft construction represents the main 'predicate' of the matrix clause, and of the construction as a whole; it is a 'pragmatic predicate' rather

[17] In an intonationally marked narrow focus sentence, there is a main semantic predicate (*e.g. hit* in *JOHN hit Bill*) and the specificational function is, in a sense, superimposed on this. In the *it*-cleft, the specificational function (involving a 'pragmatic predicate') is the main predication of the construction.

than a semantic predicate. This pragmatic predicate is therefore a key feature of the specificational *it*-cleft construction.

In this section, I discussed the properties of the clefted constituent and its role in the sentence, particularly focusing on noun phrases as clefted constituents. I have shown that there are two coindexed expressions in the cleft construction with status as independent referring expressions, and thus the cognitive status of the clefted constituent is, in a sense, separate from its role as corresponding to the (presupposed) variable in the cleft clause. In the same way, the status of the clefted constituent as a referring semantic argument is distinct from, and does not conflict with, its function as pragmatic predicate. The function of pragmatic predicate described above essentially matches the specification of a value for a variable. I have shown that in specificational sentences, the goal of 'saying something about' an entity is an act of identification, or specification, rather than of semantic predication, and therefore there is no constraint against this value function being carried out by a referring expression.

The cleft construction is unambiguously narrow focused, inherently specificational, and thus differs from intonationally marked narrow focused constructions. In the latter, there is a semantic predicate and there is a pragmatic predicate, and the two need not necessarily coincide. In the *it*-cleft construction, on the other hand, the semantic predicational context for the variable is backgrounded or subordinated, and the specificational function (involving the clefted constituent as pragmatic predicate) is the main predicative function of the sentence.

With reference to Table 1.1, I suggest there appears to be a scale of specificity and referentiality whereby, at one end, beyond non-specific, non-referential noun phrases, which do not have "accessible…referents" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:200), are noun phrases serving as semantic (nominal) predicates. At the other end of the scale, specific,

referential noun phrases can be used as pragmatic predicates in specificational sentences. From these observations, while reference contrasts with semantic predication, a broader understanding of predication including pragmatic/specificational predication suggests a type of scalar rather than binary relationship between referring expressions (as characterized through identifiability, specificity and referentiality) and predication. The *it*-cleft construction illustrates this, though the question of a 'referential' status for the cleft clause needs clarification. The following section discusses this subject.

5.1.3 The cleft clause

As a specificational construction, the *it*-cleft construction specifies a value for a variable and the variable is generally described by the content of the cleft clause. It is important to clarify what is meant by the 'variable' and the following section (5.1.3.1) discusses this. Following that discussion, I characterize the referential status of the variable as identifiable, specific and non-referential.

5.1.3.1 The variable element in clefts

In copular sentences that specify a value for a variable, such as pseudoclefts, there are two coindexed syntactic constituents, one usually corresponding to the value and one to the variable (see (26) and (27), value underlined).[18]

(26) a. [What I bought]$_{NP}$ was [a goldfish]$_{NP}$.
VARIABLE VALUE

b. Presupposition: I bought something/something exists that I bought.

(27) a. [Jack the Ripper]$_{NP}$ is [the murderer]$_{NP}$.
VALUE VARIABLE

b. Presupposition: someone (exists who) is the murderer.

The definite noun phrase that denotes and describes the variable as an identifiable and specific entity is a referring expression. The *it*-cleft construction, on the other hand,

[18] As noted above, pseudocleft constructions also have a predicational reading. The discussion here concerns the specificational reading.

does not contain two such syntactic constituent units, as noted in section 2.1.2.1. It can also be the case that the 'x' variable itself is not represented in the syntactic form of the sentence, only its description, and thus the interpretation of the term 'variable' is somewhat more complex than in sentences like (26) and (27).

In terms of its semantic content, the *it*-cleft construction contains a 'value' argument coindexed with a variable located within an open proposition (28b). The pragmatic presupposition associated with *it*-clefts includes the presupposition of existence, or identifiability, of the coindexed element in the open proposition (the 'someone' in (28c)).

(28) a. It was [Heather]$_{NP}$ [who learned to sign]$_{CLAUSE}$.
VALUE (VARIABLE)
b. Contains open semantic proposition: 'x learned to sign'
c. Presupposition: someone exists who learned to sign.

The difference in structure between pseudoclefts and *it*-clefts is sometimes resolved in the literature by deriving the cleft clause from within a unit with a head such as a corresponding pseudocleft (*e.g.* Akmajian 1970, Gundel 1977; see section 3.1.1). Alternatively, other analyses take an extrapositional approach and connect the cleft clause, semantically, syntactically, or pragmatically to the cleft pronoun, letting the latter function as some kind of head (*e.g.* Hedberg 2000, Lambrecht 2001). On the other hand, non-derivational accounts argue against the need to represent arguments in the syntactic representation when they are not expressed phonetically. Thus Langacker, for example, states, "a relative clause like *she bought* [in *the skirt she bought*] is not obtained by deforming [the full clause structure]; it merely represents an alternate construction in which only the trajector [(*she*)] is elaborated" (Langacker 1991:420).

In light of the distinctive syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft construction, this section seeks to clarify whether the pragmatic character and function of the semantic 'x'

variable mean that it can be described as a referring expression, even though it may have no syntactic realization.

Hedberg's (2000) (semantically) extrapositional approach connects the cleft clause with the cleft pronoun. She states that the cleft construction contains a "existential condition [originating in the] definite description effected by the combination of the cleft pronoun (definite determiner)" (2000:906) and the "propositional content of [the] cleft clause" (2000:898). This "composed definite description" is then connected to the clefted constituent via the copula (2000:906-7). Hedberg states that in (29a), for example, the presupposition given in (29b) includes an existential condition; that is, the 'someone' is presupposed to exist in the discourse.

(29) a. It was Lee who got a perfect score on the semantics quiz.

b. Presupposition: Someone got a perfect score on the semantics quiz.

(Hedberg 2000:905)

c. Open proposition: 'x' got a perfect score on the semantics quiz.[19]

However, aligning the presupposition solely with the semantic content of the cleft clause constituent is too restrictive. Information regarding the person of the variable, for example, is not contained purely in the semantic content of the cleft clause. This suggests that the existential condition and presupposition of which it forms a part are based not only on the semantic 'propositional context' of the cleft clause constituent but are also formed with reference to the clefted constituent and the wider pragmatic context. I have already noted (in section 2.2.1.2, for example) that elements within the clefted constituent can also be included in the presupposition.

[19] There are other possible interpretations for the *it*-cleft sentence presented in (29a). For example, it may be that the hearer has the presupposition that someone specific other than Lee got a perfect score (rather than that an unspecified person did). With this strongly contrastive focus reading, the pragmatic presupposition on the part of the hearer would not be derivable purely from the semantic content of the cleft clause.

The 'broader' source of the presupposition is further exemplified by the sentences given below in (30) where the content of the cleft clause is essentially 'John ran'; the presupposition cannot always be predicted independently of the nature of the clefted constituent and pragmatic context.

(30) a. It was to the store that John ran.
Presupposition: John ran somewhere.
b. It was with me that John ran.
Presupposition: John ran with someone.
c. It was yesterday that John ran.
Presupposition: John ran at a certain time/on a certain day.
d. It was a half-marathon that John ran.
Presupposition: John ran a certain distance/race.

While the 'variable' should be considered a referring expression, I argue this status is evident from its pragmatic function in the utterance rather than through its syntactic expression or through structural association with the cleft clause.[20] Thus, the description of the variable is represented by a syntactically (and semantically) 'incomplete' subordinate clause, in which the variable itself may not be expressed. Nonetheless, the variable is presented in the construction as an identifiable discourse referent through its role in the specificational function of the construction.

These observations reflect the interrelated nature of the *it*-cleft construction; the pragmatic notions of value and variable and the semantic components do not correspond precisely to syntactic constituents. Lambrecht also notes that the "superimposition of the asserted proposition on the set of presupposed propositions often occurs in such a way that the two cannot be lexically factored out and identified with specific sentence constituents" (1994:58). This lack of mirroring is evidence against formal analyses that

[20] There is, however, a degree of iconicity (Croft 2003:102) or mirroring in the *it*-cleft construction in terms of the syntactic subordination of the cleft clause. Chapter 7 examines this iconicity from a cross-linguistic perspective.

define clefts in terms of syntactic or semantic constituent units since a characterization of the *it*-cleft construction involves pragmatic notions and pragmatic 'constituents'. On the one hand, the *it*-cleft construction displays a lack of iconicity between its semantic and syntactic representations. On the other hand, the construction reflects its pragmatic 'constituents' and functions.

5.1.3.2 Referential status of the variable and the cleft clause

Having established the variable in the *it*-cleft construction as an identifiable discourse referent, this section assesses the implications of this for defining the referential status of the variable more precisely.

As noted above, the variable element of specificational sentences presents information that the speaker and the hearer share. This information is all that the hearer has prior to the utterance, while the speaker has more. Hence, the very purpose of uttering a specificational sentence and the function of the value element in particular is to add the speaker's knowledge to that shared with the hearer. The speaker begins from the shared cognitive environment and adds specificational information that enables the hearer to make a full(er) identification of the underspecified variable.

These functions cause the value and variable elements to be interpreted differently in terms of identifiability, specificity and referentiality, as defined above in section 1.4. As described in that section, a specific, non-referential use of a referring expression describes a definite noun phrase "the identity of which is not assumed to be known" (Gundel 1977:545). In other words, the description may be the best the speaker can produce given the information they have, but it is not enough for them (or the hearer) to 'pick out' a particular referent.[21] In the specificational sentence below in (31), for

[21] As noted in section 1.4, the referent of a noun phrase may be non-referential for the speaker, the hearer, or both. Hence, the noun phrase *the French teacher* in (i) can be described as non-referential since the motivation for the question is most likely to be the fact that the speaker cannot 'pick out' the individual. However, the fact that the speaker is asking the question

example, the noun phrase *the previous tenant* may be specific and non-referential if it is the best description the speaker has and is not enough for the hearer to identify the referent fully.

(31) The previous tenant broke the oven. SPECIFIC NON-REFERENTIAL

With regard to specificational sentences such as those in (26)-(28) the variable element is not non-referential for the speaker (otherwise they would have nothing to add for the referential value), but it is non-referential for the hearer. The speaker begins from this shared description and adds information to enable the hearer to pick out a specific referent. Thus, "the purpose of a specificational sentence with a definite NP as variable is precisely to identify the referent of a NP whose use has remained [that is, up until the point of utterance] attributive [that is, specific and non-referential] for the hearer" (DeClerck 1988:47-8).

Therefore, the variable of a specificational sentence is, by definition, interpreted as identifiable, specific and non-referential ('attributive'). Since *it*-clefts are specificational constructions the same description of the variable applies. Specifically, the underspecified variable of an *it*-cleft denotes an identifiable, specific, non-referential entity.[22] The difference, as noted above, is that the variable itself may not be represented in the syntactic form of the sentence, although elements of its description appear as the content of the cleft clause.

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creates the probability that s/he believes that this noun phrase is referential for the hearer. Another possibility is that the speaker may know the full identity of the referent but be asking the question rhetorically, to test the hearer's knowledge.

(i) Who is the French teacher?

[22] This applies when the variable represents a referring expression, although there is a sense in which the same description can be applied to non-referring expressions, as in (i) below. The hearer is likely to hold the presupposition that there are occasions on which one can tell people's true character, but cannot identify those occasions at the time of utterance by the speaker.

(i) It is when people visit you in hospital that you can tell their true character.
(*Independent Review*, 18 Dec 2003, p4)

These observations have relevance for the study of patterns of verb agreement in the *it*-cleft construction. As noted in section 2.1.2.4, in English *it*-cleft constructions there is agreement in number but not person between the verb in the cleft clause and the clefted constituent (when that constituent controls verb agreement, as in (32a)). This is also the case in pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts (see (32b) and (c)), and is analogous to the situation in noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses (see (32d)).[23]

(32) a. It is me who is/*am doing the moaning.[24] *IT*-CLEFT
b. The one who likes/*like beans is me. PSEUDOCLEFT
c. I am the one who likes/*like beans. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT
d. I like the you that buys/*buy me flowers. NP WITH RELATIVE CLAUSE

This patterning is arguably related to the non-referential status of the variable that is coindexed with the referential clefted constituent. The variable is not referentially 'grounded'; it does not enable the hearer to pick out a fully identifiable referent. On the other hand, a feature such as 'person' is inherently referential and deictic (Huddleston 1984:288); that is, it picks out or locates a particular specific referent. Therefore, this feature cannot be carried over in the coindexation process and so verb agreement in terms of person is not triggered in the cleft clause. The feature of number, which is not inherently referential in the same sense, is coindexed with the variable and is marked by verb agreement in the cleft clause, as the examples in (32) demonstrate.[25]

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[23] Restrictive relative clauses with first or second person head nouns do not normally occur. This is because it would be pragmatically odd to modify a head noun in order for the hearer to be able to identify the referent when the referent would be either the speaker or the hearer themselves.

[24] http://jobs.guardian.co.uk/officehours/story/0,9897,1086536,00.html. Posted 17/11/2003. Accessed 15/12/2003.

[25] This explanation runs into some difficulties in the light of somewhat archaic forms of full *it*-clefts (and relative clauses) where the clefted constituent pronoun is in nominative form and verb agreement does occur (see (i-iii)). In the example in (ii), the author uses the first person form *am* in the non-restrictive relative clause *who am reading the novel ironically*, but the third person singular *runs* in the subsequent cleft clause.

This section has demonstrated that the variable 'x' element in the *it*-cleft construction is a semantic argument that denotes an identifiable discourse referent. It is coindexed with the clefted constituent and the two are therefore coreferential. As a referring expression denoting the variable of a specificational construction, the 'x' argument is identifiable and non-referential.

In conclusion, this section has examined the issues connected with each of the major constituents of the *it*-cleft constituent, and demonstrated that the cleft pronoun is more than a syntactic dummy 'place-filler': the related *it*-cleft and *there*-cleft constructions differ in form only in terms of the pronoun in the matrix clause and this reflects differences in the semantic and pragmatic interpretation of these constructions. This difference between the two cleft constructions, in addition to the possibility of *this* and *that* as cleft pronoun, indicate an additional relationship between the cleft pronoun and the information structure of the sentence, in particular the presupposition often expressed by the cleft clause.

The clefted constituent has been described in detail, both in terms of its nature as a referring semantic argument (if a noun phrase) and in terms of its function as a

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In addition, other languages such as French and Italian do mark person agreement (see (iv) and (v)), though both pattern with (i) since neither pronoun is marked accusative.

(i) It is I who am/*is guilty. (Jespersen 1937:83) *IT*-CLEFT

(ii) In this case, if it is *I* who am the principal ironist (and *not* Bujold), then it is I, who am reading the novel ironically, who runs the risk of getting fat. (http://ltimmel.home.mindspring.com/campaign1.html. Accessed 15/12/2003)

(iii) I who am captive to this dreary toil NOUN PHRASE
(Hebridean Altars, cited in Celtic Daily Prayer 2000:64; Harper Collins: London)

(iv) C'est moi qui suis le chef. FRENCH *IT*-CLEFT
1SG-SF be-1SG
'It is I who am the boss.'

(v) Sono io che sono responsabile. ITALIAN *IT*-CLEFT
1SG-NOM be-1SG
'It is I who am responsible.' (Sornicola 1988:348)

Differences between these examples and the specificational *it*-cleft, such as the acceptability of a restrictive relative clause with a personal pronoun as antecedent within a noun phrase (as in (iii)), suggest these are structures with pragmatic functions that differ from that of the *it*-cleft construction. The nature of such constructions needs further examination.

pragmatic predicate. This predicative role as 'value' of a specificational sentence is pragmatic rather than semantic. Therefore, rather than being excluded from serving as 'value', referring expressions are in fact suited to this function, to the degree that elements that are not noun phrases are to some extent 'nominalized'.

The cleft clause participates in the expression of the variable and its description, although the variable itself may not be syntactically-expressed. Through its pragmatic role within the presupposed part of the construction, the variable of the *it*-cleft construction can be interpreted as an identifiable, specific, yet non-referential entity.

Having examined the elements of the *it*-cleft construction in detail in this section, the following section examines the two main relationships in the construction, that within the copular matrix clause and the relationship between the subordinate clause and the matrix clause.

5.2 The *it*-cleft construction as a whole

The previous section (5.1) focused on the discussion of issues related to the constituents of the *it*-cleft construction. The form and role of these elements are part of the broader form and specificational function of the construction, a function that involves two key features of the *it*-cleft construction as a whole. Section 5.2.1 examines the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction, and the parameters along which the *it*-cleft can be compared with other copular specificational constructions. Section 5.2.2 focuses on the similarities and differences between the cleft clause in the *it*-cleft construction and relative clauses in noun phrases and I discuss the implications of this patterning on the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction.

5.2.1 *It*-cleft constructions as copular, specificational sentences

Section 2.2 provided a detailed description of the characteristics of the *it*-cleft as a type of cleft construction and as a specificational sentence. I demonstrated there that the

it-cleft construction shares many features with pseudocleft, reverse pseudocleft and other copular specificational constructions. These similarities lie primarily in the semantic and pragmatic function of these sentences characterized as specificational: providing a value for a variable. The main distinguishing feature of the *it*-cleft construction is its syntactic form; it does not contain two noun phrases connected by the copula, and its variable element can have no syntactic representation. This section begins by assessing the extent to which current approaches to the analysis of copular sentences can be applied to the *it*-cleft construction.

Some studies in the literature suggest that in copular sentences containing two noun phrases that serve to specify or identify a referent (rather than to attribute a property to a referent) the copular verb is a "true verb" (Adger and Ramchand 2003:2). They argue that the copular verb should be interpreted as the semantic predicate of the sentence, taking two arguments (in contrast to its use as an auxiliary in sentences with adjectival and nominal predicates, for example). Adger and Ramchand (2003) cite Higgins (1973), Zaring (1996), Carnie (1997) and Higginbotham (1987) as examples of this approach. As noted above, Van Valin also adopts this approach, positing the predicate **equate´** for "equational" sentences, defined as those containing two referring expressions (forth.:42-3). Gundel "roughly represents" (1977:546) this interpretation as follows in Figure 5.1, where 'identificational' corresponds to DeClerck's (1988) 'specificational' category (and possibly also includes his 'identity statements', such as *Dr Jekyll is Mr Hyde* (1988:110); see section 2.3.2). 'Attributive' is used by Gundel to refer to copular sentences containing nominal predicates.

(1) Identificational — *E.g. Harold is the man in charge.*

(2) Attributive — *E.g. Eddie is a comedian.*

Figure 5.1 Identificational vs. attributive copular structures (Gundel 1977:546)

On the other hand, others such as Heggie (1988, 1992, 1993) and Moro (1997) contest that this type of approach "predicts a symmetry which goes against our intuitions about these sentences, and which is called into question by some more subtle properties of copular sentences" (Heycock and Kroch 2002:144). Exponents of the alternative analysis argue, "where two DPs appear in copular sentences, one of them is semantically and syntactically the predicate, while the other is referential…*the doctor* is the predicate in both [(33a) and (b)]" (Adger and Ramchand 2003:3).

(33) a. Jenny is the doctor.
b. The doctor is Jenny.

There is a large amount of literature on both sides of the issue but neither of these approaches offers a clear answer regarding the status of the clefted constituent in the *it*-cleft construction. Even if one can successfully argue that *NP is NP* sentences, as well as pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts, involve equating two noun phrases, and that the copula verb represents the syntactic and semantic predicate, this argument is inevitably less successful for the *it*-cleft construction. In the *it*-cleft construction, as has been shown, there are not two definite noun phrase constituents to serve in a simple equational construction. To come somewhere close, the semantically non-referring cleft pronoun would have to be interpreted as coreferential with the cleft clause. Giving the cleft pronoun referring status in this way provides two headed constituents to serve in an 'equational' relationship as in other copular specificational sentences. However,

there are problems with structurally extrapositional accounts, as I have shown (see section 3.1.1).

The opposing view outlined above is that one noun phrase (*e.g. the doctor* in (33)) functions as the semantic and syntactic predicate. The difficulty in applying this to the *it*-cleft construction is that the element termed the semantic predicate is not within the copular matrix clause of the construction.

The pragmatically-orientated 'value/variable' analysis described in the chapters above provides evidence against a strictly 'equational' interpretation of specificational sentences. At the same time, it does not support the interpretation of the variable element as a semantic predicate in the sense discussed above for *the doctor* in (33) since this element does not describe a property.[26] I have discussed the recognition of an essentially pragmatic rather than semantic predicational function in the *it*-cleft construction, with the 'value' element (rather than the variable) as pragmatic predicate. This characterization allows for an alternative comparison with other specificational, copular constructions.

Thus, specificational constructions share a 'pragmatically predicational' function while the *it*-cleft construction is distinguished by its syntactic form. Since the similarity among specificational sentences largely lies in their semantic and pragmatic function, I would argue that it is in the representation of these aspects that similarities should be reflected. This is facilitated by a theoretical framework such as Role and Reference Grammar that separates (but also links together) the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic representations.

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[26] It is possible that the category of copular sentences that DeClerck terms 'descriptionally-identifying' could be analyzed in this way (see (i)). As described in section 2.3.1, in descriptionally-identifying sentences a referring expression provides descriptive information (concerning a 'property' of the referent) to assist the hearer in making an identification.

(i) A: Who's William?
B: William is my yoga teacher. DESCRIPTIONALLY-IDENTIFYING SENTENCE

The specificational copular constructions that are most similar in form and function to *it*-clefts are pseudocleft and reverse pseudoclefts. Section 2.1 detailed the formal and functional similarities and differences between these constructions. I discuss the implications of this comparison for an analysis of the *it*-cleft construction in the remainder of this section; the syntactic and semantic representations of these constructions are examined as part of a Role and Reference Grammar analysis in sections 6.1 and 6.2.

One contrast created by the structural differences between *it*-cleft and pseudocleft constructions is the potential predicational reading available to pseudoclefts, mentioned briefly in the conclusion to chapter 2. The following examples illustrate these readings (Gundel 1977:544-7).

(34) a. What I bought is a German Shepherd and a St. Bernard. (It's/They are really cute).
b. It was a German Shepherd and a St. Bernard that I bought. (#It's/They are really cute).

The pseudocleft construction in (34a) has two possible readings. In the first reading, the predicational reading, there is only one dog; the thing that was bought has the property of being a crossbreed of a German Shepherd and a St. Bernard. The second noun phrase predicates a property of the first.[27] The second, specificational reading, on the other hand, involves two dogs: the second noun phrase identifies the referent of the first noun phrase. The *it*-cleft in (34b), on the other hand, only has the two-dog

[27] Lambrecht considers the pronoun *what* to be a referring expression in the predicational reading of pseudoclefts, but argues that it is not under the specificational reading as it is equivalent to the "empty" *it* + *that* of an *it*-cleft (2001:470). However, the difference seems to me to be that the WH-noun phrase may be referential on the predicational reading in the sense that the hearer "may very well be able to identify" (Lambrecht 2001:494) the referent for which the predicate describes a property. In the specificational reading, on the other hand, the referent of the 'variable' WH-noun phrase is generally identifiable and specific but not referential (as discussed in section 5.1.3). In other words, in both readings of the pseudocleft the noun phrase is a referring expression, the difference lies in the referential status of the noun phrase and this is influenced by the specificational or predicational function of the construction as a whole.

specificational reading available (as the infelicity of *It's really cute* indicates). The clefted constituent cannot be interpreted as predicating a property of the coindexed argument in the cleft clause (a predicative reading).[28]

This comparison between pseudoclefts and *it*-clefts is taken by Gundel (1977) as evidence for a derivational account that derives the *it*-cleft from structures underlying pseudoclefts that have what she terms an 'identificational' structure (see Figure 5.1 above). In the non-derivational Role and Reference Grammar account proposed in chapter 6, an alternative explanation is presented that concentrates on differences in the coindexation relationship in the two constructions to explain the difference in possible 'readings', without recourse to the different properties of 'underlying' abstract representations. In the *it*-cleft construction in (34b), for example, the value element cannot be interpreted as predicative since there is no syntactic headed referring expression in the construction of which it can predicate a property.

This section has focused on the *it*-cleft construction as one of a 'family' of copular constructions, and as a specificational construction in particular. It has highlighted two key approaches to the structure and interpretation of copular sentences, and demonstrated that neither can be straightforwardly applied to the *it*-cleft construction. The difficulty is due firstly to the distinctive syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft construction. In addition, both types of analysis focus on semantic predication while I propose that it is primarily in terms of their pragmatic function that specificational constructions resemble each other.

In derivational accounts of the *it*-cleft construction, similarities and differences between this construction and pseudoclefts are often studied in order to determine the

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[28] The reverse pseudocleft sentence also lacks a predicational reading for the same reason that sentences such as **Happy is John* are ungrammatical.

(i) A German Shepherd and a St. Bernard is/are what I bought. (*It's/They are really cute).

underlying structure of the constructions, and to determine if and how one is derived from the other. In a non-derivational account, these constructions are taken 'at face value' and explanations account for the similarities and differences in terms of the 'surface' syntactic and semantic structure of these constructions. I suggest that the difference between the readings available for pseudoclefts and *it*-clefts are just one consequence of a difference between the elements that are coindexed in the two constructions. In the detailed analysis presented in chapter 6, I develop this suggestion further (see section 6.2 in particular).

A further complication in analyzing the *it*-cleft construction as primarily a copular structure (whether by derivational means or not) is that another key relationship affects the structure, meaning and function of the construction. The relationship between the clefted constituent and the 'relative-type' cleft clause participates in the interpretation of the *it*-cleft and this is discussed in the following section.

5.2.2 Comparison of *it*-cleft constructions and noun phrases containing relative clauses

Analyses of the *it*-cleft construction that take an 'expletive' approach focus on the relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause (generally interpreting the cleft pronoun as 'expletive') and on formal patterning between the cleft clause and relative clauses. While there are some similarities between the constructions, these differences stem from the type of antecedent – the 'external syntax' – in each construction, and that this affects the interpretation of the relationship between the relevant constituents. This section provides a more detailed comparison between the *it*-cleft construction and restrictive relative clauses in terms of syntactic form, semantic representation and pragmatic interpretation.

5.2.2.1 Constituents of the it*-cleft construction and of noun phrases containing relative clauses*

In terms of syntactic form, the cleft clause and relative clause share a similar internal structure.[29] In both cases, a variable within the subordinate cleft/relative clause is coindexed with a clefted constituent/head noun. However, the constructions in which they participate differ. The bi-clausal *it*-cleft construction forms a complete sentence while a restrictive relative clause forms part of a noun phrase. The first consequence of this is the difference in whether a relative pronoun, complementizer *that*, or zero marking can occur in the cleft/relative clause.

In most cases, the cleft or relative clause is introduced by either a relative pronoun or the clause linkage marker *that.* In both relative clauses (see (35a)) and *it*-cleft constructions (see (35b)), this element can be omitted if the variable in the linked clause is not the subject (or 'privileged syntactic argument') of that clause.[30]

(35) a. the new boy <u>that/who/Ø</u> the blonde woman fired NOUN PHRASE
b. It was the new boy <u>that/who/Ø</u> the blonde woman fired. *IT*-CLEFT

There are also, however, some differences in the syntactic variations of the restrictive relative clause and the cleft clause. There is a greater tendency for *that*, or zero (as opposed to a relative pronoun) to be used in the cleft clause in *it*-clefts than in

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[29] Cross-linguistic studies (*e.g.* Schachter 1973) find similar patterning between relative clauses and *it*-clefts in different languages, though realized in various ways. Schachter argues that this evidence "provides a basis for a coalescence of the rules deriving the two constructions, [and] should…be provided for in general linguistic theory, rather than on an ad hoc basis in the grammar of each separate language" (1973:26). The Role and Reference Grammar analysis presented in chapter 6 'coalesces' the constructions to some extent while highlighting the difference in antecedents. There is further typological discussion of the *it*-cleft construction in chapter 7.

[30] There is also the same possibility in a limited number of dialects (*e.g.* East London) for the pronoun *what* to appear as in the examples in (i) and (ii).

(i) a bush <u>what</u> is there all year round NOUN PHRASE
(*Creature Comforts: The Garden* (Aardman Animations: Bristol); west country dialect of British English)

(ii) ?It was my car <u>what</u> got nicked. *IT*-CLEFT

restrictive relative clauses (noted by Davidse 2000:1106, for example). In addition, some studies in the literature (*e.g.* Sornicola 1988:357, Davidse 2000:1106, citing Quirk *et al*. 1972, and Huddleston 1984:460) assert that where the variable is the would-be subject, there is a greater acceptability of such structures in *it*-clefts than in relative clauses, at least in informal English.

(36) a. ?It was the boy caused all the trouble. (Davidse 2000:1106) *IT*-CLEFT
b. *The boy caused all the trouble (…has been given a detention). NOUN PHRASE

The difference in acceptability illustrated in (36) is related to the avoidance of potential ambiguity created by the form of the constructions. Without either a relative pronoun or *that*, the noun phrase in (36b) could be misinterpreted as a simple sentence with *caused* as the main predicate (also discussed by Temperley 2003). This ambiguity is not a possibility in the *it*-cleft construction in (36a), however, as there is a clausal boundary between the copular matrix core and the cleft clause; in other words, *It was the boy* cannot be misinterpreted as the initial noun phrase in a simple sentence and thus the *who/that* can be omitted more readily.

Further differences between *it*-clefts and restrictive relative clauses are observed by Davidse (2000) who notes variations in terms of their antecedents (as mentioned in section 3.1.3).[31] As described in detail below, the antecedent in *it*-cleft constructions is the full noun phrase, whereas in noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses the antecedent for the variable in the relative clause is the head noun.

Davidse's (2000) analysis stems from Langacker's observations concerning noun phrases and his concepts of type specification and grounding: a "head specifies a type, and the determiner grounds an instance of that type" (Langacker 1991:143). In other words, head nouns and non-determining modifiers (a category that includes restrictive

[31] These observations comparing restrictive relative clauses with *it*-cleft constructions are based on *it*-clefts with noun phrases as clefted constituents.

relative clauses) together constitute a 'type specification'; then, "to tie the type specification to specific instances [that is, to 'ground' it], it has to be modified by a determiner" (Davidse 2000:1109). The following examples illustrate this difference (Davidse 2000:1109): the determiners (*a*/*the*) "ground" the type specification to a specific instance.[32]

(37) a. a [golden dog]$_{\text{TYPE SPECIFICATION}}$

b. the [dog that is faithful]$_{\text{TYPE SPECIFICATION}}$

In terms of these categories, and as illustrated by (37b), a noun phrase containing a restrictive relative clause is a 'type specification' constituted by the 'head noun + relative clause'; this unit is 'tied' to a specific instance using a determiner, which modifies the whole unit (Langacker 1991:432). In contrast to this pattern, the relative-type clause in *it*-clefts has the full noun phrase as its antecedent.

In other words, the relative clause modifies the head noun and the resulting unit is then modified by the determiner. In the *it*-cleft construction, on the other hand, the determiner within the clefted constituent noun phrase modifies the 'type specification' given by the clefted noun and the 'relative-type' cleft clause 'modifies' the resulting unit. The diagram in Figure 5.2 represents this difference with examples.

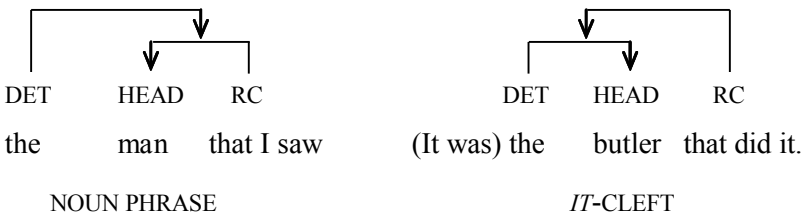

Figure 5.2 Ordering of modifiers in NPs and it*-clefts (based on Davidse 2000:1109)*

As evidence of this difference in scope, Davidse examines the scope of quantifiers and shows that, within a noun phrase such as in (38a) below, the interpretation is not that 'all students attended'; instead the *all* applies to the type description 'students who

[32] As shown in chapter 4, this distinction is reflected in Role and Reference Grammar theory through noun phrase-level definiteness and deixis operators (determiners), which are concerned with locality or grounding.

attended' (indicated by bold square brackets). In the *it*-cleft sentence in (38b), on the other hand, the quantifier has only *the passengers* within its scope, not *the passengers who had committed the murder*. In other words, the variable within the relative clause *who attended* in (38a) has the head noun *students* as its antecedent, while the relative pronoun in the cleft clause in (38b) has the noun phrase *all the passengers* as its antecedent.

(38) a. All **[**students [who attended]**]$_{NP}$** will receive a bonus point.

b. It was all **[**the passengers**]$_{NP}$** [who had committed the murder]. (Davidse 2000:1114)[33]

One effect of this difference in scope is in terms of the presuppositions attached to restrictive relative clauses and to *it*-cleft constructions, both those connected with the use of the definite article and those connected with the relative or cleft clause. For example, a sentence such as (39a), containing a restrictive relative clause, has (amongst others) the presupposition given in (39b). The use of a definite determiner codes the identifiability (or presupposition of existence) of the referent of *man that fixed Jim's TV*.[34]

(39) a. (I saw) the man that fixed Jim's TV. NOUN PHRASE

b. Presupposition: There exists (in the world of discourse) one man that fixed Jim's TV.

(40) a. It was the Pope that I saw. *IT*-CLEFT

b. Presupposition: There exists (in the world of discourse) one person that was seen by the speaker (and the referent corresponding to the description 'Pope' is identifiable to the hearer).

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[33] These examples have a somewhat odd feel because of the use of the universal quantifier *all*. As noted in section 2.2.3, the clefted constituent will generally be interpreted contrastively and so using a universal quantifier inhibits this contrastive interpretation (the exception being if the quantifier itself is being contrasted with less comprehensive quantification such as *only some*).

[34] There are, of course, other elements to the pragmatic presupposition associated with these sentences such as the familiarity of the referent of *Jim*.

On the other hand, the use of the definite article in the clefted constituent noun phrase in (40a) codes the fact that the referent *Pope* is identifiable for the speaker but it does not create the presupposition that the speaker saw the Pope. The main presupposition for the *it*-cleft construction in (40a) merely presupposes that 'someone' exists that was seen by the speaker.

This difference is related to the scope of the definite determiner and the conditions that licence its use. In the noun phrase in (39a), the head noun *man* as well as the context created by the restrictive modifier (the relative clause *that fixed Jim's TV*) is within the scope of the determiner. In the *it*-cleft sentence in (40a), however, only the clefted constituent noun *pope* is within the scope of that noun phrase determiner.

This difference in information structure is further illustrated by indefinite noun phrases.

(41) a. (I'm looking for) a man that has travelled faster than the speed of light.
b. No presupposition of the form: There exists someone who has travelled faster than the speed of light. (Schachter 1973:41)

(42) a. It was a friend of mine that gave that to me.
b. Presupposition: someone gave 'that' to me.

In this case, the sentence containing the indefinite noun phrase in (41a) does not have the presupposition (including the content of the relative clause) given in (41b) because the head noun and relative clause unit are coded as indefinite (indicating unidentifiability of the referent). In contrast, the *it*-cleft construction in (42) retains the presupposition described by the cleft clause even with an indefinite noun phrase as clefted constituent. This happens because the cleft clause is not within the noun phrase marked as indefinite.

As noted at the beginning of this section, the elements of the *it*-cleft construction participate in the main pragmatic function of the sentence; in other words, the

relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause is directly related to the broader information structure and pragmatic function of the whole sentence. A definite noun phrase containing a relative clause, on the other hand, while assuming the identifiability of the referent it denotes (as marked by definiteness), can function in a wider sentential context within either the asserted or presupposed part of the sentence, including appearing as the clefted constituent of an *it*-cleft (also noted by Cinque 1993:268). The examples in (43) illustrate these possibilities (with square brackets highlighting the relevant noun phrase and the focus domain underlined).

(43) a. Jeff saw [the film that he'd been waiting to see].
b. [The gerbil that I bought] died after two days.
c. It was [the man who lives at number 53] who made all the noise.

These observations also account for two differences between *it*-cleft constructions and restrictive relative clauses in terms of the elements that can function as head noun or clefted constituent (noted by Schachter 1973). The first difference is the acceptability of proper nouns as antecedents in *it*-clefts, but not in restrictive relative clauses (see (44)).

(44) a. ?*the John who bought my car NOUN PHRASE
b. It was John who bought my car. *IT*-CLEFT

Proper nouns represent referential 'grounded instances'; as Davidse notes, they do not "symbolize the 'type description' as a separate element that the relative pronoun [in a noun phrase] can refer back to" (2000:1111). In other words, since the referent is already specified it is not possible (or necessary) to modify the noun with a restrictive relative clause to help the hearer identify the referent; neither is it marked with a definite determiner.[35] In an *it*-cleft construction, on the other hand, the cleft clause is not

[35] Proper names are permissible in noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses where they are not used referentially but as a 'type description', that is, as referring to all individuals

modifying the clefted constituent but describing the variable for which the clefted constituent provides the value; therefore, a proper noun can appear as clefted constituent.

Secondly, as noted in section 2.2.1.2 and in contrast to the behaviour of proper nouns, indefinite pronouns such as *something* or *someone* cannot occur as clefted constituent in a cleft sentence (see (45a)). However, they can occur as the head of a noun phrase containing a restrictive relative clause (see (45b); examples from Schachter 1973:22).

(45)	a. (What did you eat?)	#It's something I ate.	*IT*-CLEFT
	b. (What's bothering you?)	(It's) something I ate.	NOUN PHRASE

As noted by DeClerck (1988:86), indefinite pronouns are not possible as clefted constituents because they add nothing to the presupposition: in (45a), for example, the presupposition is that the speaker ate something. The purpose of the clefted constituent is to identify further what was eaten, which the clefted constituent in (45a) fails to do. In (45b), on the other hand, the presupposition is that something is bothering the speaker and the assertion is that some unidentified consumed entity is the cause.

For similar reasons, negative pronouns such as *nobody, nothing etc.* cannot occur as clefted constituent in *it*-cleft constructions (in contrast to *there*-clefts, as noted in section 5.1.2.1). Negative pronouns conflict with the presupposition that includes the existence or identifiability of the referent that the clefted constituent refers to. The clefted constituent cannot be an element that negates the existence of the referent. As DeClerck points out, "a specificational sentence [such as an *it*-cleft] by its very nature requires that the variable must exist" (1988:13). This difference is illustrated in (46).

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with a particular name (Davidse 2000:1111), as illustrated in (i). In this case, a determiner would be used.

(i) The Craig I'm talking about (is the one on the Holiday programme).

(46) a. *It was no one who swam the channel. *IT*-CLEFT
b. No one who swam the channel (enjoyed it). NOUN PHRASE

In the noun phrase in (46b), on the other hand, the restrictive relative clause narrows the scope of the referring expression *no one* to 'no ones' who belong to the set of people who swam the channel.[36]

This comparison between relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions also reflects the differing status of the cleft/relative clause 'variable' as a referring expression. I have noted that the cleft clause in an *it*-cleft construction functions as a variable corresponding to a value rather than as modifier of a head noun (as for relative clauses). I also argue that this function gives the variable in the *it*-cleft construction status as a referring expression independently of the clefted constituent, even though it may not be represented syntactically. This distinction is reflected in the potential difference in cognitive status between the two elements. In other words, the referent value expressed by the clefted constituent may be either an identifiable referent that is new to the discourse or an already cognitively 'active' referent (the latter illustrated in (47)). As explained in section 5.1.2.1, it is the clefted constituent referent's role as providing the identity of the variable that is asserted or 'new' (see also the examples in (17)).

(47) Is it the Chancellor or the Prime Minister who decides what the policy will be?
a. It's [the Prime Minister]$_{\text{IDENTIFIABLE}}$ who decides policies.
a. Presupposition: someone (specific and identifiable) decides policies.

In contrast to the situation in *it*-cleft constructions, the relative clause in a noun phrase is within the scope of the definiteness operator (the determiner) and therefore the interpretation of the relative clause is, in a sense, dependent on or tied to the cognitive status of the head noun as identifiable or unidentifiable.

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[36] It is possible to have a negative noun phrase as clefted constituent, as in (i), since in this case the existence of the 'variable' referent (the 'x' who swam the channel) is not being negated, only his/her membership in the set of referents the speaker knows.
(i) It was no one that I know who swam the channel.

(48) a. a [guy that I met yesterday]$_{\text{UNIDENTIFIABLE / NEW}}$

b. the [guy that I met yesterday]$_{\text{IDENTIFIABLE / GIVEN}}$

The relative clause within the indefinite noun phrase in (48a), by its utterance, creates the context for the interpretation of the head noun *guy*. However, the information that someone was met, as well as the referent's description as *guy*, is new to the discourse; the cognitive status of the head noun + relative clause unit is marked as 'unidentifiable', or 'new' by the use of the indefinite article. In (48b), on the other hand, the constituent *guy that I met yesterday* is marked as identifiable – it presupposes not only that the speaker saw someone but also that the 'someone that was met' is identifiable to the speaker.

Through this discussion, I have demonstrated that although a semantic argument of the verb within a relative clause is coindexed with the head noun, the 'noun + relative clause' constituent forms one referring expression. To reiterate, this structure is reflected by the fact that the determiner has as its scope the head noun and the relative clause. In the *it*-cleft construction, on the other hand, the cleft clause is outside the scope of the clefted constituent operators and thus has some degree of independence in referring to a specific entity. This difference is reflected in the elements that can occur as head noun/clefted constituent, for example.

5.2.2.2 Relationship between the relative/cleft clause and its antecedent

The function of the subordinate clause (both relative and cleft) is determined by the construction in which it occurs and by the nature of its antecedent rather than necessarily by any intrinsic property of the relative clause itself (as restrictive, non-restrictive *etc.*). It is thus not necessary to describe the relative clause element itself, as it occurs within *it*-clefts, as "unique to this construction" (Huddleston 1984:462).

As shown above, the different scope of the definite determiner in noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses and in *it*-clefts (with definite noun phrase clefted

constituents) is mirrored by a fundamental difference between these two structures in terms of their function and semantic interpretation. To summarize these differences, the referent of the head noun in noun phrases containing relative clauses is restricted to being one that fits with the modifying description given by the predicate phrase in the relative clause. In other words, in a noun phrase the relative clause assists the hearer in making an accurate identification of the referent of the head noun. In *it*-cleft constructions, in contrast, I argue that the clefted constituent value 'modifies' the variable expressed by the cleft clause. The clefted constituent assists the hearer in making a full identification of the underspecified argument in the cleft clause. Thus, the opposition between the meaning and function of the restrictive relative clause and that of the cleft clause is the result of their syntactic location and the type of element to which they are peripheral, rather than the result of intrinsically different relationships.

This proposal supports Lambrecht's proposition of a "unitary semantic analysis" for relative clauses, rejecting what he considers the widespread assumption that relative clauses are restrictive by definition (2001:472-3). He defines the grammatical category of headed relative clauses as "predicates with an unsatisfied external subject requirement (…"subject"…in the semantic sense of "argument to which a predicate applies")" (2001:473).[37] In other words, headed relative clauses are predicate logical structures containing an underspecified variable. Lambrecht asserts that what makes a relative clause restrictive is not its internal nature as such, but rather its "external syntax" (2001:473). He gives the example of noun phrases and appositive (non-restrictive) relative clauses: "the restrictive function of an RC [(relative clause)] is determined by its occurrence in the modifier position of an NP construction…as a sister

[37] Lambrecht differentiates these headed relative clauses with 'external subject requirements' from headless relative clauses as in (i), which have no such requirement (2001:473).
(i) Whoever did this is in big trouble.

to N (or N′); the appositive function of a RC is determined by its occurrence as a sister to a complete NP" (2001:473). This distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses is diagrammed in Figure 5.3.[38]

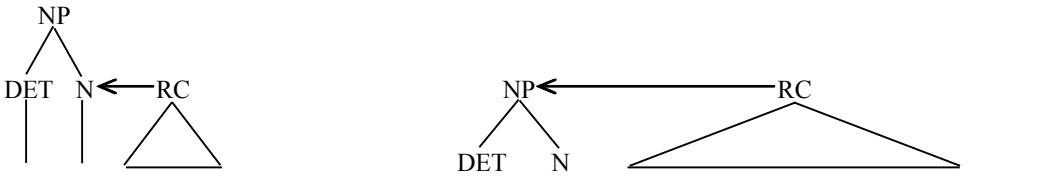

Figure 5.3 External syntax for restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses (based on Lambrecht 2001)

In support of this proposal, Lambrecht gives examples of fourteen types or uses of relative clauses in French, demonstrating that "dans chaque cas, l'association de la relative avec la principale dans laquelle elle est enchassée donne lieu à un sens global particulier" (2004:5).[39] I suggest that the relationship between the cleft clause and the rest of the *it*-cleft construction results in a "sens global particulier" that will be characterized differently from both restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses. This relationship is reflected in the Role and Reference Grammar analysis that I present in chapter 6.

To reiterate, in terms of the 'unitary' analysis presented above, (also implicitly argued by Davidse 2000), the difference between the *it*-cleft construction and noun phrases containing relative clauses does not lie necessarily in the nature of the relationship between the clauses and their antecedents as restrictive, non-restrictive, or

[38] As a reflection of this, the Role and Reference Grammar structure for restrictive and non-restrictive noun phrases (given in chapter 4) maintains a similar internal structure for both, while illustrating the different antecedents and with the rest of the construction in which they appear. Note also that the determiner *the* is included in the syntactic diagram in Figure 5.3 for illustrative purposes, though in a Role and Reference Grammar structure the determiner would be represented as an NP-level operator in the operator projection.

[39] "In each case, the association between the relative clause and the construction in which it is embedded gives rise to a unique overall meaning."

otherwise. Rather, what differentiates *it*-clefts from other constructions with relative-type clauses is their 'external syntax'; that is, the nature of the antecedents themselves and the consequent participation in the overall information structure and function of the construction.

Other studies in the literature also emphasize the structural similarities between relative clauses and *it*-clefts. Schachter, for example, suggests an analysis to account for a "deep and non-language-specific relationship" (1973:19) between relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions. For both structures, he suggests a process whereby an element of the underlying sentence is promoted into the foreground; in the case of relative clauses, this element is the head noun, in *it*-clefts, the clefted constituent. Schachter (1973:42) suggests that both the cleft clause in *it*-clefts and relative clauses are therefore 'backgrounded' elements; as subordinate clauses, they are presented as given or presupposed relative to the clefted constituent or head noun.

The reasoning behind Schachter's analysis is quite different from that presented here. He examines syntactic similarities separately from semantic similarities, whereas I have taken an integrated approach to these aspects of structure. Patterning in phenomena such as relativization and pronominalization lead him to suggest a 'promotion' analysis in accounting for these patterns that enables him to account for essentially theory-internal problems related to linear ordering. In order to account for the similarities between *it*-clefts and relative clauses, Schachter is led to posit a similar process of derivation for both structures that, he argues, "underlie the many surface similarities between focus and relative constructions" (1973:35).

While Schachter seeks to demonstrate, through examples from various languages, that the relationship between relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions is non-language-specific, his attempt to apply his English-based theoretical analysis to internally-headed

relative clauses in Bambara (Niger-Congo) runs into problems. He is forced to suggest an underlying structure that enables his derivational process to work, rather than one that reflects the structure of the language. In defence of this approach, he argues, that "if languages like Bambara fail to offer any evidence in favor of a promotion analysis of relativization, they also fail to offer evidence in favor of any familiar alternative" (Schachter 1973:36). It is arguably more plausible that the semantic meaning of a relative clause and its components is shared among other languages than that the elements involved share the same linear order. Since Role and Reference Grammar theory takes elements in the syntax to be semantically motivated, and since it seeks to represent cross-linguistically comparable structures in comparable ways (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:22, Van Valin forth.:3), its application to the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction has the potential to be more cross-linguistically applicable.

This section has focused on a comparison between the *it*-cleft construction and noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses. Since the head of a noun phrase is obviously always a noun, this comparison has focused on *it*-clefts with noun phrases as clefted constituent, although the wider range of antecedents for *it*-clefts is another indication of the difference between the constructions. The comparison focused initially on the types of elements that can occur as head noun and clefted constituent respectively. The antecedent for the relative clause in a noun phrase is the head noun, while the antecedent for the coindexed element in the cleft clause is a complete, referential noun phrase.

In conclusion, the observations made here have implications for the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic interpretations of the *it*-cleft construction. An analysis of the *it*-cleft as a copular construction needs to account for the similarity in function between

the *it*-cleft and other specificational copular constructions while simultaneously allowing for the difference in syntactic structure.

This detailed discussion has also indicated the need for an analysis of relative clauses and cleft clauses both in terms of the nature of their antecedent and their function in the information structure of the sentence as a whole. Both these areas of comparison feature in the Role and Reference Grammar analysis in the following chapter.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a detailed examination of the issues that affect the form and function of the *it*-cleft construction in a theory-neutral discussion. Each component of the *it*-cleft construction – cleft pronoun, clefted constituent and cleft clause – is an integral part of the whole, with a syntactic, semantic and pragmatic role in the interpretation of the construction. These constituents interact in terms of two main relationships: the specificational function of *it*-cleft constructions aligns them with other copular sentences, while the simultaneous relationship between cleft clause and clefted constituent creates a construction that has parallels with relative clauses.

Having reappraised the *it*-cleft construction in the light of the observations made in this chapter, the subsequent chapter presents these findings within a Role and Reference Grammar framework.

6. ROLE AND REFERENCE GRAMMAR ANALYSIS

The previous chapter presented features of the constituents of the *it*-cleft construction and examined the two main relationships that exist within the construction. From this analysis, two main conclusions emerge. Firstly, the syntactic constituents of the *it*-cleft construction do not necessarily mirror semantic or pragmatic constituents in a direct way. Secondly, a thorough understanding of the *it*-cleft construction can only be gained by examining both its copular and relative-type relationships, as well as the way these interact. With these issues defined, the observations and proposals made in chapter 5 are presented in this chapter within a Role and Reference Grammar framework.

The analysis presented here demonstrates the advantages of a Role and Reference Grammar approach: the interlinked syntactic, semantic and pragmatic representations facilitate the understanding of the *it*-cleft construction and its components. In addition, the analysis enables the representation and understanding of the specificational function of the construction, reflected by the use of the copular verb. It simultaneously allows comparisons with relative clause constructions.

In this chapter, I firstly present the syntactic constituent and operator projections in section 6.1. The semantic logical structure is second, followed by the information structure properties of the construction (sections 6.2 and 6.3). Finally, in section 6.4, the linking algorithms are applied to demonstrate the integration of these three broad areas.

6.1 Syntactic representation

Figure 6.1 below presents the syntactic constituent projection for the *it*-cleft construction along with the operator projection. The difference between the structure in (a) and that in (b) lies in the use of a relative pronoun or complementizer *that* in the cleft

clause. (Internal operators of the noun phrase are omitted here; these are discussed further below.)

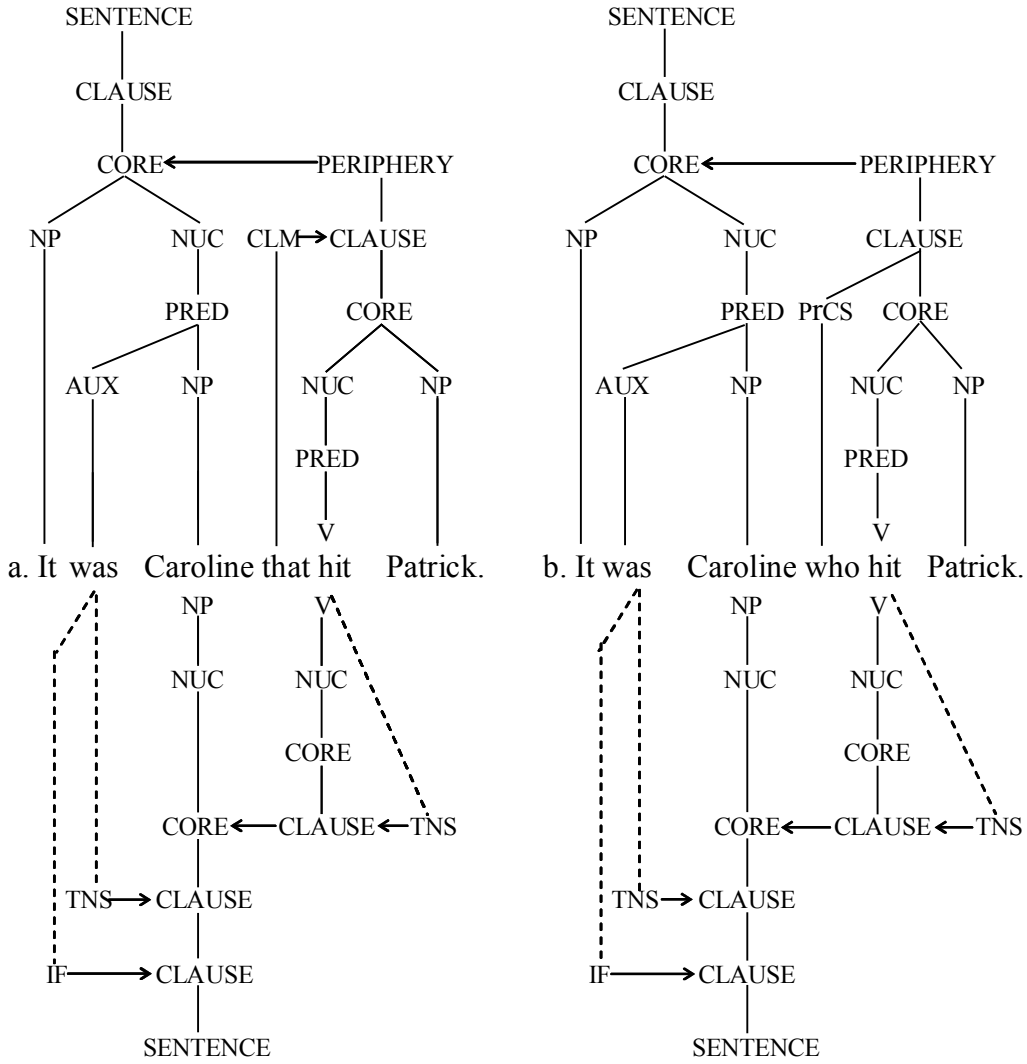

Figure 6.1 Constituent and operator projection for it-*cleft construction*

The operator projection mirrors the syntactic constituent projection: the linked clause is peripheral to the matrix core in the constituent projection and is shown the same way in the operator projection.

6.1.1 The matrix core

In the constituent projection, the clefted constituent is represented as the predicative nucleus within the matrix clause, with the copular verb as an auxiliary. This follows the proposal in chapter 5 that the clefted constituent functions as a type of

pragmatic predicate within the specificational *it*-cleft construction. Since the main predicative function of the sentence is pragmatic rather than semantic, it follows that the nucleus of the main core is filled by the main (pragmatic) predicate. As noted in section 4.1.1, larger constituents such as cores and clauses can also function as the nucleus of a sentence (as demonstrated for French in Pavey 2003a). Figure 6.2 gives the constituent projection for an *it*-cleft construction with a *that*-clause clefted constituent; the *that*-clause is a semantic argument of the cleft clause verb *believe* (operator projection omitted).

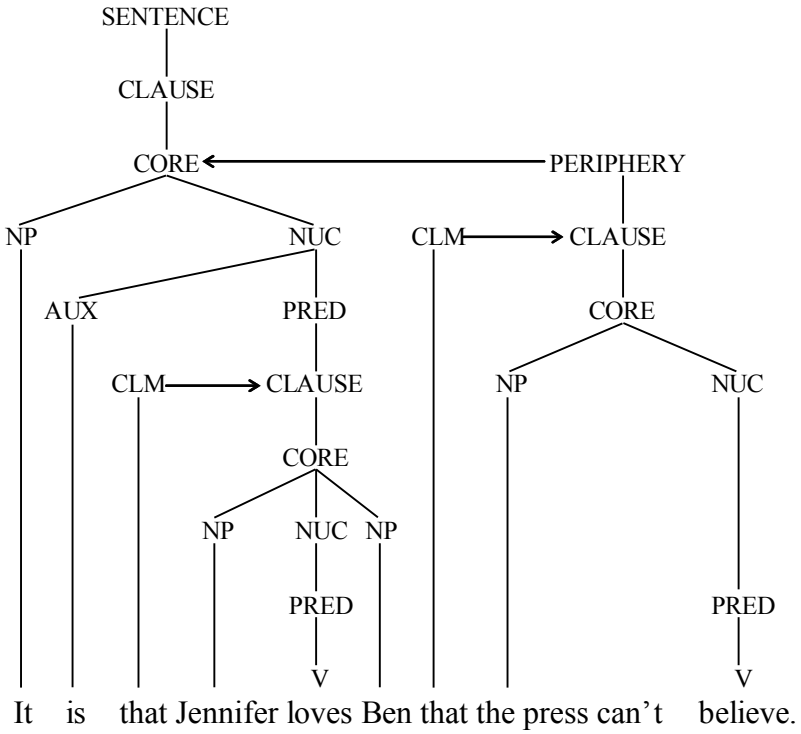

Figure 6.2 It-*cleft construction with* that-*clause as clefted constituent*

The cleft pronoun is represented syntactically as a noun phrase argument within the core. This makes no claims about the status of the noun phrase as a referring expression; its semantically 'dummy' nature is reflected in its absence from the semantic representation of the construction (see section 6.2). Section 5.1.1 discussed the role of the cleft pronoun in reflecting the main semantic function of the cleft

construction (as specificational or existential). The form of the pronoun will therefore need to be specified in the constructional template (see section 6.4.4).

The structure of the matrix clause is similar to those for copular sentences with nouns and adjectives as the predicative elements. Examples of the constituent and operator projections for these structures are given in Figure 6.3 for comparison.

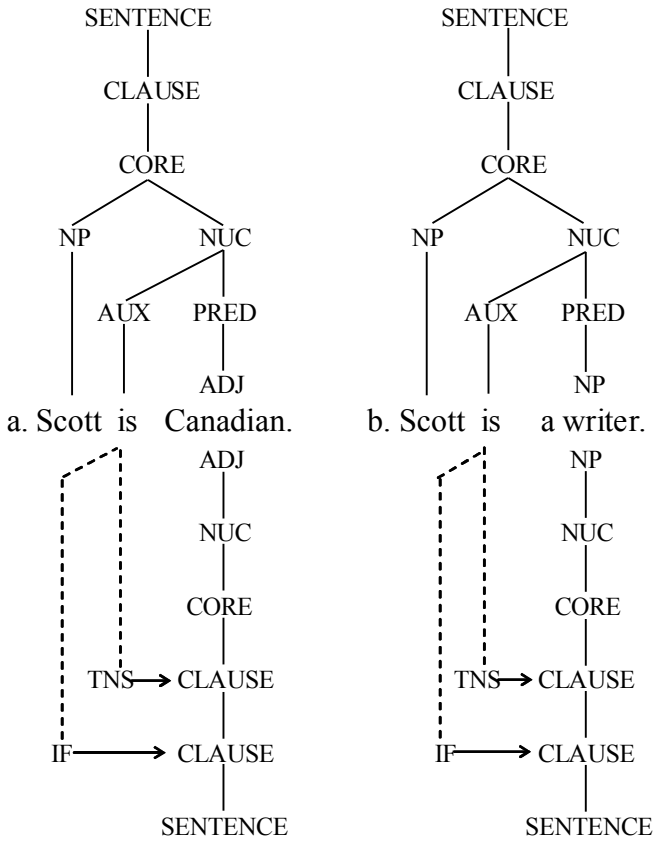

Figure 6.3 Constituent projections for sentences with nominal and adjectival predicates

6.1.2 The cleft clause

In the *it*-cleft structure in Figure 6.1, the subordinate cleft clause is peripheral to the matrix core. One reason for this placement outside the core is that the cleft clause can be omitted, as in (1b).

(1) a. A: Who broke the toaster?
b. B: It was Ben. (…who broke the toaster)

In addition, as discussed above, the coindexation between the variable in the cleft clause and the clefted constituent leads to a structural dependence that is reflected in the placement of the cleft clause in the periphery of the clause.

Within the cleft clause, the complementizer *that* (the 'clause linkage marker') serves to mark the linked clause as subordinate. In cases where a relative pronoun is used, this appears in the pre-core slot (see Figure 6.1b). The structure in Figure 6.1 reflects the formal similarities between *it*-cleft constructions and restrictive relative clauses (discussed in section 5.2.2). The cleft clause is similar to a restrictive relative clause, in internal form and in its peripheral relation to the rest of the construction. Figure 6.4 gives the structure for restrictive relative clauses for comparison (see also Figure 4.14, chapter 4).

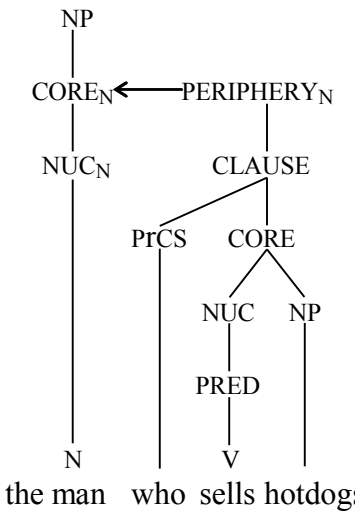

Figure 6.4 Constituent projection for a noun phrase with restrictive relative clause

As noted in chapter 5, there are also key differences between the *it*-cleft and relative clause constructions and these are also reflected in the Role and Reference Grammar representations in Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.4.

Section 5.2.2 discussed the difference between the *it*-cleft and restrictive relative clause constructions in terms of the scope of the NP-level locality or grounding operator of definiteness. In the *it*-cleft construction, the clefted constituent is a referential,

grounded noun phrase before it is 'modified' by the cleft clause. A restrictive relative clause, on the other hand, modifies a head noun and the resulting unit falls under the scope of the definite determiner.

This difference is reflected in the representations for the two constructions. Figure 6.5 below includes the operator projection and clearly shows the difference in scope between the constructions.

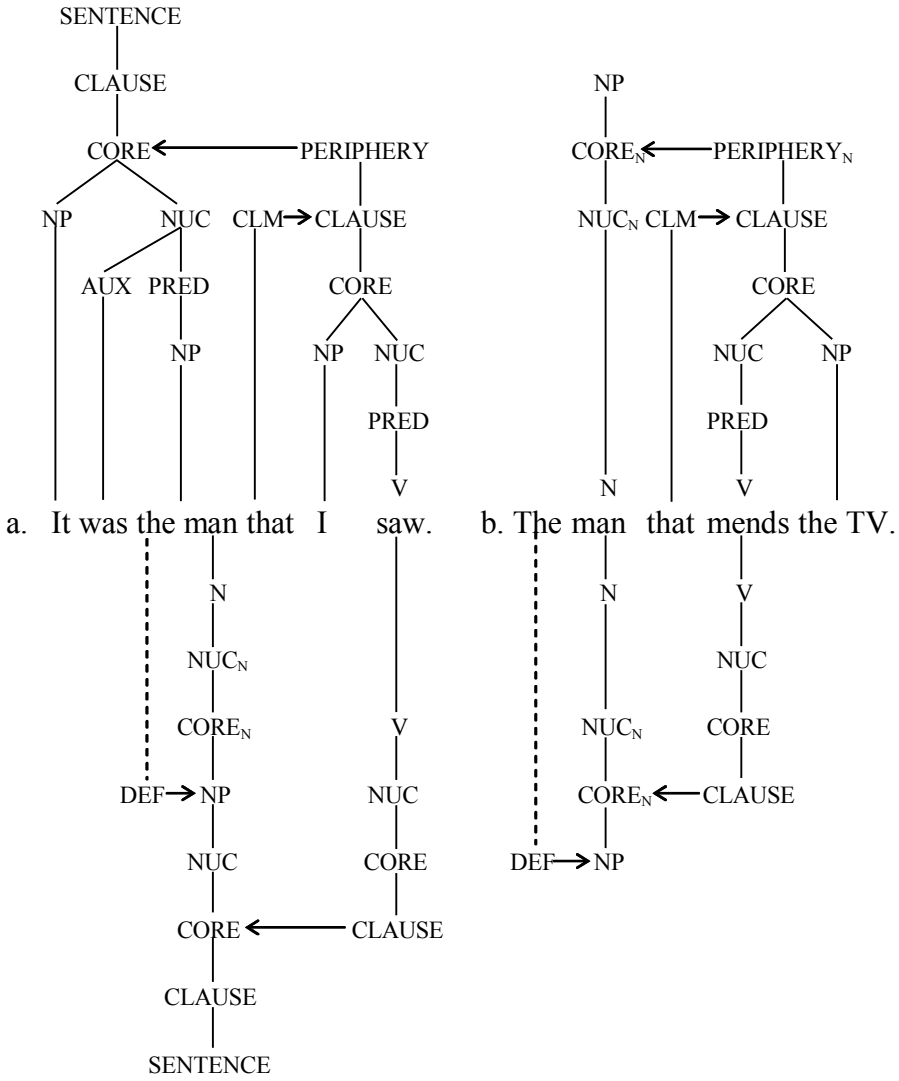

Figure 6.5 Structure for (a) it-clefts and (b) relative clauses showing operator scope

As the structures in Figure 6.5 indicate, the cleft clause of the *it*-cleft is peripheral to the matrix core and the antecedent for its variable is a 'grounded' referring expression (if a noun phrase). Therefore, the cleft clause does not function as a restrictive modifier.

The structure for noun phrases containing relative clauses, on the other hand, shows that the relative clause is peripheral to the $core_N$ containing a head noun. This is a reflection of the restrictive function of that relative clause. To reiterate, these two Role and Reference Grammar structures capture both the formal (clause-internal) similarities and the differences between *it*-cleft and relative clause constructions.

The proposed structure for the *it*-cleft construction also differentiates it from the structure of subordinated *that*-clauses, an example of which is given below as Figure 6.6.

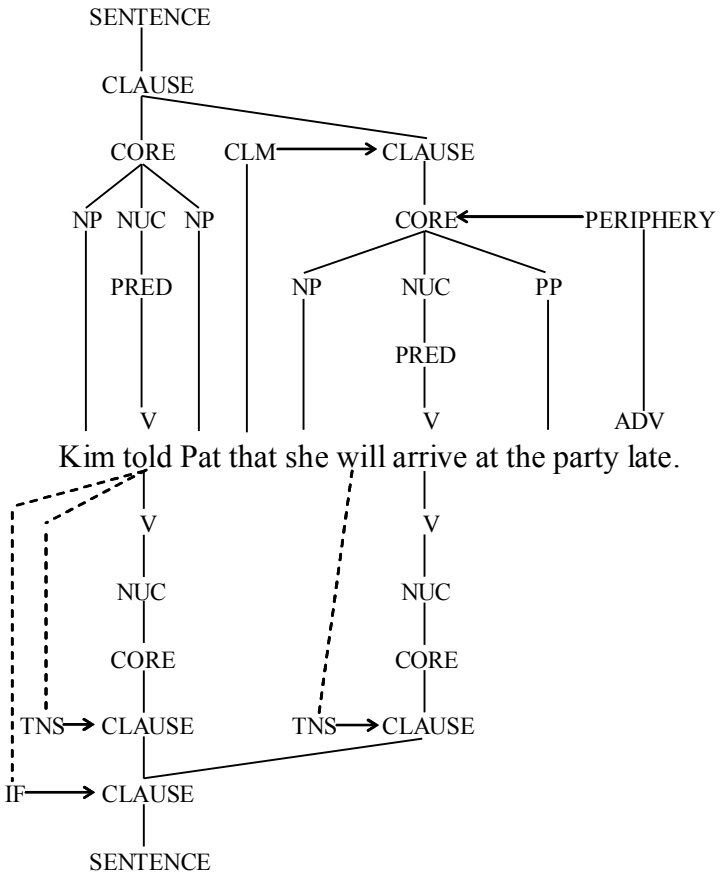

Figure 6.6 Role and Reference Grammar structure for that*-clauses (Van Valin forth.:175)*

The subordinate *that*-clause in Figure 6.6 is a direct daughter of the main clause node rather than peripheral to the core, as explained in section 4.1.4. This subordinate position reflects the fact that potential focus domain extends into the *that*-clause,

following the general constraint governing the potential focus domain in complex sentences, given in (2).

(2) A subordinate clause may be within the potential focus domain if and only if it is a direct daughter of (a direct daughter of) the clause node which is modified by the illocutionary force operator. (Van Valin forth.:190)

As evidence of the fact that subordinate *that*-clauses are within the potential focus domain, consider (3), where the actual focus domain is one element within the *that*-clause. As Van Valin notes, "in order to be the focus of a question, an element must be in the potential focus domain" (forth.:191).

(3) Q: Did Kim tell Pat [that she would arrive at the party LATE]?
A: No, EARLY.

In the *it*-cleft construction, on the other hand, the cleft clause is presupposed and elements within it cannot be questioned, as illustrated in (4). This difference is structurally reflected in the position of the cleft clause as peripheral to the main core, rather than as a direct daughter of the clause node. Note that it is not even possible for the cleft clause to function as a single information unit within the potential focus domain, except in an echoic context: **It was Kim that what?*

(4) Q: Was it Kim [that arrived at the party late]?
A: No, Pat.
A: ??No, early.

The peripheral position of the subordinate (cleft) clause is a feature shared with adverbial subordinate clauses (Figure 6.7). As the example in (5) below illustrates, while the peripheral adverbial constituent as a whole can be questioned, its internal constituents cannot be questioned, demonstrating that they too are outside the potential focus domain:

(5) Q: Did Pat see Kim after she arrived at the party late?

A: a. No, Sally.

b. No, before.

c. ??No, early.

Thus, in both adverbial clauses (such as in Figure 6.7) and in the *it*-cleft construction the subordinate clause is not a direct daughter of the main clause node, but is assigned a position in the periphery.

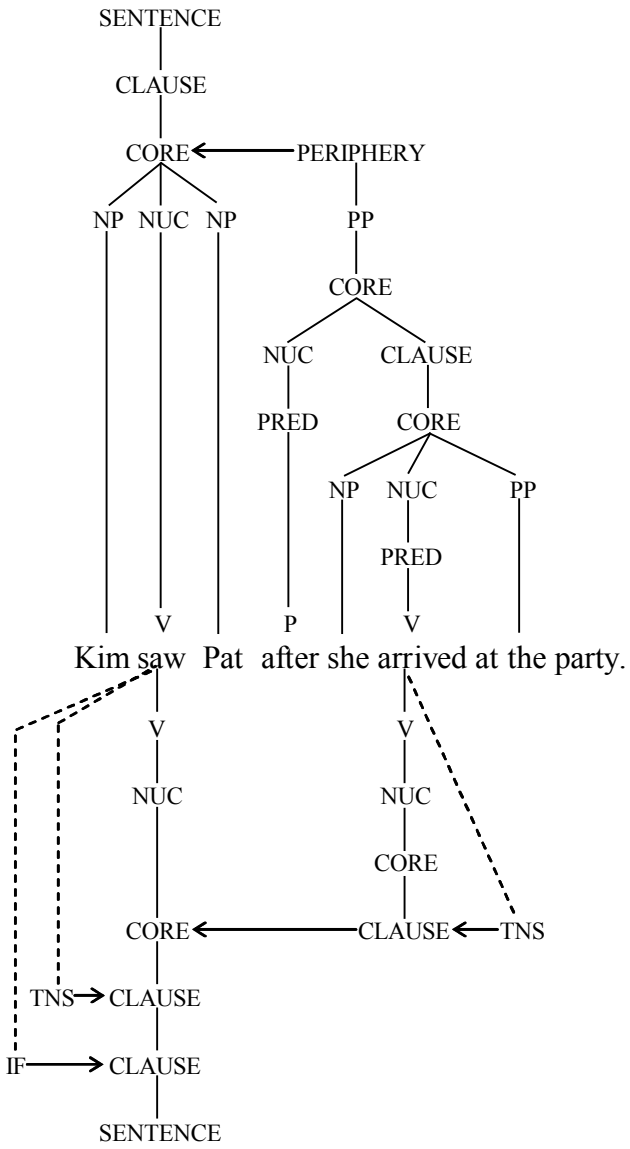

Figure 6.7 Role and Reference Grammar structure for subordinate (adverbial) clauses (Van Valin forth.:185)

The difference between adverbial subordinate clauses and the cleft clause in *it*-clefts lies in their semantic relationship with the matrix core. In adverbial subordinate clauses, the main core is an argument of the predicative preposition in the subordinate clause. In the *it*-cleft, on the other hand, the clefted constituent is coindexed with an argument in the (subordinate) cleft clause.

Finally, it is worth noting that the *it*-cleft construction can appear not only as a complete sentence, but also as a constituent of a complex sentence (also noted by Huddleston 1984:460). The following examples in (6) and Figure 6.8 illustrate the *it*-cleft construction (in square brackets) participating in clausal coordination and subordination.

(6) a. Ian persuaded Mo that [it was Alfie that got married].
CLAUSAL SUBORDINATION

b. Dennis should leave before [it's him that gets blamed].
CLAUSAL SUBORDINATION

c. Ellen sailed round the world and [it was that experience that prompted her to write a book].
CLAUSAL COORDINATION

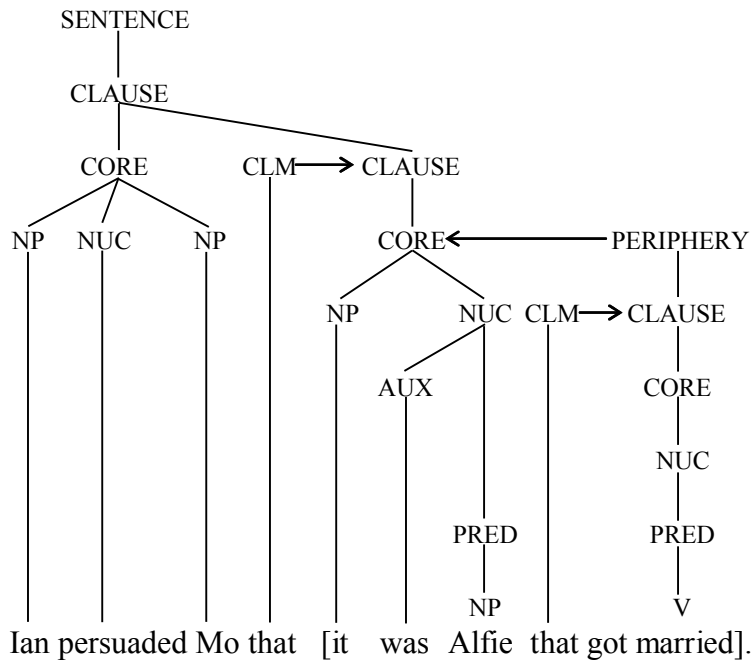

Figure 6.8 Clausal subordination sentence (6a) containing it-*cleft*

The distinctive syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft construction is stored as a syntactic template, one aspect of the constructional template (see section 6.4.4).

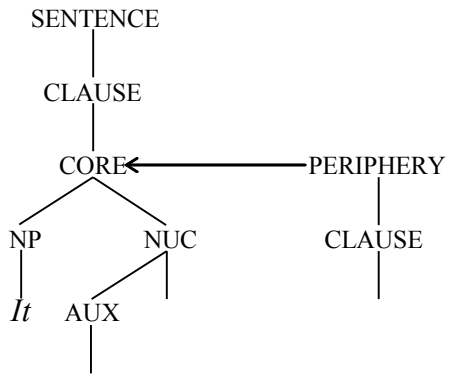

Figure 6.9 Syntactic template for the it*-cleft construction*

6.2 Semantic representation

The proposed logical structure for the *it*-cleft construction is given below in (1) for the example sentence *It's Martha that/who eats octopus.*

(7) a. It's Martha that eats octopus. *IT*-CLEFT WITH *THAT*
be´ ([**do´** (x_i, [**eat´** (x_i, octopus)])], $Martha_i$)

b. It's Martha who eats octopus. *IT*-CLEFT WITH RELATIVE PRONOUN
be´ ([**do´** (who_i, [**eat´** (who_i, octopus)])], $Martha_i$)[1]

The main predicate of the *it*-cleft construction is **be´**, rather than the predicate in the linked clause. The state of affairs described by the sentences in (1) is not the eating of octopus, but is the expression or specification of the identity of Martha, and this is reflected in the syntax by the occurrence of the 'eating' logical structure in a subordinate, linked clause. The semantic representation thus presents the "event structure" (Van Valin, p.c., 3/5/03) of the sentence. The predicate **be´**, with two referring expressions as its arguments, reflects the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction as providing a value for a variable. I noted in sections 2.2, 2.3 and 5.2.1 that specificational sentences are distinctive; they differ in terms of their form and

[1] As an activity verb, *eat* has a basic logical structure of the form [**do´** (x, [**eat´** (x, y)])], see section 4.2.1.

function from 'true' equative sentences (*e.g.* 'identity statements': *Dr Jekyll is Mr Hyde*). I therefore propose to use **be´** rather than **equate´** in the logical structure of the *it*-cleft construction, reserving the **equate´** predicate for 'identity statements' (see section 2.3). In addition, Oberlander and Delin describe clefts in general as "state-making devices…the cleft copula introduces a state description…in addition to whatever eventuality is conveyed by the lexical verb now contained in the presupposed content"(1996:218).[2] The use of the predicate **be´** thus reflects this stative characteristic of the *it*-cleft construction.

The presence of **be´** as main predicate in the *it*-cleft logical structure also patterns with 'identificational/attributive' sentences where the first argument is the single referring argument of the sentence and the predicate nominal or adjective fills the second argument position.[3] As in the *it*-cleft construction, the **be´** predicate is not equivalent to English copular *be*; it does not appear syntactically as the predicative nucleus of the sentence, as discussed above in section 6.1.1 (see Figure 6.3). Examples of 'identificational' and 'attributive' sentences are given in (8) for comparison.

(8) a. Fernanda is a teacher. 'IDENTIFICATIONAL' (PREDICATE NOMINAL)
be´ (Fernanda, [**teacher´**])

b. Fernanda is Brazilian. 'ATTRIBUTIVE' (PREDICATE ADJECTIVE)
be´ (Fernanda, [**brazilian´**])

Returning to the representation for *it*-cleft constructions exemplified in (1), the first argument of the **be´** predicate corresponds to the semantic content of the cleft clause. It contains an element that is coindexed with the second argument of **be´** (which

[2] The authors point out that the term 'state-making' does not imply "any commitment to a transformational or movement account…[but rather] a conceptual operation" (Oberlander and Delin 1996:219).

[3] This use of the terms 'identificational' and 'attributive' by Van Valin and LaPolla (1997) differs from the senses relating to referentiality and cognitive status described above in section 1.4. Identificational refers to constructions with a predicate nominal as nucleus; attributive refers to sentences with an adjective as nucleus.

appears syntactically as the clefted constituent); this coindexation is represented with subscript 'i'. In the examples in (1), the coindexed element is the first argument of **do´**. Where this coindexed element is lexically unfilled (that is, if the clause linkage marker *that*, or zero, appears in the cleft clause), it is not represented in the syntactic representation, since Role and Reference Grammar does not represent syntactic 'gaps'. However, it is represented in the semantic logical structure as 'x' (see (7a)). If a relative pronoun is used, this appears in the logical structure coindexed with the second argument of **be´**, as shown in (7b). Thus, the variable within the specificational construction is represented, within the propositional context of its description, as a referring expression in the semantic representation. The clefted constituent is represented as the second argument of **be´**. It functions as the 'value' or 'pragmatic predicate' and is therefore assigned the second argument predicate slot. The cleft pronoun is not a semantically referring argument and is therefore not represented in the logical structure of the *it*-cleft construction.

It is important to recall that the logical structure of a sentence does not necessarily correspond to the information structure, consisting of its presuppositions and assertions. Van Valin notes that logical structures "do not represent the entire meaning of the sentence; in particular, they do not represent the semantic differences associated with presuppositions at all" (Van Valin, p.c., 3/5/03). However, the meaning and function of the specificational *it*-cleft construction, as identifying a value for a variable, is closely linked to a particular information structure since the variable is presented as presupposed and the value is asserted. Thus, the two semantic arguments of **be´** in an *it*-cleft construction often correspond to these two pragmatic functions, as one tends to represent the variable and one the value.

As noted above, a major difference between the *it*-cleft construction and other specificational constructions such as pseudoclefts is that the latter contain two headed referring expressions. The WH-NP in pseudoclefts is represented as a headless relative clause forming a noun phrase; internally, it contains an attributive **be´** structure with a semantic predicate as its second argument. The WH-word is the head and it is coindexed with a variable in the relative clause within the noun phrase (as for other noun phrases containing relative clauses, see below).[4] The proposed logical structure for pseudoclefts in (9b) and (c) thus differs from that for *it*-cleft constructions (repeated in (9a)).

(9) a. It was the cat that I kicked. *IT*-CLEFT

be´ ([**do´** (I, [**kick´** (I, x_i)])], cat_i)

b. What I kicked was the cat. PSEUDOCLEFT

be´ ([**be´** ($\underline{what}_i$, [**do´** (I, [**kick´** (I, x_i)])])], cat_i)

c. The thing that I kicked was the cat. PSEUDOCLEFT

be´ ([**be´** ($\underline{thing}_i$, [**do´** (I, [**kick´** (I, x_i)])])], cat_i)[5]

---

[4] Headless is somewhat of a misnomer here, given that I suggest the WH-word *what* to be the 'head' of these noun phrases. Only *what* functions straightforwardly as the head of the WH-NP in pseudoclefts. Other headless relative clauses seem to merely provide a description rather than ground this in a particular instance of that description, hence their inability to be interpreted as a specific identifiable variable. I suggest that this different internal structure explains the constraint against them appearing as the WH-NP in pseudoclefts (see (ii) and (iii)). This suggestion is reinforced by the fact that *what* cannot generally appear as the relative pronoun in *it*-clefts (see (iv)).

(i) What I saw was the cat.

(ii) *Who I saw was John.

(iii)*When I went was September.

(iv)*?It was the cat what I kicked.

The interpretation of the WH-word as an internal head in headless or free relative clauses also has parallels with recent derivational accounts (Alexiadou, Law, Meinunger and Wilder 2000:20). Theory-internal motivations (that "moved items do not project") prevent *what* from being the head of a DP, and therefore other proposals suggest an "abstract head" (Alexiadou *et al.* 2000:23-4). Kayne (1994) proposes, for free (headless) relative clauses only, "the incorporation of the *wh*-form into the external determiner [(D, within the DP)]" (Alexiadou *et al.* 2000:24); this assists in explaining its "definite" identifiable interpretation, which I describe above (section 5.1.3.2).

[5] There is also an analogous parallel between *there*-clefts and pseudoclefts such as (i) below (adapted from Heycock and Kroch 2002:152). The pseudocleft in (i) and the *there*-cleft in (ii) present one possible value for the variable within the presupposition 'I kicked x/something'.

Despite the differences between these specificational cleft constructions, in both cases, the first argument of the specificational **be´** predicate contains a variable that is identifiable, specific and non-referential, as defined in section 5.1.3.2. Thus, these structures capture the similarities as well as differences between the constructions.

As noted above and shown in (9b) and (c), the first argument of the main **be´** predicate in the pseudocleft construction is a noun phrase. The head of the noun phrase is coindexed with the second argument of **be´**. This means that pseudoclefts can have a predicational reading as well as a specificational interpretation. The two readings of an example pseudocleft sentence are given in (10) with their respective logical structures.

(10) a. What I heard was a secret. PREDICATIONAL READING
be´ ([**be´** (what, [**hear´** (I, x_i)])], [**secret´**])

b. What I heard was a secret. SPECIFICATIONAL READING
be´ ([**be´** ($what_i$, [**hear´** (I, x_i)])], $secret_i$)

For the predicational reading, the thing that was heard has the property of being confidential. The logical structure for this reading follows the same pattern as for the predicate nominal example in (8a), with a referring first argument of **be´** and a semantic predicate as second argument. In the specificational reading, on the other hand, the thing that was heard is identified as a specific secret. For this reading, the head of the noun phrase forming the first argument is coindexed with the second argument, the value, which is a referring expression.

The **be´** predicate is also used for restrictive relative clause structures, examples of which are given in (11) for comparison.

(11) NP WITH RESTRICTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSE (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:591,596)

a. the student who knows the answer WITH RELATIVE PRONOUN
be´ ($student_i$, [**know´** (who_i, answer)])

(i) There's the cat that I kicked. (…and I also kicked the dog).
(ii) One thing I kicked was the cat. (…and I also kicked the dog).

b. the student that knows the answer WITH *THAT*
be´ (<u>student</u>$_i$, [**know´** (x_i, answer)])

In the *it*-cleft construction, the **be´** predicate structure forms a sentence. In noun phrases containing restrictive relative clauses, on the other hand, the logical structure represents a noun phrase. The underlining of the head noun (as in (11)) indicates this difference.

In both constructions, an argument of the logical structure of the embedded logical structure predicate is coindexed with the clefted constituent or head noun. This is indicated in both structures by a subscript 'i', as (1) and (11) show. Subscript 'i' is also the notation used to represent control constructions, where an argument is 'shared' between two cores. In (12), for example, *Chris* is an argument of the verbs *try* and *see* (represented as 'y'), although the noun phrase only occurs once in the syntactic form of the sentence (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:547).

(12) Chris tried to see Pat.
do´ (Chris$_i$, [**try´** (Chris$_i$, [**see´** (y_i, Pat)])])

In restrictive relative clauses, the logical structure of the linked clause (which modifies the head noun) fills the "'**pred**[**icate**]'' slot in the attributive logical structure" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:591); in other words, it is the second argument of **be´**. This patterns with sentences with nominal or adjectival predicates (such as in (8)). In contrast, it will be immediately apparent that in the logical structure for the *it*-cleft construction in (7), the logical structure of the cleft clause is the first argument of **be´**. This is because it is the clefted constituent rather than the cleft clause that functions in a (pragmatically) predicative role in an *it*-cleft construction.

To reflect the different meaning and functions of the *it*-cleft and *there*-cleft constructions, I propose that **exist´** be used in the semantic representation of *there*-cleft constructions (illustrated in (13a)), in common with other existential constructions such

as in (13b). The rest of the logical structure patterns with *it*-cleft constructions. The use of *there* as pronoun, to mark the existential nature of the construction, is specified in the constructional template for the *there*-cleft (see section 6.4.4).[6]

(13) a. There's John who likes football.
exist´ ([**like´** (who_i, football)], $John_i$)
b. There is a wasp on your back.
exist´ ([**be-on´** (back, wasp)]) (Van Valin, p.c., 22/12/03)

6.2.1 Prepositional phrase clefted constituents

The three types of prepositional phrases described in section 4.2.1.2 can appear as clefted constituents in an *it*-cleft construction. The resulting logical structures vary depending on the type of prepositional phrase, as explained and illustrated below.

Firstly, a prepositional phrase clefted constituent may be coindexed with an argument-marking function in the cleft clause logical structure, as in (14).

(14) It was to me that David gave the flowers/It was me that David gave the flowers to.
be´ ([**do´** (David, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **have´** (x_i, flowers)], me_i)

As (14) shows, in English the preposition can appear with the noun it marks, as part of the clefted constituent, or 'stranded' within the cleft clause. In the semantic representation, argument-marking prepositional phrases (like case agreement) are treated the same way as noun phrase clefted constituents since the prepositions are not represented in the logical structure of the construction but assigned by independent rules (as outlined in section 4.2.1.2).

If the prepositional phrase is of the argument-adjunct type, as in (15), it contains a predicative preposition.[7]

---

[6] Considering the parallels between *there*-clefts and indefinite noun phrases (analogous to those between *it*-clefts and definite noun phrases) discussed in section 5.1.1, it is plausible to suggest that the **exist´** predicate could also be used for indefinite noun phrases, as in (i) below.

(i) a student who knows the answer INDEFINITE NOUN PHRASE
exist´ (student$_i$, [**know´** (who_i, answer)])

(15) It was under the bed (that) Anna put the presents.

be´ ([[**do´** (Anna, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **be-LOC´** (x_i, $presents_j$)]], [**be-under´** (bed, y_j)]$_i$)

These types of *it*-cleft construction require an analysis that gives the 'variable' element in the cleft clause a suitable semantic representation. The variable does not correspond to an argument of the cleft clause core yet there is clearly an underspecified variable element presupposed in the construction for which the clefted constituent provides the value. In order to represent adjunct clefted constituents such as these, I propose the use of an abstract predicate **be-LOC´**. The specification of this abstract predicate and its 'x' argument is given by the coindexed element. The 'y' argument in the logical structure in (15) stands for the second argument of the preposition, which is syntactically represented as the core of the cleft clause. The coindexation between these elements is represented with subscript 'j'.

This use of abstract predicates is not without precedent in Role and Reference Grammar. Van Valin and LaPolla (1997:335), following Jurafsky (1992), use **be-LOC´** and **be-TEMP´** for interrogative sentences such as (16b) and (17b) where the WH-word in the precore slot stands for a predicative prepositional phrase. In other words, the prepositional phrase it represents would be a peripheral adjunct if the sentence were not a question. In (16b), for example, the source of the WH-word in the precore slot needs to be a logical structure like for (16a) but there is no predicative preposition in (16b).

(16) a. Ed saw Carol at the school.
[**be-at´** (school, [**see´** (Ed, Carol)])]

b. Where did Ed see Carol?
[**be-LOC´** (where, [**see´** (Ed, Carol)])]

---

[7] As described in section 4.2.1.2, argument-adjunct prepositions are predicative; rather than modify the clause, they introduce an argument. In other words, one of their arguments is shared with the logical structure of the main verb (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:160).

(17) a. Robin saw Pat after the concert.

[**be-after´** (concert, [**see´** (Robin, Pat)])]

b. When did Robin see Pat?

[**be-TEMP´** (when, [**see´** (Robin, Pat)])]

All that is known is that the WH-word refers to a location; its precise nature (as *at*, *in*, *behind*, *etc.*) is not known. Hence, the abstract predicate is used, and the question word functions as its 'x' argument. The logical structure of the core forms the 'y' argument (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:335).

In the *it*-cleft construction, a similar situation arises. In sentence (15) repeated here as (18), for example, the nature of the predicative preposition along with the argument of that predicate is specified by the clefted constituent (the 'value').

(18) It was under the bed (that) Anna put the presents.

The logical structure of the *it*-cleft construction with an adjunct clefted constituent presented in (15) therefore incorporates these abstract predicates to represent the variable element for which the clefted constituent supplies the value.

As for argument-marking prepositional phrases, if only the argument of the predicative preposition is focused, the preposition can be 'stranded' within the cleft clause (see (19)).[8]

(19) It was the bed that Anna put the presents under.

[8] There appear to be certain constraints on predicative preposition stranding since some prepositional phrases, particularly temporal ones, are much less acceptable.

(i) It was the bed that we found the key under.

(ii) *?It was Tuesday that we found the key on.

I suggest that this could be because in temporal prepositional phrases, the main predicative element is the temporal noun rather than the preposition. Note in this regard that temporal nouns only occur with certain prepositions: *on/*in/*at Tuesday, *on/in/*at June, *on/*in/at midday*, suggesting that these prepositions are rule-assigned like argument-marking prepositions. This has consequences for the linking for *it*-cleft constructions with this type of clefted constituent. Van Valin further discusses the stranding of predicative prepositions within questions (forth.:164-5).

The third type of prepositional phrase consists of adjunct prepositional phrases. When one of these, or an adverb, appears as the clefted constituent, the sentence then contains two logical structures: one for the predicative preposition or adverb and one for the verb in the cleft clause. The latter forms the second argument of the adjunct prepositional phrase. These adjunct predicative prepositions often have locative or temporal meanings, as the sentences in (20b) and (21b) illustrate.

(20) a. Sarah saw Owen at the party.
be-at´ (the party, [**see´** (Sarah, Owen)])
b. It was at the party that/?where Sarah saw Owen.[9] *IT*-CLEFT
c. ?It was the party that Sarah saw Owen at.

(21) a. Sarah saw Owen before the party.
be-before´ (party, [**see´** (Sarah, Owen)])
b. It was before the party that/?when Sarah saw Owen. *IT*-CLEFT
c. ?It was the party that Sarah saw Owen before.

In these *it*-cleft constructions, the logical structure of the cleft clause is 'complete', in the sense that it does not have an argument 'missing'. However, these are once again still specificational structures: they identify an element within the prepositional phrase, or the whole prepositional phrase, as the value. For example, (21b) could have the readings and associated presuppositions in (22) or (23) (underlining indicates focused element).

(22) a. It was before the party that Sarah saw Owen.
b. Presupposition: Sarah saw Owen at a certain point in time in relation to the time of the party (*e.g.* contrasting with *after the party*).
Focus: 'before'

[9] Grammaticality judgements for these *it*-clefts with relative pronouns vary. Davidse (2000:1106), for example, considers the sentence in (i) ungrammatical, whereas for me it is marginally acceptable. Example (ii), on the other hand, is ungrammatical.
(i) *It is in November when you should prune the roses.
(ii) *It is for this reason why Bob quit his job.

(23) a. It was before the party that Sarah saw Owen.

b. Presupposition: Sarah saw Owen before a certain event (*e.g.* contrasting with *movie*).

Focus: 'the party'.

Like for argument-adjunct prepositional phrases, I propose the use of abstract predicates (**be-LOC´** and **be-TEMP´**) to represent *it*-cleft constructions with adjunct prepositional phrases as clefted constituent, as shown in (24a) and (b).

(24) a. It was at the party that Sarah saw Owen.

be´ ([**be-LOC´** (x_i, [**see´** (Sarah, Owen)]$_j$)], [**be-at´** (the party, y_j)]$_i$)

b. It was before the party that Sarah saw Owen.

be´ ([**be-TEMP´** (x_i, [**see´** (Sarah, Owen)]$_j$)], [**be-before´** (the party, y_j)]$_i$)

Temporal predicate adjuncts (such as *yesterday*) take only one argument, which is the core that they have scope over, as shown in (25).[10]

(25) It was yesterday that Samuel baked a cake.

be´ ([**be-TEMP´** (x_i, [[**do´** (Samuel, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **baked´** (cake)]]$_j$)], [**yesterday´** (y_j)]$_i$)

This use of abstract predicates can also be applied to noun phrases containing relative clauses, as illustrated in (26a) and (b). The content of the relative clause forms the 'y' argument of the **be´** predicate and this includes an abstract predicate of the type described above.

(26) a. the party where Sarah saw Owen

[**be´** (party$_i$, [**be-LOC´** (where$_i$, [**see´** (Sarah, Owen)])])]

b. the day when Sarah saw Owen

[**be´** (day$_i$, [**be-TEMP´** (when$_i$, [**see´** (Sarah, Owen)])])]

One difference between relative clauses (such as (26)) and *it*-cleft constructions (such as (24)) is that in the former the head noun is coindexed with the argument of the abstract predicate but the nature of the predicate remains abstract. In (26a), for example,

[10] This class of adjuncts includes other temporal nouns or phrases where the period involved is part of the meaning of the word, *e.g. (on) Tuesday*, *(in) June*, *(at) midday*.

party can be understood only as a location, not as the argument of a specific predicative preposition such as **be-at´** or **be-in´**, for example.[11]

This difference between relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions is related to their distinctive functions. The function of a noun phrase containing a restrictive relative clause is not to specify the value for a variable; instead, the relative clause modifies the head noun, narrowing possible referents for the description (*the party*, in the case of (26a)). In an *it*-cleft construction with an adjunct clefted constituent, on the other hand, the function of the clefted constituent is to provide the 'identity' or value of the abstract predicate. Hence, in contrast to (26), (27) shows that the WH-words *where* and *when* are not used as part of the clefted constituent without a temporal or locative predicative preposition.

(27) a. *It was the house where Sarah saw Owen.
b. *It was the party when Sarah saw Owen.

Another consequence of the difference in function is that 'fully specified' temporal predicates (such as *yesterday*, *(on) Tuesday*, *etc.*) can occur as the clefted constituent of an *it*-cleft, specifying the value for a variable, but not as the head noun of a relative clause (as was also the case for proper nouns).

(28) a. It was yesterday that/when Billy started to worry.
b. *the yesterday when Billy started to worry.

The linking for these more complex sentences is discussed in more detail below in section 6.4.3.

[11] When the head noun is a temporal word, the relative pronoun can be replaced with *that* or zero since the nature of the head noun helps define the abstract predicate as temporal rather than locative (see (i)). This is clearly not possible when the head noun is ambiguous in this regard, as in (ii), unless the preposition is stranded, as in (iii).
(i) the day when/that/Ø Sarah saw Owen.
(ii) the party where/when/*that/*Ø Sarah saw Owen.
(iii) the party that Sarah saw Owen at/after.

6.2.2 Reflexivization

Within Role and Reference Grammar, the conditions on reflexivization are semantically based. In this section, I give an overview of the conditions on reflexivization. I explain that a reflexive pronoun and its binder may appear in different syntactic clauses in an *it*-cleft construction since it is their semantic relationship that is significant.

The constraint on the domain of obligatory reflexivization is given below in (29).

(29) Domain of Obligatory Reflexivization Constraint

One of two coreferring semantic co-arguments within a simple clause must be realized as a reflexive, while one of two coreferring syntactic arguments (which are not semantic co-arguments) within a simple clause may be realized as a reflexive. (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:405)

The example in (30a) illustrates the first part of the constraint in (29). The predicate **hit´** has two coreferring semantic co-arguments (indicated by subscript 'i') and so one is required to appear as a reflexive. Example (30b) illustrates coreferring syntactic co-arguments within a simple clause that are not semantic co-arguments (as they are separated by ∧). The example shows that in these cases reflexivization is optional.[12]

(30) a. Jack_i kicked himself_i/*him_i.

do´ (Jack, [**hit´** (Jack_i, *him_i/himself_i)])

b. Pamela got spaghetti sauce on her_i/herself_i.

[**do´** (Pamela_i, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **have´** (Pamela, spaghetti sauce) ∧ BECOME **be-on´** (her_i/herself_i, spaghetti sauce)]

In terms of the relationship between the lexical antecedent and the reflexive pronoun, two related conditions determine that the position of the antecedent (binder) in the logical structure should be higher or superior to the coreferring pronoun (the bound

[12] Various factors such as affectedness of the argument determine how optional the reflexivization is (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:406).

variable). These are given as (31) and (32) (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:398, 400; based on Jackendoff 1972, 1992).

(31) Role Hierarchy Condition

The reflexive pronoun must not be higher on the privileged syntactic argument (PSA) selection hierarchy (repeated below) than its antecedent.

Privileged Syntactic Argument Selection Hierarchy

arg of DO > 1st arg of **do´** > 1st arg of **pred´** (x, y) > 2nd arg of **pred´** (x, y) > arg of **pred´** (x)

(32) a. Logical structure superiority (LS-superiority)

A constituent P in logical structure is LS-superior to a constituent Q iff there is a constituent R in logical structure such that

(i) Q is a constituent of R, and

(ii) P and R are primary arguments of the same logical structure.

b. Superiority Condition on reflexivization

A bound variable may not be LS-superior to its binder.

In other words, arguments representing the actor macrorole are universally the antecedents for undergoer arguments (Van Valin forth.:148) and the binder cannot be subordinate to the bound variable in the logical structure (and as reflected in the syntax). These semantic principles account for the ungrammaticality of sentences such as those in (33). In (33a), the reflexive pronoun is higher on the hierarchy in (31); in (33b) the bound variable is 'LS-superior' to its binder.

(33) a. *Herself$_i$ saw Jane$_i$.

see´ (herself$_i$, Jane$_i$)

b. *Jane$_i$'s mother saw herself$_i$.

see´ ([**have.as.kin´** (Jane$_i$, mother)], herself$_i$)

The logical structures of *it*-cleft constructions are similar, to some extent, to those for their non-cleft counterpart sentences. As such, the semantic explanation for the patterns of reflexivization in *it*-cleft constructions is relatively straightforward: the syntactic linear order of elements and the linear precedence of the reflexive pronoun in particular, is not a

complication to the account, as the following examples in (34) illustrate. (As before, subscript 'i' marks coindexation; reflexive binding is indicated by superscript 'i'.)

(34) a. It was Nick that saw himself.

be´ ([**see´** (x_i^i, himself^i)], $Nick_i$)

b. It was himself that Nick saw.

be´ ([**see´** ($Nick^i$, x_i^i)], $himself_i$)

c. *It was himself that saw Nick.

be´ ([**see´** (x_i^i, $Nick^i$)], $himself_i$)

As was the case in (30a), the arguments of **see´** are coreferential and so one has to appear as a reflexive (following (29))[13]. In the case of (34b), for example, the second argument of **see´** is the variable that is coindexed with the second argument of **be´**. Therefore, the latter argument appears as a reflexive pronoun. The ungrammatical sentence in (34c) fails for the same reason that the non-cleft sentence in (33a) (or **Himself saw Nick*) fails: it conflicts with the Role Hierarchy Condition (in (31)) since the reflexive argument (or the coreferring non-lexical argument) is higher on the PSA selection hierarchy than its antecedent.[14]

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[13] Some speakers accept *it*-cleft constructions with first and second person pronouns as clefted constituent and first person reflexives in the cleft clause, as in (i). In dialects where both first and third person referents are accepted, the variations appear to have different presuppositions.

(i) It's me who protects myself. FIRST PERSON REFLEXIVE
Presupposition: someone protects the speaker.

(ii) It's me who protects himself/herself/themself. THIRD PERSON REFLEXIVE
Presupposition: someone protects themselves (/'self-protects').

Examples such as (i) are nonetheless grammatically anomalous in the sense that the coindexed variable triggers verb agreement in the cleft clause in number but not person (*protects*), and yet prompts the use of a reflexive that does agree in person. It may be that the reflexive pronoun is agreeing, 'via' the variable, with the person of the clefted constituent referent, while the variable itself controls verb agreement. As noted above, the variable is non-referential (in the sense of section 1.1.4) and so does not carry the deictic, referential feature of person. Sornicola (1988) argues that in "the most widespread variety of English" (unspecified), the verb agrees in person, giving (iii), where *cut* is presumably interpretable in the present tense. This is ungrammatical in my dialect (south-eastern British English).

(iii) It is me that cut myself. (Sornicola 1988:350)

[14] As noted in section 2.1.2.3, there are certain cases where an *it*-cleft sentence with reflexive pronoun as clefted constituent can have an ambiguous reading that is not present in the non-cleft counterpart sentences. These seem to involve core and clause junctures within the

An interesting difference between pseudocleft and *it*-cleft constructions is illustrated by the use of reciprocal pronouns, as noted by Heycock and Kroch (2002:155). A reciprocal pronoun can occur as the focused element in a pseudocleft but not in an *it*-cleft construction (compare (25b) and (c)). However, reciprocal pronouns can occur as possessive markers within noun phrases, as illustrated in (36).

(35) a. *Each other amuse them.
  b. What amuses them is each other. PSEUDOCLEFT
  c. *It is each other that amuses them. *IT*-CLEFT

(36) a. Each other's photos amuse them.
  b. What amuses them is each other's photos. PSEUDOCLEFT
  c. It is each other's photos that amuses (amuse?) them. *IT*-CLEFT

This is not merely a question of the linear order of pronoun and antecedent; example (34b) illustrates that the bound pronoun may linearly precede its binder. The non-cleft example in (25a) is ungrammatical because the reciprocal pronoun is the argument represented as actor; in other words, within the logical structure for the sentence, the bound argument is higher on the PSA-selection hierarchy than its antecedent. There are circumstances in which a coreferring reciprocal pronoun can be the actor argument, while reflexive pronouns do not occur in that environment, as the examples below in (37) and (38) show (Van Valin forth.:150).

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subordinate cleft clause. Two examples are given below in (i) and (ii) along with their logical structure semantic representations and non-cleft counterparts. In (i.a), the reflexive can be coreferential with either John or Bill, and in (ii.a) a reflexive is required for coreference with *Bob*, while it is not permitted in the non-cleft version.

(i) (a) It was himself$^{i/j}$ that John^{j} persuaded Bill^{i} to hit.
be´ ([**do´** (John^{j}, [**say´** (John^{j}, Ø)])] CAUSE [**want´** (Bill^{i}, [**do´** (Bill^{i}, **hit´** (Bill^{i}, x$^{i/j}$))])], himself$^{i/j}$)
  (b) John^{j} persuaded Bill^{i} to hit himself$^{i/*j}$.

(ii) (a) It was himself^{i}/*him^{i} that Bob^{i} claimed had been hit.
be´ ([**do´** (Bob^{i}, [**claim´** (Bob^{i}, [**do´** (Ø, [**hit´** (Ø, x^{i})])])])], himself^{i})
  (b) Bob^{i} claimed he^{i}/*himself^{i} had been hit.

It is possible that, in these types of sentences, the reflexive pronouns are being used emphatically. Trask observes such "seemingly anomalous" emphatic uses of reflexive pronouns, "as in *This paper was written by Lisa and myself*…such occurrences are probably best regarded as not true reflexives at all, but as mere emphatic forms of personal pronouns" (1993:234).

(37) a. *The men were shaved by themselves.[15] REFLEXIVE PRONOUN

b. **do´** (themselves^{i}, [**shave´** (themselves^{i}, men^{i})])

c. **do´** (man^{i}, [**shave´** (man^{i}, man^{j})]), i = j

(38) a. The men were shaved by each other. RECIPROCAL PRONOUN

b. **do´** (each.other^{i}, [**shave´** (each.other^{i}, men^{i})])

c. **do´** (man^{i}, [**shave´** (man^{i}, man^{j})]) ∧ **do´** (man^{j}, [**shave´** (man^{j}, man^{i})])

The grammaticality of the example in (38) (and the ungrammaticality of the *it*-cleft construction in (34c) above) suggest that the reciprocal pronoun can only be represented as the actor argument when it is expressed syntactically in a peripheral *by*-phrase. In such sentences, the lexical noun phrase antecedent (*e.g. the men* in (38)) remains the privileged syntactic argument of the main core.

The reciprocity or two-way relationship expressed by the use of a reciprocal differentiates them from reflexives. The logical structure for the sentence in (37a) violates the hierarchy in (31) since the reflexive pronoun *themselves* is the first argument of **do´**. The fuller logical structure for sentence (38a) (given in (38c)) shows that reciprocals consist of two readings, one of which does not violate the Role Hierarchy Condition (forth.:150), and hence the sentence is grammatical.

The difference between the grammaticality of the pseudocleft construction in (25b) and the *it*-cleft construction in (25c) above arises, I suggest, from the element with which the focused constituent is coindexed. These sentences are repeated below with their respective logical structures.[16]

(39) a. [What amuses them]$_{NP}$ is [each other]$_{NP}$. PSEUDOCLEFT

be´ ([**be´** (<u>what</u>$_{ij}$, x$_{i}^{i}$ CAUSE [**feel´** (them^{i} [**amused´** (them^{i})])])], each.other$_{j}$)

[15] This sentence obviously has a grammatical reading whereby the men were alone when they were shaved by someone else. However, there is no reading available where the men were simultaneously the actors and undergoers of the shaving process.

[16] The referent of the noun phrases marked with 'i' have the same referent as those marked with 'j' (i = j); the different variables are used to distinguish the coindexed relationships; between the head noun *what* and a variable within the relative clause on the one hand, and between the head noun and the second argument of **be´** on the other.

b. *It is [each other]$_{NP}$ [that amuses them]$_{CLAUSE}$. *IT*-CLEFT
be´ ([x_j^i CAUSE [**feel´** (them^i [**amused´** (them^i)])]], each.other$_j$)

The focused second argument of **be´** (the reciprocal pronoun) in the *it*-cleft construction is coindexed directly with a variable within the logical structure of the cleft clause verb (*amuse* in (39)). In the pseudocleft construction, on the other hand, the focused element is coindexed with the head of the first noun phrase argument of **be´**, namely *what*.

In other words, the semantic representation for the pseudocleft in (39a) indicates that the noun phrase headed by *what* and the 'value' constituent are coreferential; thus the latter (which, as the second argument of **be´**, has a lower position in the logical structure), is marked as a reciprocal pronoun. The problem with the grammaticality of the *it*-cleft construction in (39b) appears to be that the argument with which the reciprocal pronoun clefted constituent is coindexed is the actor argument of the logical structure of *amuse*. As mentioned above, reciprocal pronouns can only be the actor argument of the logical structure if the reciprocal pronoun appears outside of the main core in a *by*-phrase. Since this is not the case in the *it*-cleft construction, the sentence is ungrammatical.

This analysis is supported by the grammaticality of (36c), repeated below as (40) with its semantic representation. In this construction, the reciprocal pronoun is part of the noun phrase *each other's photos* and it is this noun phrase, rather than the reciprocal pronoun itself, that is coindexed with the variable in the logical structure of *amuse*. The first argument of **have´** is marked as coreferring with *them* and as such, and as inferior in its position in the logical structure, appears as a reciprocal pronoun.[17]

[17] A similarity in patterning with negative polarity markers such as *not…any* suggests the plausibility of an analogous analysis whereby the status of the WH-NP in pseudoclefts as a headed referring expression coindexed with the value expression affects the grammaticality of such constructions. See (i-iii) below (from Heycock and Kroch 2002:154).

(40) It is each other's photos that amuse them.

be´ ([x_i^i CAUSE [**feel´** (them^i [**amused´** (them^i)])]], [**have´** (each.other^i, photos)]$_i$)

Thus, the difference between the logical structures of pseudoclefts and *it*-cleft constructions presented in this Role and Reference Grammar analysis throws light on issues of coindexation between semantic arguments such as reflexivization and reciprocals.[18]

6.3 Information structure

A key feature of the specificational *it*-cleft construction (and cleft constructions in general) is its largely unambiguous information structure that is reflected in its syntactic structure. The cleft clause is subordinate and is interpretated as presupposed or backgrounded, rather than as asserted.[19] It is outside the actual focus domain, as discussed above in section 6.1.2. As a reflection of this, the examples in (4), repeated here as (41), show that elements within the cleft clause cannot be questioned.

(i) *Any firemen weren't available.
(ii) What wasn't/weren't available was/were any firemen.
(iii) *It was any firemen that weren't available.

[18] One can also compare pseudoclefts and *it*-clefts where the 'value' element of the cleft construction is a proposition, as in (i) and (ii) below. This is only possible with pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts, not in *it*-clefts. This is again because in the former, the proposition *boil them in a pint of water* is coindexed with *what*, the head of the noun phrase *what I've done*. In the *it*-cleft, there is no possibility of having an unexpressed predicate 'variable' in the cleft clause, but neither can an anaphoric *done* appear.

(i) What I've done is boil them in a pint of water. PSEUDOCLEFT
(ii) *It is boil them in a pint of water that I've (done). *IT*-CLEFT

It is interesting to note that speakers sometimes repeat elements given in the WH-NP, as (iii) and (iv) illustrate. Speakers seem to use the WH-NP and copula within these pseudoclefts as a discourse marker focusing attention on the following clause (also noted by Massam 1999). A similar development is the repetition of the copula verb, as in (v).

(iii) What I've done is I've boiled them in a pint of water. (Delia Smith *How to Cook*, broadcast BBC2, 3rd November 2003)
(iv) What I want to do is I want to make a sort of caramelized thing. (*Ready Steady Cook,* broadcast BBC2, 26th January 2004)
(v) What I asked was was who disappeared. (message posted to www.linguistlist.org 13/1/04 by P. McConvell)

[19] As noted in section 2.2.1.1, in the case of 'informative-presupposition' *it*-clefts, the content of the cleft clause may not be presupposed or known to the hearer. Nonetheless, its presentation within the subordinate cleft clause often marks it as information that is to be taken as established but not necessarily known to the hearer (Prince 1978:898).

(41) Q Was it Kim that arrived at the party late?

A No, Pat.

A ??No, early.

A ??No, the concert.

The other element in the *it*-cleft construction with semantic meaning is the post-copular clefted constituent (assuming the cleft pronoun to be a non-referring expression). Since specificational cleft constructions are always narrow focus constructions, the actual focus domain is always the nucleus of the matrix core. Figure 6.10 illustrates the focus structure projection for the specificational *it*-cleft construction.

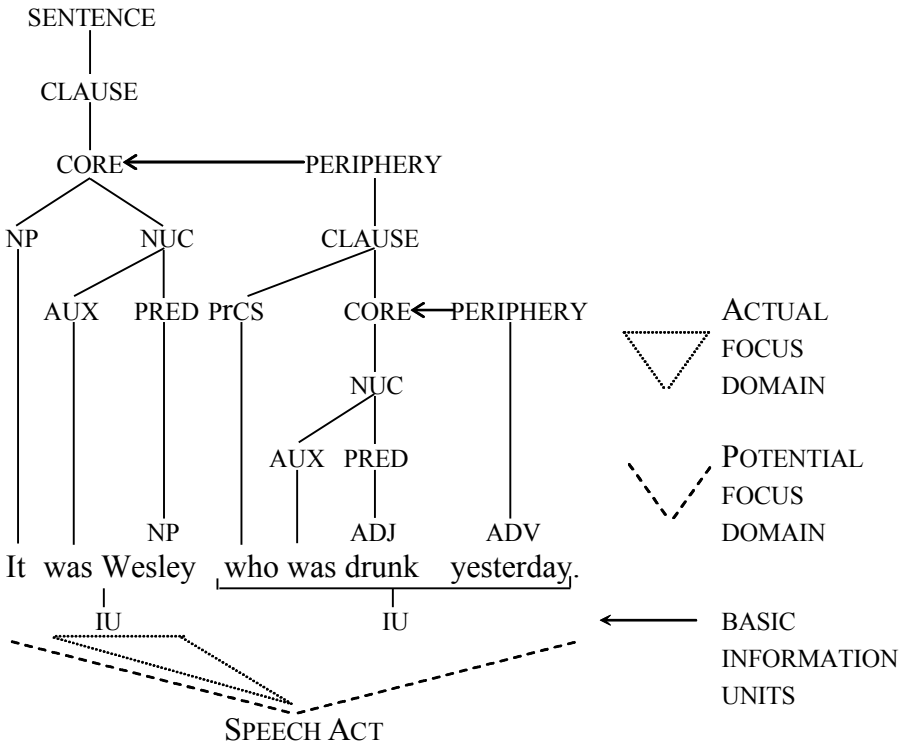

Figure 6.10 Focus structure projection of the it-cleft construction

The relatively unambiguous focus structure of cleft constructions differentiates them from other sentence types where the actual focus domain can be any element in the sentence (see section 4.4.3). Since the specificational *it*-cleft construction has unambiguous narrow focus structure, its focus structure is stored with the syntactic

template (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:234). Thus, Figure 6.11 is an enhanced version of Figure 6.9.

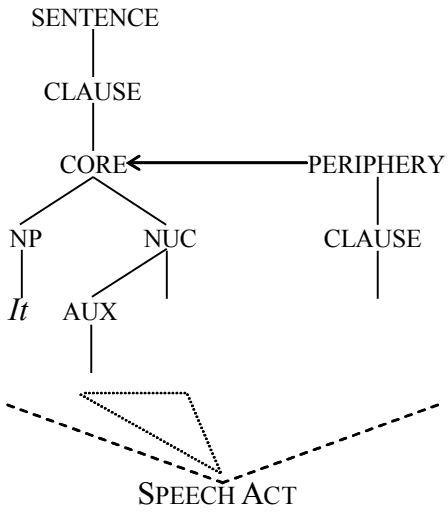

Figure 6.11 Syntactic template for English specificational it*-cleft construction including focus structure projection*

It was noted above in section 6.2 that while logical structures do not represent the semantic differences associated with presuppositions, the pragmatic specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction and its relatively unambiguous syntactic structure mean that certain aspects of the information structure of the sentence can be determined from the syntactic and semantic representations. The first and second arguments of the **be´** predicate within a specificational logical structure are the 'variable' and the 'value' of the construction.

6.3.1 Negation and information structure

As noted in section 2.1.2.2, negation and quantification interact with focus structure in complex ways. This interaction is illustrated in this section by providing a Role and Reference Grammar analysis for *it*-cleft constructions involving negation and *because*-adverbial clauses. Heggie (1993) draws attention to the use of negation in sentences with subordinate *because*-phrases, such as (42b) (negation marker underlined).

(42) a. John said it because it was rude.

b. John didn't say it because it was rude.

The syntactic and semantic structure of such constructions interacts with negative operators to create ambiguity between two readings. Heggie (following Horn 1985) calls the first reading 'non-metalinguistic'. In this reading, the sentence "states that something was not uttered, and this was because it would have been rude to do so" (Heggie 1993:51). This corresponds to core-level negation in Role and Reference Grammar terms. The alternative 'metalinguistic' interpretation is that "something was said, not because it was rude, but for some other reason" (1993:51). This second reading thus does not negate the act of speaking (as does the first), but rather negates rudeness as the reason for John's utterance. This corresponds most closely to clause-level negation in Role and Reference Grammar terms.[20] Sentences such as (42b) represent an interesting complication when various of their constituents appear as the clefted constituent in an *it*-cleft construction, as analyzed below.

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[20] Heggie interprets Horn's (1985) category of 'metalinguistic' negation as a difference of scope (1993:51). However, Horn's explanation of the term relates more to the interpretation of negation than its scope (necessarily). He defines metalinguistic negation as "a means for objecting to a previous utterance on any grounds whatever" and as an "extended use of negation as a way for speakers to announce their unwillingness to assert something in a given way, or to accept another's assertion of it in that way" (Horn 1985:134-5). Thus, it seems that a sentence may have core/internal or clausal/external negation and be interpreted metalinguistically or non-metalinguistically, as the following examples indicate ((i) and (iii) from Horn 1985:130,133).

(i) John didn't MANAGE to solve the problems, (they were quite easy for him to do).
CORE/INTERNAL SCOPE, METALINGUISTIC INTERPRETATION

(ii) John didn't read THE BOOK, (he read the magazine).
CORE/INTERNAL SCOPE, NON-METALINGUISTIC ('DESCRIPTIVE') INTERPRETATION

(iii) I'm not his daughter, (he's my father).
CLAUSAL/EXTERNAL SCOPE, METALINGUISTIC INTERPRETATION

(iv) John didn't read stories to the children, (he went to the pub).
CLAUSAL/EXTERNAL SCOPE, NON-METALINGUISTIC ('DESCRIPTIVE') INTERPRETATION

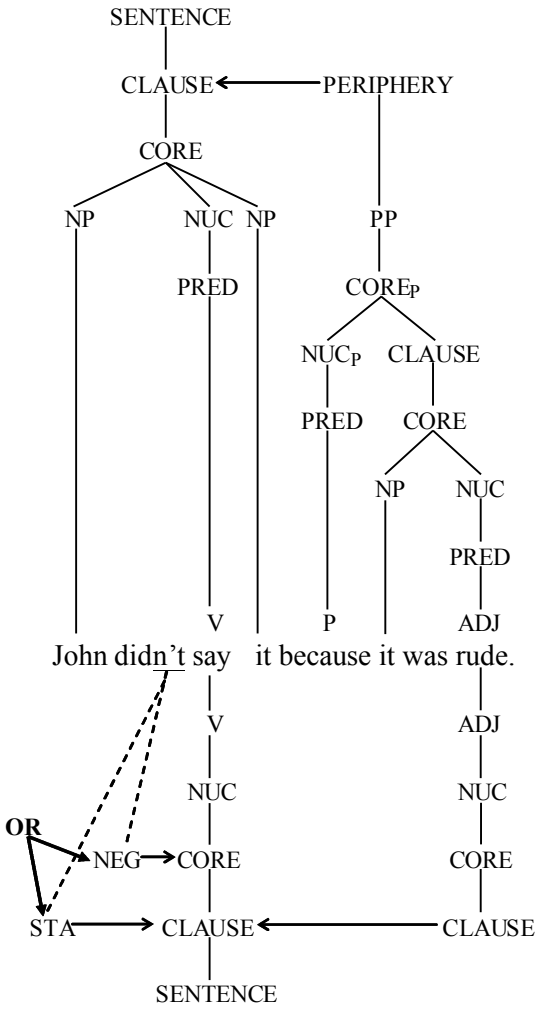
It is important to note that *it*-cleft constructions display both Horn's (1985) non-metalinguistic and metalinguistic interpretations with core-level negation.

(v) It wasn't JOHN that I saw, (it was BILL). NON-METALINGUISTIC

(vi) It wasn't monGEESE that I saw, (it was monGOOSES). METALINGUISTIC.

The discussion in this section concerns the availability of the reading that Heggie terms 'metalinguistic', which seems to correspond to clausal-level negation.

Firstly, the syntactic structure of (42b) needs to be established. Subordinating conjunctions are treated as predicative prepositions in Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:464) and the *because*-phrase is a constituent of the clausal periphery (Van Valin, p.c., 1/3/04; see Figure 6.12, negation marker underlined).



Core negation logical structure:

[**because**′ ([**be**′ (it^{i}, **rude**′)], ⟨$_{NEG}$*NEG* ⟨[**do**′ (John, [**say**′ (John, it^{i})])]⟩⟩)]

Clause negation logical structure:

⟨$_{STA}$*NEG* ⟨[**because**′ ([**be**′ (it^{i}, **rude**′)], [**do**′ (John, [**say**′ (John, it^{i})])])]⟩⟩

Figure 6.12 Core and clause level negation in (42b)[21]

[21] The verb *say* has a complex logical structure that is not fully represented in Figure 6.12 for the sake of clarity. The general logical structure for verbs of saying is as in (i) below (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:117).

(i) **do**′ (x, [**express** (á)**.to.**(â)**.in.language.**(ã)′ (x, y)])

In the logical structure, this relationship is also reflected: in the case of (42b), the **because**´ predicate takes *it was rude* as its first argument, and the logical structure of the main core as its second argument. The focus structure of the sentence is also significant: the potential focus domain in (42b) is the whole sentence. As Figure 6.12 shows, in the Role and Reference Grammar structure the different interpretations of (42b) are represented as a difference in the scope of the negation operator. Figure 6.12 highlights the two readings for the sentence. With core-level ('non-metalinguistic') negation nothing was said because it would have been rude to do so; with clause-level ('metalinguistic') negation something was said, but not for the reason that it was rude. (Superscript 'i' indicates coreference between the two instances of *it.*)

The peripheral phrase is outside the scope of the core-level negation operator, as reflected in the operator projection, and in the position of that operator in the semantic representation of the construction (other operators have been omitted). It is only when negation operates at clause level (under the label 'status') that the peripheral *because*-phrase is within the scope of the negation, and thus the Role and Reference Grammar structure neatly reflects and illustrates this difference in interpretation.

Heggie (1993) observes that when the adjunct *because*-phrase appears as the clefted constituent in an *it*-cleft construction the readings available depend on the placement of the negation operator.[22] She gives the following examples in (44) and (45) (with (42b) repeated as (43)).

(43) John didn't say it because it was rude.

(44) It's because it was rude that John didn't say it.

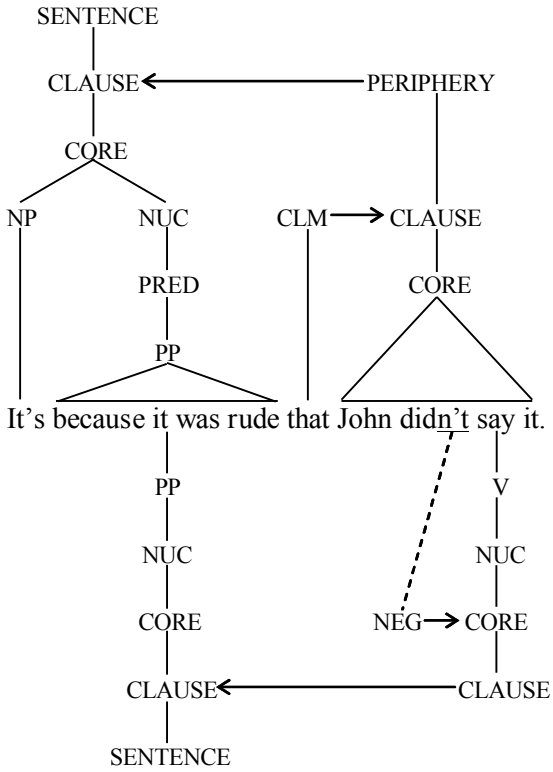
[22] It is worth noting that not all subordinating conjunctions can appear within the clefted constituent of an *it*-cleft construction. Subordinating conjunctions such as *(al)though* that offer alternatives rather than add information to the presupposition do not seem to appear as clefted constituent (see (i)); they conflict with the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction.

(i) *It is although I have plum jam that I have no strawberry jam.

(ii) It is because I have plum jam that I have no strawberry jam.

(45) It's not because it was rude that John said it.

If the negation operator appears in the subordinate cleft clause, as in (44), then only the core-level ('non-metalinguistic') negation reading is possible, where nothing was said for the reason that to do so would have been rude. Figure 6.13 gives an abbreviated constituent projection and the semantic representation for the *it*-cleft sentence in (44). (As before, subscript 'j' indicates coindexation, superscript 'i' indicates coreference.)



be´ ([**because´** (x_j, ⟨$_{NEG}$*NEG* ⟨**do´** (John, [**say´** (John, it^i)])⟩⟩)], [**be´** (it^i, **rude´**)]$_j$)

Figure 6.13 Syntactic and semantic representation for (44)[23]

As the structure in Figure 6.13 clearly shows, the clause-level ('metalinguistic') negation reading is not possible for (44) because the clefted constituent *because*-phrase

[23] The semantic representation differs slightly from those for temporal and locative adverbial clauses, as proposed in section 6.2.1. This difference is because in cleft constructions with temporal and locative adverbial clauses as the clefted constituent, the nature of the preposition as well as its argument may be being specified. In the case of *because*, it is only the reason (that is, the argument of **because´**) that is being specified. Therefore, no 'abstract' predicate is necessary.

is not under the scope of the clausal negation operator within the cleft clause. The *it*-cleft construction in (44) asserts the reason of rudeness (represented as the focused clefted constituent) as the cause of John not saying 'it': the sentence cannot at the same time deny the presupposition that 'John didn't say it', hence the metalinguistic reading is unavailable.

In contrast to (44), the negation operator may appear in the clefted constituent alongside the *because*-phrase, as (45) illustrates. Heggie (1993) suggests that the 'metalinguistic' reading (that 'it' was said, though not for the reason that it was rude) is the only interpretation available for this sentence. This is true to the extent that there is a presupposition that 'it' was said by John. However, a more detailed examination of (43) and (45) shows that differences in syntactic and information structure between these constructions lead to a variation in the so-called 'metalinguistic' readings.

The *it*-cleft construction is a narrow-focus construction. Since only asserted or focused elements can be negated (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:219), core-level negation is the only negation scope level available in *it*-cleft constructions (when the negation operator appears within the matrix clause). The negation operator negates the clefted constituent as the correct value for the variable (as noted in section 2.2.1.1). In the sentence in (45), 'John's saying it (for a reason)' is presupposed; the sentence does not display clause-level negation as all that is within the actual focus domain, and hence the scope of negation, is *(because) it was rude*.

In (43), on the other hand, the negation operator precedes the main verb and includes it in its scope, resulting in the possibility of clause-level negation.[24] This

[24] Only (43) exhibits Horn's (1985) metalinguistic negation as in this sentence the speaker is expressing unwillingness to assert something or accept another's assertion, rather than negating the proposition concerned.

difference is reflected in replies negating the assertion of the sentences, as demonstrated in (46) and (47).

(46) a. [John didn't say it because it was rude]$_{PFD/AFD}$.

b. Yes he did.

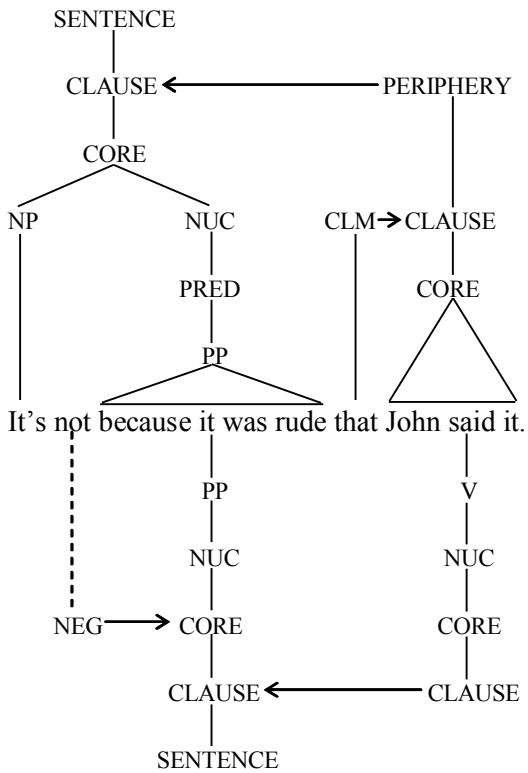
c. !Yes it was.

(47) a. [It's not [because it was rude]$_{AFD}$ that John said it]$_{APFD}$.

b. !Yes he did.

c. Yes it was.

Thus, what the *it*-cleft construction in (45) (repeated in (47a)) shares with the clausal-negation reading of (43) (repeated in (46a)) is that something was said for a reason. However, in the former, the negation has to be at the core level. Figure 6.14 below gives the structure of (45).



be´ ([**because´** (x_j, [**do´** (John, [**say´** (John, it^i)])])], $\langle_{NEG}$*NEG* $\langle$[**be´** (it^i, **rude´**)]$_j\rangle\rangle$)

Figure 6.14 Syntactic and semantic representation for (45)

For the *it*-cleft in (45), an interpretation where nothing was said, for the reason of rudeness, is not available; the presupposition associated with the *it*-cleft construction is

that ‘John said it (for a reason)’ and so a reading that contradicts this is not available. In the syntactic and semantic representation in Figure 6.14 the negation operator has scope only over the *because*-phrase, the second argument of **be´**.

Heggie goes on to observe that adjuncts such as the *because*-phrase “behave in a very different fashion” (1993:51) from arguments in negated sentences such as (49) and (50) below, where the second argument of the verb appears as the clefted constituent.

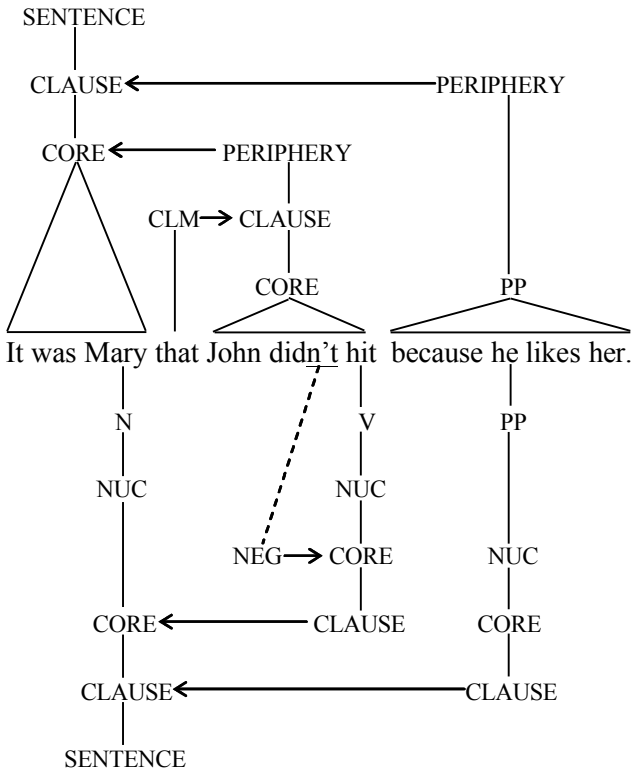
(48) John didn’t hit Mary because he likes her.
(49) It was Mary that John didn’t hit because he likes her.
(50) It wasn’t Mary that John hit because he likes her.

Heggie rightly observes that these sentences have different readings from those for (43)-(45). However, she additionally claims that (unlike the *it*-cleft sentences in (44) and (45)) both the *it*-cleft constructions in (49) and (50), as well as the non-cleft sentence in (48), have two readings, “one in which Mary is not hit, and the metalinguistic one, where Mary was hit for a reason other than that given in the *because*-phrase” (1993:51). She suggests, “arguments appear to behave in a very different fashion from adjuncts” (Heggie 1993:51) and proposes “two syntactically motivated classes” of cleft constructions (1993:49). I suggest, however, that it is not so much the “syntactic properties of the focused element” (Heggie 1993:49) that determine the “properties” of the different *it*-cleft sentences, but rather a combination of their syntactic, semantic and pragmatic structure. In other words, the variations in interpretation fall out from the placement and scope of the negation operator combined with the presuppositions attached to the *it*-cleft construction: this is demonstrated through the Role and Reference Grammar analysis. The two readings of the non-cleft sentence in (48) are very similar to those for the non-cleft sentence in (43) (given in Figure 6.12). (51a) and (b) give the semantic representations corresponding to the two readings.

(51) a. [John didn't hit Mary because he likes her]$_{PFD}$. CORE-LEVEL NEGATION
because´ ([**like´** (he^i, her^j)], ⟨$_{NEG}$*NEG* ⟨[**do´** (John^i, [**hit´** (John^i, Mary^j)])]⟩⟩)

b. [John didn't hit Mary because he likes her]$_{PFD}$. CLAUSE-LEVEL NEGATION
⟨$_{STA}$*NEG* ⟨**because´** ([**like´** (he^i, her^j)], [**do´** (John^i, [**hit´** (John^i, Mary^j)])])⟩⟩

In the *it*-cleft sentences in (49) and (50), a semantic argument of the predicate in the cleft clause appears as the focused clefted constituent, whereas in (44) and (45) the clefted constituent is an adjunct phrase. Taking (49) first, as for (44) (see Figure 6.13), the *it*-cleft sentence in (49) has no clause-level negation (or 'metalinguistic' reading in the sense described by Heggie 1993) where John hit Mary, not because he likes her, but for another reason. Figure 6.15 gives the (abbreviated) syntactic and semantic representations for (49) and shows core-level negation within the cleft clause.



be´ ([**because´** ([**like´** (he^i, her^j)], ⟨$_{NEG}$*NEG* ⟨[**do´** (John^i, [**hit´** (John^i, x^j_j)])]⟩⟩)], Mary$_j$)

Figure 6.15 Syntactic and semantic representation for (49)[25]

[25] This reading of *It was Mary that John didn't hit because he likes her*, while grammatical, is pragmatically odd – it presupposes a set of possible referents that John didn't hit, and states that Mary is the one and only referent that fits this description. It would seem generally more

There are several reasons why I consider the clause-level ('metalinguistic') reading of (49) (where hitting took place) to be unavailable. Firstly, the 'metalinguistic' clausal negation reading described above requires that the *because*-phrase be in focus. In the *it*-cleft construction in (49), however, the *because*-phrase lies outside the actual focus domain; it cannot be the main focus of the sentence. In addition, the content of the cleft clause (the fact that John didn't hit someone) is presupposed and so cannot be negated. The *because*-phrase gives the reason for Mary being the one that John didn't hit, rather than the reason for John not hitting someone and thus the *because*-phrase is peripheral to the matrix clause rather than the cleft clause. Figure 6.15 shows that this places the *because*-phrase outside the scope of the negation operator.

Finally, a clause-level reading of (49) creates problems with the interpretation of *Mary* and *her* as coreferential. If the interpretation of (49) is that Mary was hit, but not because John likes her, it is difficult, if not impossible, to interpret the *her* in the *because*-phrase as coreferential with Mary. This follows from the Role and Reference Grammar principle governing intrasentential pronominalization given in (54) (section 4.4.4; see also Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:227): the lexical noun phrase is within the actual focus domain in (49) while its coreferring pronoun is part of the presupposed part of the sentence, outside the focus domain. The Role and Reference Grammar structures given in Figure 6.15 above clearly illustrate all these aspects.

The second *it*-cleft construction in (50) has the negation marker as part of the clefted constituent. This construction is repeated below as Figure 6.16. As for (49), the *because*-phrase in (50) is outside the actual focus domain and outside the scope of the negation operator, and so the reading that suggests that John hit Mary for a reason other than his liking her (with focus on the reason) is not available. In addition, there remains

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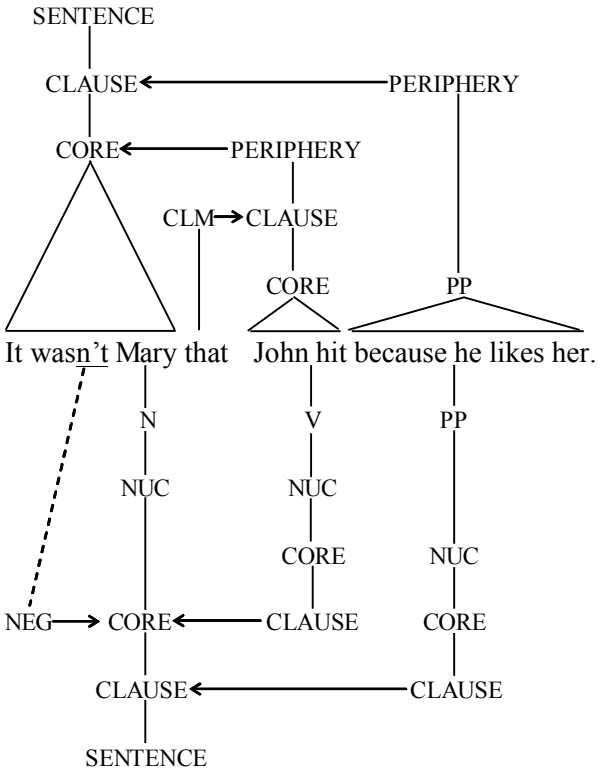
plausible to assert someone to be the patient of an action, than assert them to be the patient of the absence of an action.

the question of the constraint against pronominal coreference between *her* and *Mary* that is required for that reading. The narrow focus *it*-cleft construction creates the interpretation where the negation operator negates the referent of *Mary* as corresponding to the person John hit (core negation), rather than negating the act of hitting. The Role and Reference Grammar structures given below once again illuminate this interpretation.



be´ (**because´** ([**like´** (he^{i}, her^{j})], [**do´** (John^{i}, [**hit´** (John^{i}, x_j)])]⟩⟩, ⟨$_{NEG}$*NEG* ⟨Mary$_j$⟩⟩)

Figure 6.16 Syntactic and semantic representation for (50)

These observations provide evidence for the proposal that the difference between the *it*-cleft constructions and the non-cleft counterpart results from the function of the clefted constituent and the general focus structure and presuppositions attached to the *it*-cleft construction. In the core-negation reading of the non-cleft sentence in (48) for example (where Mary is not hit), there is not necessarily any presupposition that anyone else was necessarily hit in her place. In the *it*-cleft construction in (50), on the other

hand, there is a presupposition that someone was hit. What is asserted is that the person hit was not Mary (the contrastive implication being that it was someone else).

This Role and Reference Grammar analysis of the interaction between negation, syntactic and semantic form and information structure in the *it*-cleft construction has demonstrated that there is no motivation for postulating "two syntactically motivated classes" (Heggie 1993:49) of *it*-cleft constructions. Instead, the differences between the 'readings' for *it*-cleft constructions such as (44) and (45) and those such as (49) and (50) are only structural to the extent that they can be explained in terms of the function of the clefted constituent and the information structure properties of the *it*-cleft construction (in conjunction with general principles such as for pronominalization). This analysis is illuminated and explained through the Role and Reference Grammar structures proposed above.

6.4 Linking

The linking algorithms introduced in section 4.5.2 serve to connect the syntactic and semantic representations of the sentence. As noted in section 4.5.2, general cross-linguistic and cross-constructional rules for linking in each direction are given in terms of linking algorithms. In addition, constructional templates capture idiosyncratic, language-specific features of constructions (see Table 4.3, chapter 4). The following sections run through the linking process for the *it*-cleft construction, both from semantics to syntax and from syntax to semantics. One goal of this process is to ascertain what information falls out from the linking algorithms and what needs to be specified in a constructional template.

6.4.1 Semantics to syntax

Moving from semantics to syntax is a reflection of the speaker's perspective. An abbreviated form of the linking algorithm from semantics to syntax given in section

4.5.2.1 is repeated here for convenience as (57) (LS = logical structure). Each of the steps in (57) are then applied to the *it*-cleft construction.

(52) Linking algorithm: semantics → syntax (Van Valin forth.:247)

1. Construct the semantic representation of the sentence, based on the LS of the predicator.
2. Determine the actor and undergoer assignments, following the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy in Figure 4.19 (chapter 4).
3. Determine the morphosyntactic coding of the arguments.
4. Select the syntactic template(s) for the sentence following the selection principles in (11) (chapter 4).
5. Assign XPs to positions in the syntactic representation of the sentence.

The speaker begins with a communicative intent; an intent behind the *it*-cleft example in (53) would be to provide the identity of the person that was kicked by the grey horse.

(53) It was Charlie that the grey horse kicked.

In this case, the speaker wishes to specify the identity for a specific, identifiable entity ('someone who was kicked by the grey horse') that the hearer cannot yet 'pick out'. This is a specificational function, and so the main predicate is **be´**, with two referring expressions as its arguments. The other predicate (**kick´**) and its logical structure form the first argument of **be´**, together with any other propositional context (such as the general predicates **be-LOC´** and **be-TEMP´**, described above in section 6.2.1). The constituent consisting of the specified element (the value) appears as the second argument of **be´**. Also included at this point, as part of the communicative intent, are voice and illocutionary force, as are the activation (or cognitive) status of the referents (Van Valin forth.:126).[26] The output of step 1 in (57) is therefore Figure 6.17:

$\langle_{IF} DEC \langle_{TNS} PAST \langle$ **be´** ([[**do´**(horse, [**kick´** (horse, x_i)])]$_{ACV}$, Charlie$_{iACS}$)$\rangle\rangle\rangle$

Figure 6.17 Output of step 1 of semantics-syntax linking in (57)

[26] ACV = active, ACS = accessible.

Step 2 in the semantics to syntax linking concerns the assignment of macroroles. **Be´** is a stative predicate with two argument slots. It usually has one macrorole (undergoer), which corresponds to its first argument (for example, *Sally* in *Sally is tall*: **be´** (Sally, [**tall´**])). However, the first argument in the *it*-cleft logical structure is a clause, not a referring expression and so, since macroroles subsume thematic relations that designate participant roles (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:113), this clausal argument cannot be assigned a macrorole. In addition, while a referring expression appears as the second argument of **be´**, this is usually the position in the **be´** predicate logical structure of some kind of predicate; in this case, it is a 'pragmatic predicate' (as proposed in section 5.1.2.2). The assignment of macroroles is therefore not straightforward since, despite being a referring expression, the second argument of **be´** in the cleft construction has a predicative function.

However, within the embedded logical structure that forms the first argument of the **be´** predicate, the argument *horse* is the actor of **kick´** since it is the first argument of the predicate **do´** and therefore ranked highest on the Actor-Undergoer hierarchy (see 4.19, section 4.2.2.2). The second argument of **kick´** is the undergoer but it is lexically unfilled; its referent is established through coindexation with the second argument of **be´** that is therefore marked as the undergoer.[27] The result of this is in Figure 6.18.

…[**be´** ([**do´**(ACT:horse, [**kick´** (horse, x_i)])]$_{ACV}$, UND:Charlie$_{iACS}$)]

Figure 6.18 Output of step 2 of semantics-syntax linking

Step 3 concerns morpho-syntactic properties of arguments, specifically the selection of the privileged syntactic argument and consequent case-marking or adposition-marking, plus appropriate verb agreement. The sentence in (53) is a nominative-accusative construction in active voice; the default selection for privileged

[27] If the *it*-cleft sentence has a relative pronoun instead of *that*, then this relative pronoun would be marked as undergoer.

syntactic argument (of **kick**´) is the actor *horse* (following the selection principles given in section 4.1.3). This results in Figure 6.19 (case marking does not appear morpho-syntactically in this sentence).

…[**be**´ ([**do**´(ACT:horse, [**kick**´ (horse, x_i)])]$_{ACV}$, UND:Charlie$_{iACS}$)]
[PSA:NOM] Active:1sg [ACC]

Figure 6.19 Output of step 3 of semantics-syntax linking

The controller of verb agreement within the copular matrix clause is the cleft pronoun (as illustrated in (54)).

(54) It is/*are Ant and Dec that everyone likes the most.

This constituent, although non-referring and consequently without macrorole status, is the only syntactic argument in the matrix clause (since the clefted constituent is a type of predicate and thus forms the nucleus of the core). Its role in controlling verb agreement is specified in the constructional template (see section 6.4.4).[28]

Step 4 concerns the selection of a syntactic template. As noted in section 4.1.1, the semantic predicate **be**´ is not equivalent to the English non-predicative copular verb *be* but is associated with the appearance of *be* as an auxiliary in the syntax (in conjunction with non-verbal predicates, for example, as discussed above). This leads to the selection of a cleft construction template, in this case the *it*-cleft construction template (as shown in Figure 6.11).[29]

The selection of the syntactic template to fill the cleft clause follows the selection principles repeated here as (11).

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[28] When the privileged syntactic argument of the cleft clause logical structure is the element coindexed with the second argument of **be**´, as in (i), a (somewhat archaic) option is to mark the clefted constituent pronoun in nominative case (according to the function of the coindexed variable in the cleft clause) rather than accusative. It consequently controls verb agreement in the cleft clause in number and person (see also section 5.1.3.2).

(i) It is I that likes/*like horses.

[29] Some factors influencing the choice of an *it*-cleft construction specifically, over other types of cleft construction, are given in section 2.1.1.

(55) a. Syntactic template selection principle: The number of syntactic slots for arguments and argument-adjuncts within the core is equal to the number of distinct specified argument positions in the semantic representation of the core.

b. Universal qualifications of the principle in (a):
   i. The occurrence of a core as either the matrix or linked core in a non-subordinate core juncture reduces the number of core slots by 1.
   ii. The occurrence of a core in an externally-headed relative clause construction in which the head noun is a semantic argument of the predicate in the core reduces the number of core slots by 1.

c. Language-specific qualifications of the principle in (a):
   i. All cores in the language have a minimum syntactic valence of 1.
   ii. Passive constructions reduce the number of core slots by 1.
   iii. The occurrence of a syntactic argument in the pre/postcore slot reduces the number of core slots by 1.

The *it*-cleft construction flouts the principle in (11a) in a number of ways, as do relative clause constructions. A qualification for externally-headed relative clause constructions is already included as a universal qualification in (11b.ii). I have demonstrated the degree of syntactic and semantic patterning between relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions (see section 5.2.2), particularly the possibility of a core minus an argument in the cleft/relative clause. Consequently, I propose to extend the qualification in (11b.ii) to include the *it*-cleft construction. The latter construction is therefore viewed as a type of externally-headed relative construction for linking purposes; the only adjustment to (11b.ii) is "head noun *or clefted constituent*". The qualification (11b.ii) then reads as in (56).

(56) Amended version of (11b.ii):

The occurrence of a core in an externally-headed relative clause construction in which the head noun *or clefted constituent* is a semantic argument of the predicate in the core reduces the number of core slots by 1.

Returning to the example in (53) above, an *it*-cleft construction template is selected, along with a core template minus an argument slot for the cleft clause (using the syntactic template selection principle with the amended qualification in (56)). The

qualification in (11c.i) also ensures that the matrix core has a syntactic argument (the cleft pronoun). Pronouns and proper nouns (such as *Charlie*) do not have an internal layered structure and hence have no operator projection (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:56). The noun phrase *the grey horse* has definiteness and an adjectival modifier marked morpho-syntactically and thus these operators are marked in the structure. Figure 6.20 gives the result of these steps.

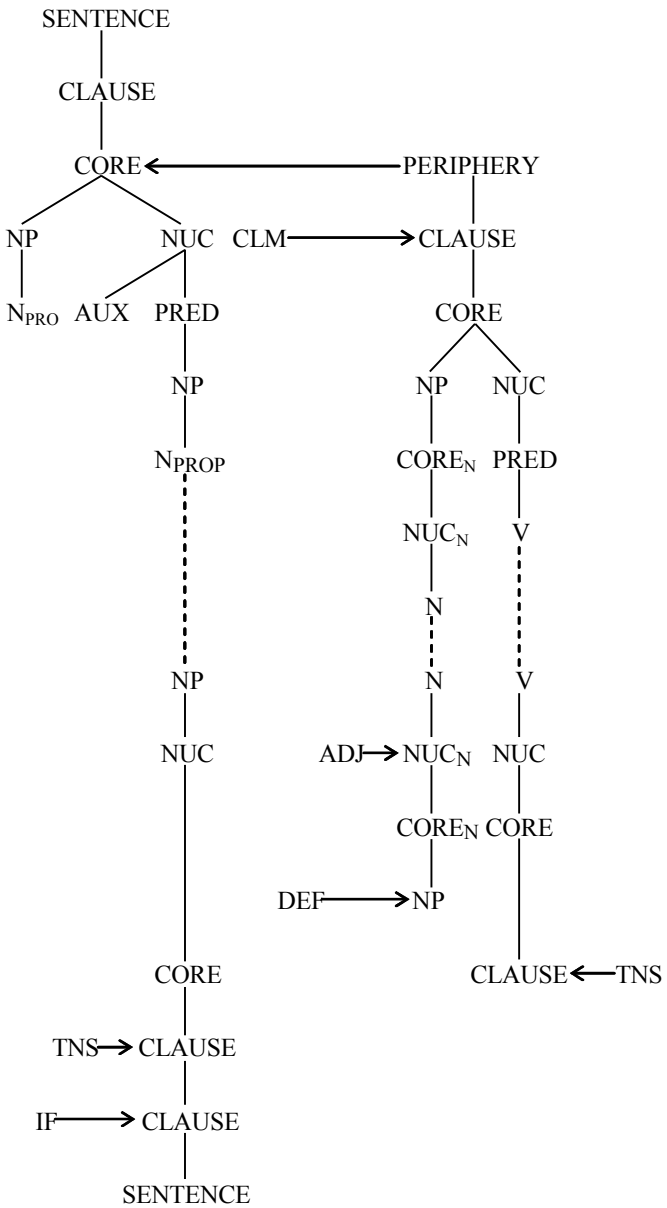

Figure 6.20 Output of step 4 of semantics-syntax linking

All that remains is to link the structure in Figure 6.20 to the elements in sentence (53). The result of the whole linking process is summarized in Figure 6.21 and explained below (operator projection omitted; steps indicated by larger numbers in bold).

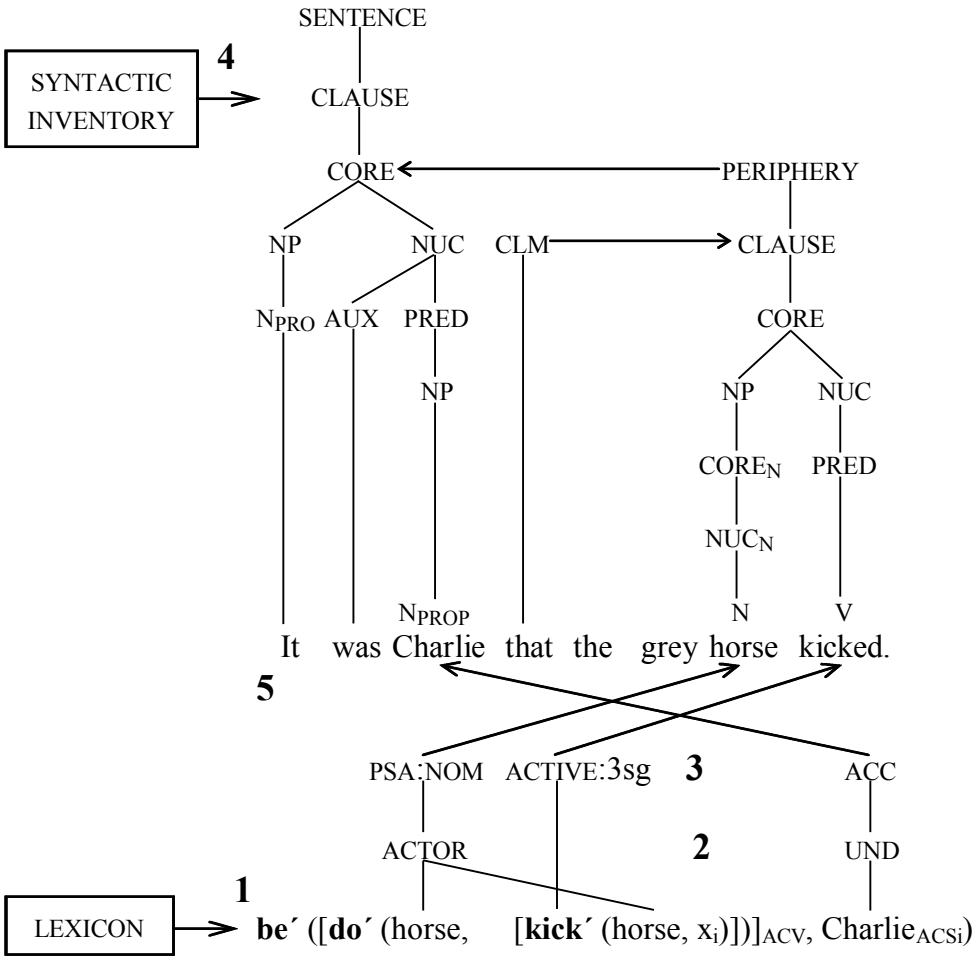

Figure 6.21 Semantics to syntax linking for It was Charlie that the grey horse kicked

The noun phrase *the grey horse*, as the privileged syntactic argument within the subordinate clause, is linked to core-initial position in that clause. The verbal predicate **kick´** is linked to the nucleus of the subordinate clause and is marked for tense, as is the copular verb in 'aux' position.

The linking of the cleft pronoun is not specified in the semantic representation of the sentence; it simply fills an open core slot position in the syntactic representation

(Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:573). It is inserted according to the *it*-cleft syntactic template and the syntactic template selection principle (see (11c.i)).

The second argument of the **be´** predicate is represented in the syntactic structure not as an argument (there are no open argument slots within the cleft clause), but as the main predicate in the nucleus of the matrix core. It is linked to the post-copular element: *Charlie*. The syntactic nucleus position for this semantic argument has been justified through its function as 'pragmatic' predicate (as described above in section 5.1.2.2). It is worth noting here that this linking (either semantics to syntax or syntax to semantics) does not violate the wording of the Completeness Constraint as repeated in (57).

(57) Completeness Constraint (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:325)
All of the arguments explicitly specified in the semantic representation of a sentence must be realized syntactically in the sentence, and all of the referring expressions in the syntactic representation of a sentence must be linked to an argument position in a logical structure in the semantic representation of the sentence.

The second argument of the **be´** predicate (*Charlie* in (53)), explicitly specified in the semantic representation, is 'realized syntactically' in the sentence, albeit as the nucleus. (In addition, from syntax to semantics, the referring expression *Charlie* is linked to an argument position in the logical structure of the sentence; see below). It is, in a sense, not surprising that one semantic argument would have to function as a predicate in the nucleus of the clause in an *it*-cleft construction since this construction is a bi-clausal syntactic structure with only one semantic predicate.

6.4.2 Syntax to semantics

As noted in section 4.5.2.2, the linking from syntax to semantics is more complex than that from semantics to syntax. An abbreviated form of linking algorithms are repeated here as (58).

(58) Linking algorithm: syntax → semantics (Van Valin forth.:248-9)

1. Determine the macrorole(s) and other core argument(s) in the clause (depends partly on voice of verb).
2. Retrieve from the lexicon the LS of the predicate in the nucleus of the clause and with respect to it execute step (2) from (57) above, subject to [certain] provisos.
3. Link the arguments determined in step 1 with the arguments determined in step 2 until all core arguments are linked.
4. In non-subordinate core junctures, one of the arguments of the matrix core must be linked to an argument position in the embedded LS.
5. If there is a predicative adpositional adjunct, then retrieve its LS from the lexicon; insert the LS of the core as the second argument in the LS and the object of the adposition in the periphery as the first argument.
6. If there is an element in the pre- or post-core slot (language-specific), assign it the remaining unlinked argument position in the semantic representation of the sentence; if there are no unlinked argument positions in the sentence, then treat the WH-word like a predicative preposition and follow the procedure in step 5, linking the WH-word to the first argument position in the LS.

As was the case for syntactic template selection in the semantics-to-syntax linking, the similarity between relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions means that construction-specific conditions introduced for when a relative clause is encountered can be adapted for use with *it*-cleft constructions. The need for construction-specific conditions for the *it*-cleft construction becomes clear even at step 1 and 2 of the linking algorithms. The matrix clause contains no verbal predicate; the nucleus contains a referring expression and the only argument (the cleft pronoun) is non-referring. In addition, one argument of the subordinate clause predicate may be represented syntactically in the matrix clause. These idiosyncrasies of the construction require special conditions and these are stated in the constructional template (see section 6.4.4 below).

Since there are similarities between relative clauses and *it*-cleft constructions, I firstly introduce the special conditions governing relative clauses. These conditions, which complement the general linking algorithms in (58), are given in (59).

(59) Conditions governing linking from syntax → semantics in externally-headed relative clauses (Van Valin forth.:232)

a. Retrieve from the lexicon an attributive LS and substitute the LS of the verb in the relative clause for the 'y' argument.
b. If there is no pre/postcore slot element in the relative clause, then treat the head noun as if it were in the pre/post core slot for linking purposes; if there is an element in the pre/postcore slot in the relative clause; coindex the head noun with it.
c. Coindex the 'x' argument in the attributive LS with the argument in the relative clause LS linked to the head noun in (b).
d. Insert the attributive LS into the argument position in the matrix LS occupied by the head noun, underlining the head noun.

The way these conditions combine with the linking algorithms to provide the linking between syntax and semantics is illustrated below in Figure 6.22 for the noun phrase *the cake that Brian baked*. As before, the large numbers refer to the steps in the linking algorithm (in (58)); the boxed numbers refer to the construction-specific conditions in (59).

Step 1 of the linking applies to the noun phrase as an argument of a verb within a wider sentential context. However, as Figure 6.22 shows, it is also relevant for the verb within the relative clause, for which the privileged syntactic argument *Brian* is the actor (as it is a syntactically accusative construction in active voice). Following step 2, the logical structure of *bake* is retrieved and its macroroles are assigned, following the Actor-Undergoer hierarchy. Condition (59a) also takes effect at this point: an attributive logical structure is retrieved and the logical structure of the verb in the relative clause is inserted as the second ('y') argument.

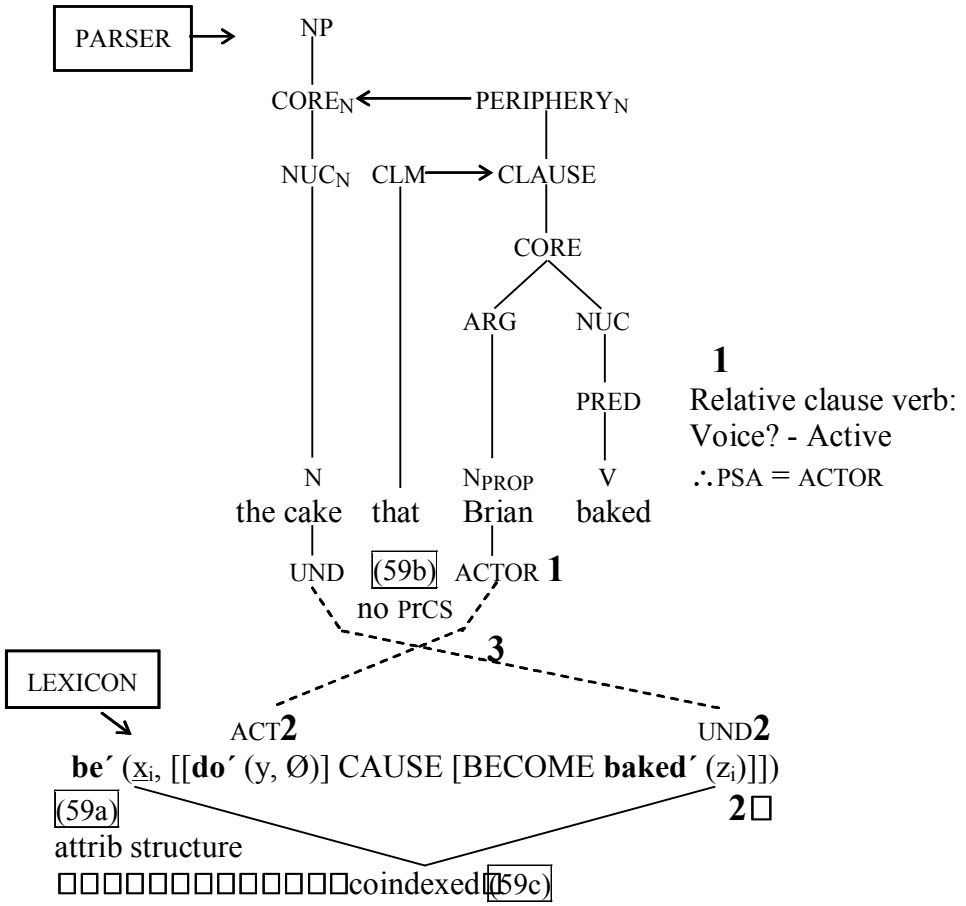

Figure 6.22 Syntax to semantics linking for NPs without relative pronouns

Before step 3 links the syntactic and semantic arguments together it is ascertained that there is no relative pronoun in the precore slot in the relative clause. Thus, following condition (59b), the head noun *cake* is treated as if it were in the precore slot; in other words, it is treated as a core argument of the relative clause verb. The linking in step 3 links the argument marked as actor in the syntax, namely *Brian*, to that marked as actor in the logical structure. The head noun is linked to the remaining argument position in the relative clause logical structure, the 'z' argument. This leaves the 'x' argument of the **be´** predicate unlinked. Condition (59c) coindexes the coreferring arguments. (Steps 4-6 in (58) do not apply in this case.)

Having described the linking for relative clauses, I show here that a modified version of the conditions governing the linking from syntax to semantics in relative clause constructions can be used for the *it*-cleft construction.[30]

(60) Conditions governing linking from syntax → semantics in *it*-cleft constructions

a. Retrieve from the lexicon a specificational LS and substitute the LS of the verb in the cleft clause for the 'x' argument.

b. If there is no pre/postcore slot element in the cleft clause, then treat the clefted constituent as if it were in the pre/post core slot for linking purposes; if there is an element in the pre/postcore slot in the cleft clause; coindex the clefted constituent with it.

c. Coindex the 'y' argument in the specificational LS with the constituent in the cleft clause LS linked to the clefted constituent following (60b).

The main difference between the conditions on relative clauses given in (59) and those presented for the *it*-cleft construction in (60) is the ordering of the arguments of **be´**. In the *it*-cleft construction, the cleft clause logical structure is inserted as the first ('x') argument position in the **be´** logical structure and the clefted constituent (the 'equivalent' of the head noun) is in the 'y' argument position. This is the reverse of the case for relative clauses. The reason for this is that, as I have demonstrated, the clefted constituent functions as a type of predicate and thus fills the second 'predicate slot' argument position of **be´**.

In addition, the label 'attributive' for relative clauses is changed to 'specificational' to reflect the fact that a specificational logical structure is of the form [**be´** (x, y)] where the referential 'y' argument functions as a 'pragmatic' predicate. The retrieval of this logical structure thus needs to be specified as a condition since it is different from the logical structure associated with other copular sentences; attributive

[30] The *it*-cleft construction in English is under consideration here; chapter 7 contains a cross-linguistic examination of the construction.

and identificational sentences have a semantic predicate as the 'y' argument: [**be´** (x, **pred´**)].

In (60c), the 'y' argument is coindexed with the 'constituent' in the cleft clause logical structure, rather than the 'argument' since other elements may occur as clefted constituent (see, for example, section 6.4.3 below on adjunct clefted constituents).[31] As mentioned previously, the cleft pronoun is not a referring expression and is therefore not specified in the semantic representation; it consequently does not enter into the linking process (although its presence is specified in the constructional template for the *it*-cleft construction).

All that remains in this section is to test the syntax to semantics linking algorithms and special conditions against both an *it*-cleft construction with a relative pronoun in the cleft clause, and against one without a relative pronoun. Firstly, the syntax to semantics linking is followed, step by step, for the example sentence in (61). Figure 6.25 then summarizes these steps.

(61) It was a ginger cake that Helen baked.

The linking process is achieved by working through the linking algorithms in (58), in conjunction with the conditions for *it*-cleft constructions given in (60). Firstly, step 1 of the linking algorithms is applied to the verb in the cleft clause: this is in active voice in an accusative construction, and so the privileged syntactic argument is the actor *Helen*. The copular verb in the matrix clause is not predicative, and since the element in the nucleus has no semantic arguments, there are no macroroles to assign for this clause. The output of step 1 is Figure 6.23.

[31] Condition (58d) for relative clauses is not necessary for *it*-cleft constructions since they form complete sentences by themselves.

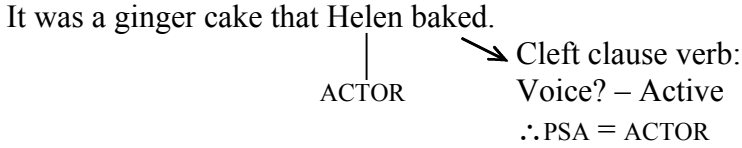

Figure 6.23 Output of step 1 of syntax-semantics linking

Step 2 of the linking algorithms leads to the retrieval of the logical structure for the cleft clause verb *bake* and the assignment of macroroles: the 'w' argument, the first argument of the predicate **do´**, is the actor and the argument of **baked´** is the undergoer. At the same time, the first condition for *it*-cleft constructions in (60a) prompts the retrieval of a specificational logical structure and the insertion of the logical structure of *bake* as its 'x' argument. Since there is no relative pronoun in the precore slot, the clefted constituent is treated as if it were in the precore slot, following condition (60b).

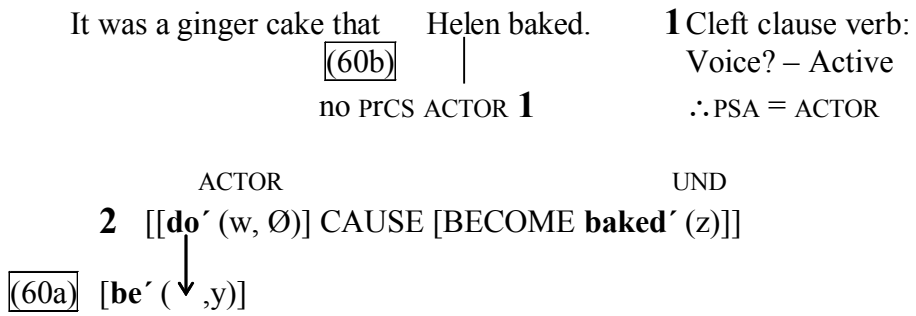

Figure 6.24 Output of step 2 and conditions (60a) and (b) of syntax-semantics linking

Step 3 of the linking algorithms links the undergoer *a ginger cake* to undergoer position in the logical structure for *bake*. *Helen*, as the actor, is linked to the actor position in the logical structure (the 'w' argument). Condition (60c) coindexes the argument linked to the clefted constituent (the argument of **baked´**) with the 'y' argument of the specificational logical structure resulting in Figure 6.25, which summarizes all these steps. (Steps 4-6 of the linking algorithm do not apply in this case.)

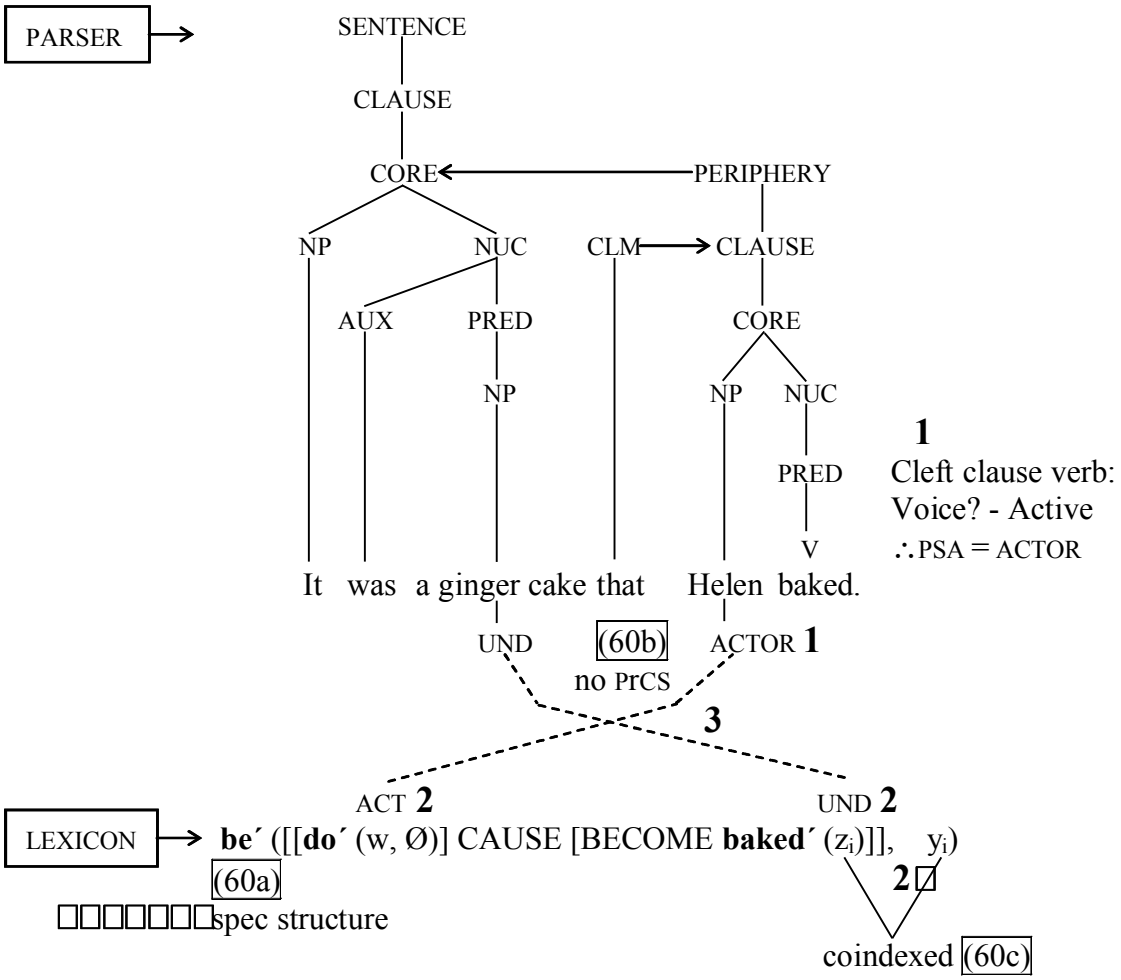

Figure 6.25 Syntax to semantics linking for an it*-cleft construction without a relative pronoun*

Figure 6.26 below diagrams the linking process for an *it*-cleft construction with a relative pronoun. The only difference between this and the process above in Figure 6.25 is that, following condition (60b), the clefted constituent is coindexed with the WH-word and the WH-word is then linked to the logical structure (following step 6 of the linking algorithms).

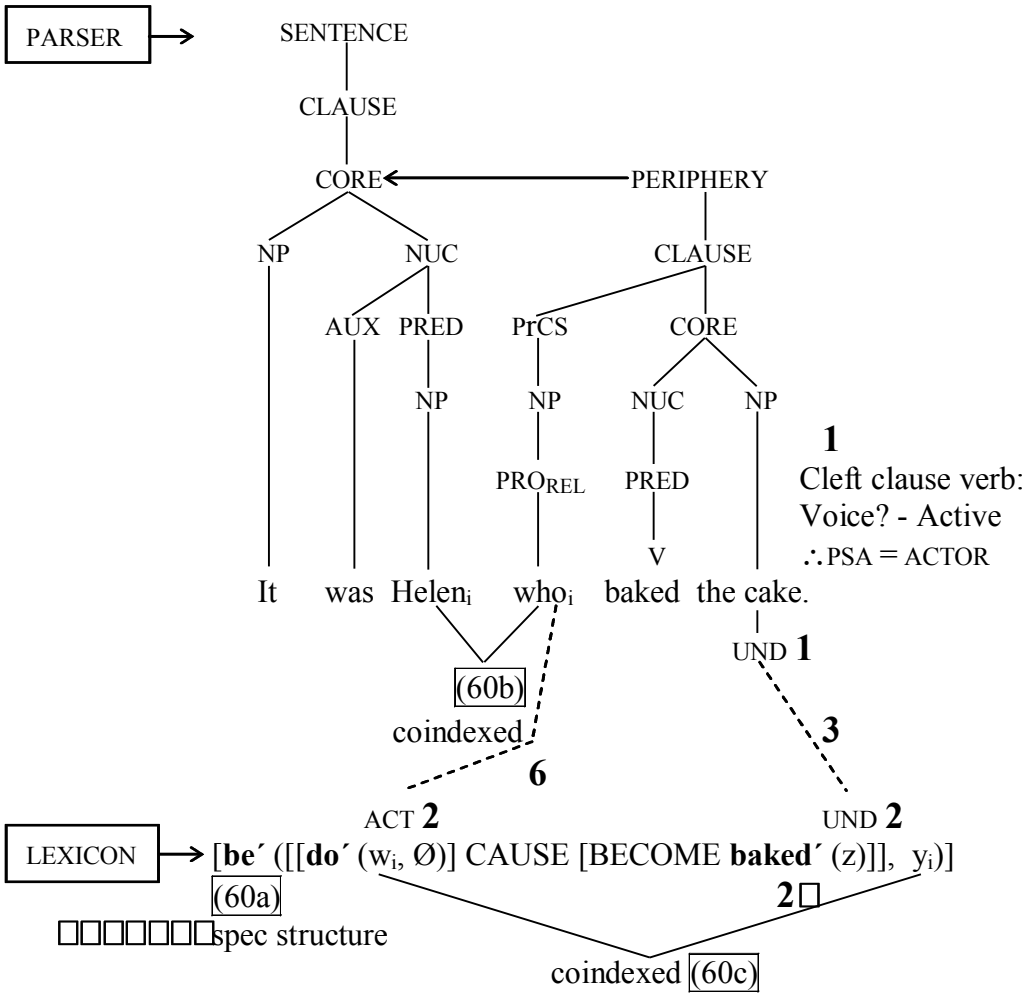

Figure 6.26 Syntax to semantics linking for it-cleft construction with relative pronoun

6.4.3 Adjunct clefted constituents

A particular type of *it*-cleft construction that requires additional explanation consists of those where an adjunct constituent appears as clefted constituent (as discussed above in section 6.2.1). Example (62) illustrates this type of construction, both with and without a relative pronoun.

(62) a. It was <u>in the kitchen</u> that Samuel baked a cake.
be´ ([**be-LOC´** (x_i, [[**do´** (Samuel, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **baked´** (cake)]]$_j$)], [**be-in´** (kitchen, y_j)]$_i$)

b. It was <u>in the kitchen</u> where Samuel baked a cake.
be´ ([**be-LOC´** (where$_i$, [[**do´** (Samuel, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **baked´** (cake)]]$_j$)], [**be-in´** (kitchen, y_j)]$_i$)

The clefted constituent predicative phrase (*in the kitchen* in (62)) specifies the nature of the abstract predicate given in the logical structure of the cleft clause as well as its argument. In addition, as discussed in section 6.2.1, the second argument of the 'value' predicate is not lexically filled but is interpreted as the same as the second argument of the coindexed (abstract) predicate (that is, as the logical structure of the cleft clause); it is represented with a 'y' variable.

In Figure 6.27, a summary of the semantics to syntax linking is given for the sentence in (62a).

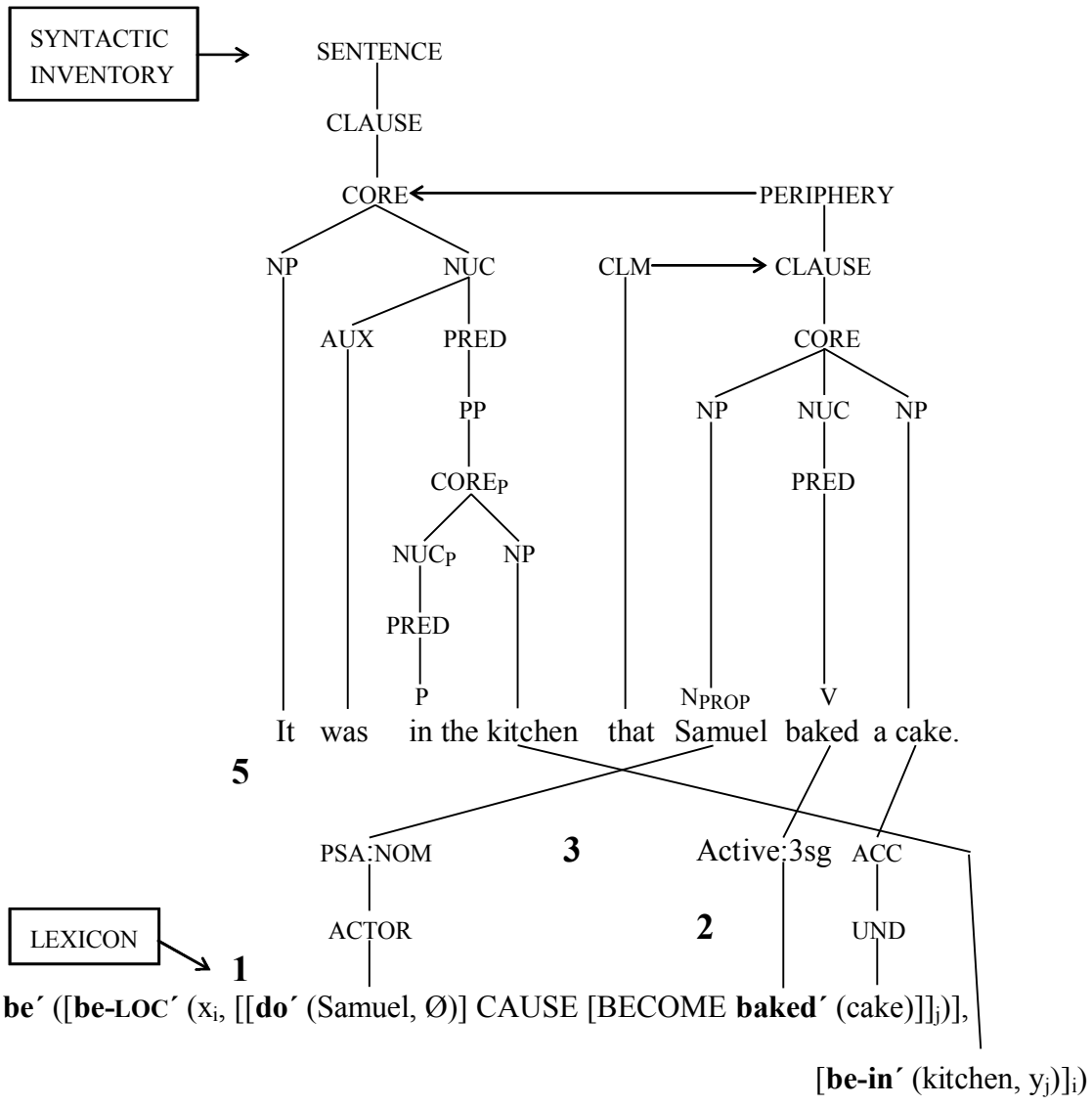

Figure 6.27 Semantics to syntax linking for an it*-cleft construction with an adjunct clefted constituent*

Figure 6.27 illustrates how the linking algorithms and conditions apply to these constructions with predicative prepositional phrases as clefted constituent. Since the communicative intention of this specificational sentence is to specify a location for an event, an abstract locative logical structure is retrieved in addition to the logical structure of the cleft clause verb. The structure of the cleft clause core becomes the 'y' argument of that abstract predicate. There is no relative pronoun in this sentence; therefore, the first argument of the abstract predicate is lexically unfilled. The specificational value is a predicative prepositional phrase and so the logical structure for this prepositional phrase is retrieved and that becomes the second argument of the **be´** predicate.[32]

The syntax to semantics linking also follows the linking algorithms and conditions for *it*-cleft constructions that have already been established. Figure 6.28 gives a summary of the syntax to semantics linking for sentence (62b).

The key step for this construction is step 6 of the syntax to semantics algorithms. This step indicates that since there is an element in the precore slot and there are no unlinked positions in the logical structure for the cleft clause verb, the WH-word should be treated like a predicative preposition following step 5. This return to step 5 leads to the retrieval of an abstract locative predicate structure; the logical structure of the core is inserted as its second argument. The WH-word is linked to the first argument of the abstract predicate (following step 6) and, following condition (60c), it is coindexed with the 'y' argument in the specificational logical structure.

[32] With regard to the syntactic template selection in step 4 of the linking algorithms, point (11b.ii), amended above in reference to the *it*-cleft construction, is not applicable here since the clefted constituent is not a semantic argument of the predicate in the cleft clause. In other words, the cleft clause contains a 'complete' core.

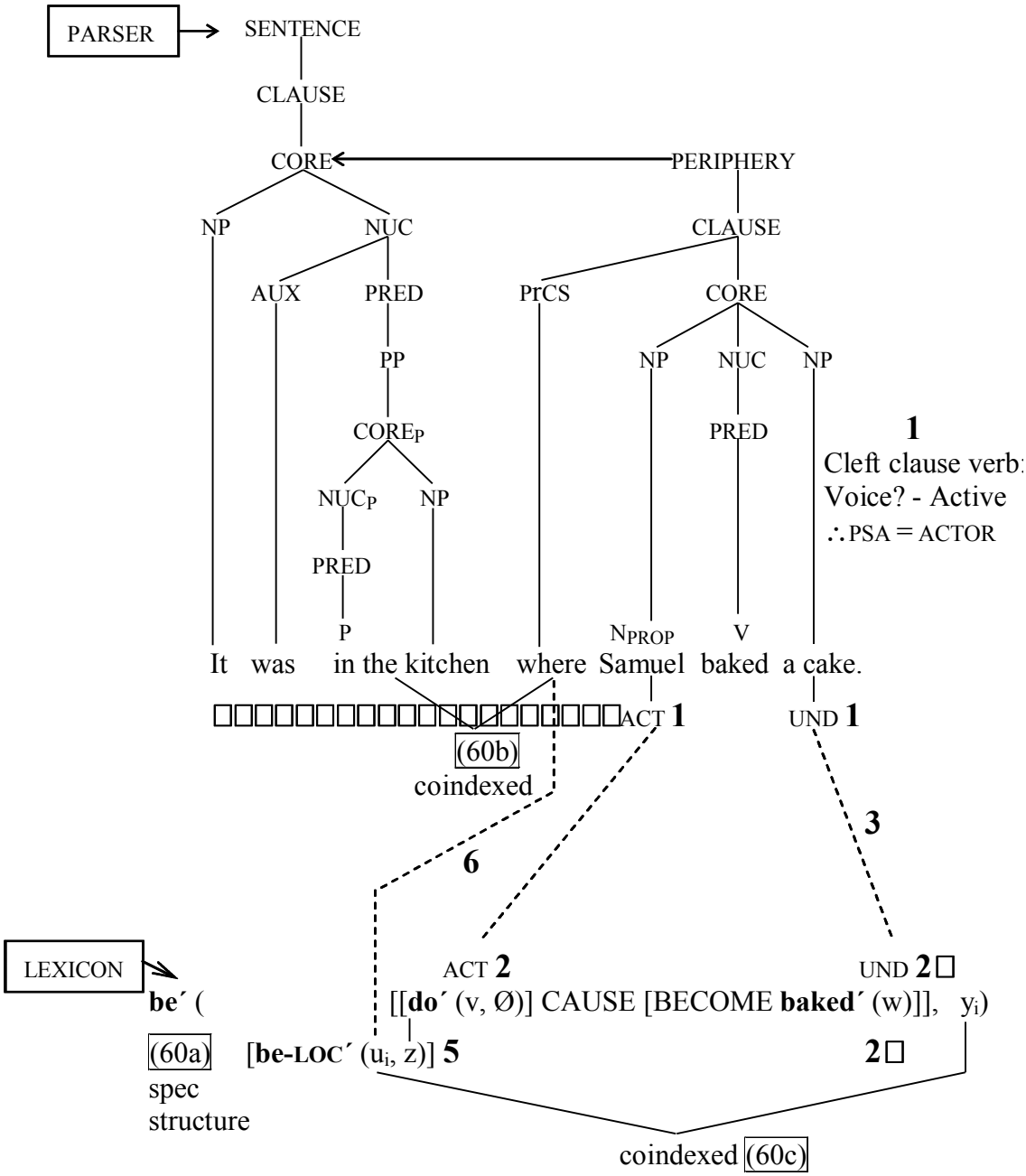

Figure 6.28 Syntax to semantics linking for it*-cleft construction with adjunct clefted constituent*

6.4.4 Constructional templates

The features of linking in *it*-cleft constructions examined in the previous sections indicate that some idiosyncrasies need to be specified in a constructional template.[33] Table 6.1 below contains the proposed constructional template for the *it*-cleft

[33] I label the constructional template '*it*-cleft' for convenience, although, as I have discussed, the cleft pronoun can also be *this* or *that*. With *there* as cleft pronoun, I have suggested that the main predicate would be **exist´** rather than **be´**.

construction without a relative pronoun. As Table 6.1 shows, the syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft construction consists of a matrix core and a subordinate (cleft) clause. The requirement of a syntactic subject and its form (as the pronoun *it*) also need to be specified in the constructional template. In terms of morphology, the circumstances under which the clause linkage marker *that* may be omitted are specified in the constructional template, as are the verb agreement patterns within the cleft clause.

CONSTRUCTION: English specificational *it*-cleft construction (without relative pronoun in cleft clause)
SYNTAX: Juncture: Core Nexus: Subordination Construction type: '*it*-cleft' Unit template(s): *It*-cleft template (including non-referring subject pronoun in matrix clause) Appropriate core template (qualified by (56) if clefted constituent is semantic argument of predicate in cleft clause) PSA: syntactic controller in both clauses Linking: for syntax to semantics include conditions in (60)
MORPHOLOGY: CLM *that* (required if clefted constituent = PSA of subordinate clause; otherwise optional) If clefted constituent (ACC) is coindexed with PSA of cleft clause, verb agreement in cleft clause in number only. *This* and *that* may occur as cleft pronoun depending on the cognitive status of the presupposition
SEMANTICS: Specificational: **be´** ([**pred´** (...x_i ...)], y_i), where 'x' is lexically unfilled coreferring with 'y' argument which is 'pragmatic predicate'.
PRAGMATICS: Illocutionary force: Unspecified Focus structure: Narrow focus on clefted constituent (nucleus of matrix clause), or element within it.

Table 6.1 Constructional template for it*-cleft construction without relative pronoun*

The semantic and pragmatic segments of the constructional template describe the specificational function of the construction. For the *it*-cleft construction, the divide between semantic and pragmatic characteristics and functions is somewhat blurred. The main predicative function of the *it*-cleft construction is pragmatic and the pragmatic specificational function of the construction is reflected in its semantic representation. As indicated above, the focus structure of the construction can therefore be determined, to some extent, from the semantic representation. For these reasons, the division between the semantic and pragmatic boxes is marked with a dotted line in Table 6.1 and Table 6.2.

In addition, the constructional template allows for cleft pronouns other than *it* to appear. The choice is related to the cognitive status of the presupposition and the discourse function associated with *this* and *that* (see sections 3.1.3 and 5.1.1.2).

The constructional template for the *it*-cleft construction containing a relative pronoun is only slightly different from that for the *it*-cleft construction without a relative pronoun. The precore slot template is required in addition to the others specified to provide a syntactic slot for the relative pronoun. In addition, since there is a relative pronoun, the variable in the cleft clause is not lexically unfilled but is filled by that relative pronoun.

CONSTRUCTION: English specificational *it*-cleft construction (with relative pronoun in cleft clause)
SYNTAX: Juncture: Core Nexus: Subordination Construction type: '*it*-cleft' Unit template(s): *It*-cleft template (including non-referring subject pronoun in matrix clause) Precore slot template Appropriate core template (qualified by (56) if clefted constituent is semantic argument of predicate in cleft clause) PSA: syntactic controller in both clauses Linking: for syntax to semantics include conditions in (60)
MORPHOLOGY: WH-relative pronoun in cleft clause. If clefted constituent (ACC) is coindexed with PSA of cleft clause, verb agreement in cleft clause in number only. *This* and *that* may occur as cleft pronoun depending on the cognitive status of the presupposition
SEMANTICS: Specificational: **be´** ([**pred´** (...x_i ...)], y_i), where 'x' is relative pronoun coreferring with 'y' argument which is 'pragmatic predicate'.
PRAGMATICS: Illocutionary force: Unspecified Focus structure: Narrow focus on clefted constituent (nucleus of matrix clause), or element within it.

Table 6.2 Constructional template for the it*-cleft construction with relative pronoun*

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, an analysis of the English *it*-cleft construction within a Role and Reference Grammar framework has been presented. I proposed syntactic, semantic and pragmatic representations for this construction and suggested how the linking algorithms can accommodate the structures. In each section an issue raised earlier in the

thesis was presented and framed in Role and Reference Grammar terms to illuminate and explain the phenomenon in question.

The syntactic representation highlights both the copular matrix clause and the relationship between that and the subordinate cleft clause. This clarifies structural comparisons with relative clauses in particular: many differences between the constructions fall out from the different antecedents for the variable in the relative/cleft clause and from the subsequent scope of the determiner associated with the head noun or clefted constituent. The Role and Reference Grammar constituent projections also make clear the comparisons with other copular sentences, as well as those with subordinate *that*-clauses. The interpretation of the nucleus node was extended to encompass the notion of 'pragmatic predicate' since this is the main predicative function of the *it*-cleft construction.

Mirroring the syntactic representation, the semantic logical structure for the *it*-cleft construction presented in section 6.2 reflects the specificational function of the construction as well as reflecting its similarities with the structure of relative clauses. The main predicative function of the *it*-cleft construction is pragmatic, and so a referring expression can function without conflict in the role of 'pragmatic predicate', as providing the value for a variable. The Role and Reference Grammar semantic representation means that one is not forced to posit a referring expression constituent as semantically predicational. The logical structure presented in section 6.2 also provides for the representation of the 'variable' element in the *it*-cleft regardless of whether this is expressed syntactically. There is thus no need for empty gaps in the syntactic representation since the argument is represented in the semantic representation.

Moving beyond noun phrase clefted constituents, the Role and Reference Grammar analysis presented in section 6.2.1 offers a way of representing prepositional

phrase clefted constituents that patterns with other clefted constituents. In addition, I have shown that the logical structure of *it*-cleft and pseudocleft constructions is relevant for understanding patterns of reflexivization and reciprocal pronouns. I argue that there is a difference in the constituents involved in coindexation (seen clearly in the Role and Reference Grammar representation) and that this affects the acceptability of, and constraints on, reflexivization.

In section 6.3.1, it was proposed that the narrow focus structure found in the *it*-cleft construction has implications for the interpretation of negation. The interaction of the focus structure of *it*-clefts and the scope of negation mean that when the negation operator occurs within the clefted constituent, it can only be interpreted as 'core negation', as negating the referent as the correct value corresponding to the variable. It cannot be interpreted as negating the proposition in the cleft clause as this is outside the actual focus domain and is consequently part of the presupposition.

The linking developed in section 6.4 brought these aspects together. The bi-directionality of the linking process (syntax to semantics and semantics to syntax) reflects both the perception and production of the *it*-cleft construction. As a non-derivational analysis, it draws simultaneously on the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic features of the construction presented in the construction template. Derivational accounts are forced to posit underlying abstract forms for the marked syntactic form of the construction. They essentially have to choose between another copular construction and a non-cleft counterpart as the basis for the derivations. The non-derivational Role and Reference Grammar analysis presented here, on the other hand, permits these aspects to be 'equally' treated and integrated into the overall analysis.

The following chapter comments on the typological validity of the observations made here and examines how the narrow focus, specificational function is conveyed in other languages.

7. COMMENTS ON TYPOLOGICAL COMPARISON OF THE *IT*-CLEFT CONSTRUCTION

This thesis has focused primarily on the analysis of English cleft constructions and on the *it*-cleft construction in particular. In this short chapter, I examine different approaches to the cross-linguistic comparison of cleft constructions and the questions that arise from a typological approach. While a detailed cross-linguistic survey is outside the scope of this thesis, I highlight data from diverse languages that demonstrate certain universal features of the construction motivated by iconicity; that is, by the idea that "the structure of the language reflects in some way the structure of experience" (Croft 2003:102) and "some aspect of the structure of reality" (Haiman 1980:515). Balancing this element of iconic motivation, I show that differences in interpretation and use suggest the advantages of a functional approach to the construction that does not attempt to 'read off' the function from the form.

In addition, this short survey of cross-linguistic typological data highlights the advantages of Role and Reference Grammar theory, which itself results from typological concerns: it aims to capture the individual nature of languages while still making cross-linguistic claims regarding universals of language (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:14-5). Role and Reference Grammar theory provides representations of the semantic and pragmatic function of sentences and bases the representation of their syntactic structure on that semantic representation; therefore, it is able to fulfil the commitment of a typologically adequate theory to "represent comparable structures in different languages in comparable ways" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:22).

7.1 Comparing the form of specificational constructions

A significant difficulty in comparing structures cross-linguistically is determining what constitutes an appropriate comparison. The same form can have different functions

in different languages, and languages can formally code the same function in different ways. Hence, "neither form nor function is necessarily a reliable indicator of comparability" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:23). The *it*-cleft construction is usually defined in terms of both its form and its function. Huddleston, for example, refers to two "parts" of the *it*-cleft construction, one "in a superordinate clause, one in a subordinate clause…the general effect is to give added prominence to the former" (1984:459).

The goal of typological comparison correlates with particular aspects of the construction (also observed by Croft 2003:18). For example, if one wants to compare the morpho-syntactic or phonological realization of the specificational function (that of providing a value for a variable), one takes the same function and examines how it is formally realized. If, on the other hand, one compares patterns of discourse use of the *it*-cleft construction cross-linguistically, one would take the same syntactic form across languages and (in languages where it occurs) examine the differences in use.

The former approach to cross-linguistic comparison, focusing on the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction, surveys other "strategies used to encode" (Croft 2003:14) a specificational, narrow focus, function. Focus structure can be signalled by intonation and morphology, for example, as well as through syntactic strategies.[1] In English, for example, the specificational function can be indicated through intonation, as in (43.

(1) Margaret plays the PIANO (…not the clarinet).

[1] The term 'focus' here is used, as elsewhere in the thesis, in the sense described by Lambrecht (1994), referring to a unit of information structure rather than (necessarily) to a prosodically-marked constituent; that is, it refers to "the semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition" (Lambrecht 1994:213). Although the focus is often marked through intonation, Lambrecht notes that "accent placement and focus marking are not to be equated" (1994:208).

Other languages mark a specificational function morphologically. Makua (Niger-Congo), for example, makes use of a focus-marking particle (Croft 2003:109). The addition of the aspectual (perfective) suffix *-ílé* and low tones on the post-verbal noun phrase in (2) (both underlined) indicate narrow focus on that noun phrase. (Data cited in Croft 2003:109; I assume that the acute accent indicates high tone and unmarked notation low tone.)[2]

(2) a. híñ-sepété áhó- han -á níváká. ORDINARY DECLARATIVE
Sepete SBJ.TNS- forge -ASP spear
'Sepete forged a spear.'

b. híñ-sepété aa- han -<u>ílé</u> <u>nivaka</u>. (NARROW) FOCUS CONSTRUCTION
Sepete SBJ.TNS- forge -PRF spear
'It's a spear that Sepete forged…'

Marathi (Indo-European, Indic) also displays this *in situ* morphological marking of narrowly focused constituents (Harries-Delisle 1978:432).The basic SOV word order of Marathi is shown in (3a), and the sentence in (3b) contains a morphologically marked constituent (Harries-Delisle does not gloss the "emphatic morpheme" *-ts*).[3]

(3) a. mi tyana pəyse dein. 'NEUTRAL' (UNMARKED FOCUS)
I them money give
'I give them money.'

b. mi tyana<u>ts</u> pəyse dein. 'EMPHATIC' (NARROW FOCUS)
I them money give
'I give THEM money.'

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[2] Croft does not discuss the change in the SBJ.TNS verbal prefix in the two constructions. However, in his accompanying examples of a WH-question and relative clause construction (2003:109-110, given below as (i) and (ii)), the same *aa-* prefix occurs, suggesting further structural similarities between these 'backgrounding' constructions.

(i) híñ-sepété <u>aa</u>- han -ílé -ni. WH-QUESTION
Sepete SBJ.TNS- forge -PRF -what
'What did Sepete forge?'

(ii) níváká <u>aa</u>- han -ílé híñ-sepété -(ñné) RELATIVE CLAUSE
spear SBJ.TNS- forge -PRF Sepete -DEM
'the spear that Sepete forged…'

[3] Word order information from http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=MRT. Accessed 01/03/04.

Other languages use syntactic 'strategies' for encoding narrow focus (that is, for expressing a specificational function). These not only include cleft constructions, but also other structures where the contrastively focused 'value' element appears in a designated focus position in the sentence. Languages that use this type of syntactic strategy are termed 'discourse-configurational' by Kiss (1995). She defines them as those "in which topic and focus form key constituents of sentence structure, *i.e.*, languages in which primary sentence articulation serves to express discourse-semantic functions" (1995:5).

Hungarian has relatively fixed focal and topical positions; Kiss (1998) suggests that it expresses 'identificational' (narrow, specificational) focus through the movement of the focused element to pre-verbal position, while informational or presentational focus occurs *in situ* (see (4a)). The exhaustive, contrastive interpretation of 'identificational focus' as defined by Kiss (1998) makes it essentially the same as the specificational function described in this thesis (see chapter 2). Kiss illustrates the pre-verbal focus position with the following Hungarian examples (in (4b), focused constituent underlined).[4]

(4) a. Tegnap este be mutattam Pétert MARINAK. INFORMATIONAL FOCUS[5]
last night PERF introduced.I Peter.ACC Mary.DAT
'Last night I introduced Peter to MARY.'

b. Tegnap este Marinak mutattam be Pétert. IDENTIFICATIONAL FOCUS
last night Mary.DAT introduced.I PERF Peter.ACC
'It was to Mary that I introduced Peter last night.'

[4] Kiss uses small capitals to indicate the informationally-focused constituent marked intonationally, though the small capitals are not intended to mark the location of pitch accents (1998:246).

[5] Informational focus, as discussed in section 3.1.2, merely "conveys new information" although Kiss suggests that both types of focus involve prosodic marking (1998:245, 246 fn 1). Szendröi (2001) argues that what Kiss terms 'informational focus' is not main stress but "phrasal focus" associated with verb phrase or 'wide' focus (predicate focus, in Role and Reference Grammar terms), whereby the verb receives the main stress (2001:81, 86).

Modern Greek further illustrates this initial 'identificational' (narrow) focus position. According to Tsimpli (1990), the basic word order of Modern Greek is VSO. It also has a pre-verbal focused position (Tsimpli 1990:246); the element in this position receives "heavy stress" (1990:238). Like Kiss' (1998) analysis of Hungarian, Tsimpli assigns the focused element a position within a Focus Phrase, implying it also carries a contrastive implication (1990:245; following Brody 1990).[6] Kiss (1998) cites the examples in (5). She explains that (5b) would be said where there is a presupposition that Petro is one of a closed set of people to whom 'they' lent the book, while the focus in (5a) does not have the same "exhaustive-contrastive reading" (Kiss 1998:270; data from Tsimpli 1995). This interpretation is reflected in the English translations for the sentences: an *it*-cleft construction is used for (5b) but not for (5a).

(5) a. Dhanisan to vivlio STON PETRO. UNMARKED WORD ORDER/FOCUS
lent-3pl the book to.the Petro
'They lent the book to PETRO.'

b. Ston Petro dhanisan to vivlio. NARROW (CONTRASTIVE) FOCUS
to.the Petro lent.3pl the book
'It is to Petro that they lent the book.'

Standard Arabic (VSO) also places contrastively focused elements in a special position before the verb. Example (6b) below would be used when it identifies *shaay* from within a closed set of identifiable members (Kiss 1998:270; following Ouhalla 1994).

(6) a. Sharib-a Zayd-un SHAAY-AN. UNMARKED FOCUS
drink-3M.SG Zayd-NOM tea-ACC
'Zayd drank TEA.'

[6] Tsimpli also notes that it is also possible for elements to be narrowly focused *in situ* in Modern Greek, as illustrated in (i) (1990:247).

(i) O Yanis edhose to vivlio STI MARIA.
the-NOM Yanis gave-3S the-ACC book to-the-ACC Maria
'Yanis gave the book TO MARIA.'

b. Shaay-an sharib-a Zayd-un (laa ‘asiir-an) NARROW FOCUS
tea-ACC drink-3M.SG Zayd-NOM (not juice-ACC)
‘It was tea that Zayd drank (not juice).’

The placement of the contrastively focused element in clause-initial or pre-verbal position bears some similarities to the clefting strategy. Lambrecht notes that this position is “cognitively speaking an eminently salient [one]” (1994:201) and thus there is some degree of iconicity involved in the initial placement of contrastively focused, highlighted elements. The difference between languages that code the specificational function by ‘fronting’, on the one hand, and by the use of a cleft construction, on the other, is discussed further below (section 7.3).

In contrast to a cross-linguistic survey based purely on the specificational function of the *it*-cleft construction, one can consider constructions with a specificational function in various languages and that are, in addition, formally similar to the *it*-cleft construction.

As indicated above, the *it*-cleft construction displays a certain amount of iconicity between its form and its function; one example of this iconicity is the subordination (or ‘backgrounding’; Schachter 1973) of the cleft clause content. In this respect, *it*-cleft constructions are formally similar to relative clause constructions, as noted in section 5.2.2. Croft observes that in both cleft constructions and relative clauses, “the focus sentence[7] structure mirrors the sentence function…This is an example of iconic motivation: grammatical structure reflects conceptual structure” (2003:110). Schachter’s (1973) examination of Akan, Ilonggo and Hausa (and the example of Makua above in (2)) indicate that this form-function correspondence exists in diverse languages. This

[7] Croft (2003) takes the term ‘focus sentence’ (and ‘focus construction’) from Schachter (1973). Schachter’s concentration in that paper (and Croft’s use of the term here) is on the *it*-cleft construction although he considers all constructions with a specificational function (as defined in this thesis) to be focus constructions.

diversity is to be expected for a structure that has iconic properties, that is, that corresponds to conceptual structure to some degree.[8]

An example of this degree of cross-linguistic mirroring between form and function in *it*-clefts comes from Johansson's study of Swedish clefts. Johansson suggests that Swedish *it*-clefts "appear to be structurally identical [to those in English]" (2001:548).[9] The sentence in (7) provides an example.

(7) Det är mer pengar vi behöver.
it is more money we need
'It is more money (that) we need.'

Johansson goes on to show that, in terms of the meaning and function of the Swedish and English *it*-cleft constructions, there is a sense "in which the reader is invited to process the information in the cleft clause as background material" (2001:554).

Harries-Delisle considers the Dera (Chadic) construction in (8) to be a cleft construction, despite the absence of a copula and a relative marker. This decision is partly due to the analogous specificational function of the construction, and partly

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[8] The example of the *aa-* particle in Makua above in (2) illustrates that cleft constructions and relative clause constructions may share the use of special sets of markers. Harries-Delisle (1978) provides several further cross-linguistic examples of this; she observes that in Somali, for example, when the subject of a sentence is "emphasized" (1978:429), that is, carries narrow specificational focus, the verb is third person singular regardless of the person or number of the subject. (Example (i) shows a 'neutral' declarative sentence, and (ii) a sentence with narrow focus). She points out that this also occurs in relative clause constructions (1978:429-430).

(i) ma?allimíin-tìì wa̱a̱ yì-ma̱a̱dd-a̱a̱n. 'NEUTRAL' (PREDICATE/SENTENCE FOCUS)
'the teachers (nom) are come (pl)'
'The teachers came.'

(ii) ma?allimíin-tìì báà ti-maadd-a. 'EMPHATIC' (NARROW FOCUS)
'the teachers (acc) is come (sg)'
'It is the teachers who came.'

[9] Johansson (2001) incorporates a useful "translation mirror principle" to provide a truer comparison between the discourse use of cleft constructions in languages (2001:551). Essentially this states that "similarities and differences [between] L1 and L2 [are genuine] if they are mirrored, to a significant extent, in translations from L1 into L2 and from L2 into L1" (Johansson 2001:551). This principle distinguishes such comparisons between languages from those where other focus constructions are translated into *it*-clefts, as in (5) and (6) above.

because of its consequent form, in particular the presence of a "neutral head noun [–*ones*]" (1978:426).

(8) Wuni wun kapa kurei.
they ones plant corn
'They are the ones who plant corn.'

Returning to the case of Arabic, Ouhalla (1999) suggests that both Standard Arabic and Moroccan Arabic use constructions that are similar in form to the *it*-cleft construction. Ouhalla's (1999) comparison focuses on formal similarities: both involve 'backgrounded' non-focused material. However, his translations of the sentences in (9) as *it*-cleft constructions suggest that the Arabic sentences also carry a similar specificational function. In this syntactic "strategy", the focused phrase is followed by a "pronominal copula (PRON)" (Ouhalla 1999:335) like that found in *NP is NP* specificational sentences.[10] The 'pronominal copula' is followed by a relative clause introduced by a relative clause marker (glossed as 'RM') (Ouhalla 1999:341).

(9) a. ZAYBAN-u hiyya llatii ?allaf-at l-riwaayat-a. STANDARD ARABIC
Zaynab-NOM PRON.she RM wrote-she the-novel-ACC
'It was ZAYNAB who wrote the novel.'

b. L-WLAD huma lli sarrd-at (-hum) Nadia. MOROCCAN ARABIC
the-children PRON.they RM sent-she(-them) Nadia
'It was the CHILDREN that Nadia sent.'

Thus, both the Arabic and English constructions reflect the iconicity described above in terms of the structural subordination of the cleft clause. In the light of similarities between Arabic and English, Ouhalla's goal is to "attempt to assimilate Arabic and English clefts" (1999:344) and to "bring English clefts into line with their Arabic counterparts" (1999:355) in terms of their underlying structure. Schachter (1973)

[10] Green explains that this "pronominal element [is used] to perform the copular function [(that is, to license non-verbal predicates)]…when the predicate of a present tense copular sentence is a definite NP …[It is] a third person pronoun agreeing in gender and number with the subject" (2004:14).

also takes the similarity in form between the *it*-cleft and relative clause constructions to be indicative of similarities in meaning. He consequently assigns the constructions a similar derivational analysis.

In contrast, the Role and Reference Grammar analysis in chapter 6 mirrors Croft's (2003) suggestion that the form reflects the function. From a non-derivational perspective, these similarities in form between the languages are reflected in similar syntactic (and semantic) representations but do not necessarily lead to the 'bringing into line' of language-specific syntactic forms. In fact, Ouhalla concludes that the similarities between Arabic and English cleft constructions seem to lie more in the function of the constructions; that is, they both provide the value for a variable (1999:336-7).

These observations reflect the fact that the *it*-cleft construction is often perceived as having a relatively unambiguous form-function correspondence. The specificational function of the *it*-cleft as a narrow focus construction, and the exhaustive, contrastive interpretation of the clefted constituent in particular, are then often viewed as properties of the syntactic form of the construction. Clefts are marked constructions in the sense that they are "special devices to mark the focus articulation of sentences whose information structure deviates from the unmarked predicate focus" (Lambrecht 2001:487). However, even for this 'marked' syntactic structure with a relatively specific interpretation and function, there is no exact one-to-one correspondence between function and form. This subject is discussed in the following section.

7.2 Comparing the functions of the *it*-cleft construction

There are two types of evidence in the literature against an exact one-to-one correspondence between function and form in the *it*-cleft construction. Firstly, some languages have various sub-types of *it*-cleft construction, some of which do not have the

stereotypical contrastive narrow focus pattern. Secondly, cross-linguistic comparisons highlight differences in the discourse use of the construction.

Various studies have recognized the existence of different discourse-pragmatic functions for the English *it*-cleft construction (*e.g.* Prince 1978, DeClerck 1988, and Lambrecht 2001). The examples in (10) illustrate the three types or uses of cleft construction suggested by DeClerck (1988:221-2).[11]

(10) a. (Nobody knows who killed the old man. The police seem to believe that) it was a tramp who did it. CONTRASTIVE CLEFT

b. It was also during these centuries that a vast internal migration…took place. UNACCENTED-ANAPHORIC-FOCUS CLEFT

c. It was the Greeks who first made wine around 1500 B.C. (Hedberg 2000:915) DISCONTINUOUS CLEFT

DeClerck defines all three types of *it*-cleft construction as specificational, providing a (focused) value for a variable. The differences lie in the cognitive status, or 'givenness' of the constituent elements. Thus, in the 'contrastive' cleft (in (10a)), the focus is new and the content of the cleft clause is old information. In the 'unaccented-anaphoric-focus' type in (10b), on the other hand, the variable is still given but the value is a "weakly accented continuous [that is, 'old'] focus" (1988:224). Discontinuous cleft constructions such as (10c) contain all-new information and these are often used as discourse openers (1988:224). It is significant that 'discontinuous' cleft constructions in particular do not exhibit all the features associated with the *it*-cleft construction, such as exhaustiveness and contrastiveness (as noted in section 2.2.1.1). They provide evidence against analyses that 'read off' these features from the form of the *it*-cleft construction.

[11] Although all the examples in (10) are *it*-cleft constructions, DeClerck argues that the division into subtypes applies equally to pseudoclefts and reverse pseudoclefts (1988:224). Her 'unaccented-anaphoric-focus' and 'discontinuous' *it*-cleft types subdivide Prince's (1978) 'informative-presupposition' *it*-cleft.

Johansson's analysis of the "processing instructions" (2001:579) involved in cleft constructions in English and Swedish reveals differences in their discourse-pragmatic use, both within and particularly between the languages. He notes the "translation equivalence" of English reverse pseudoclefts and Swedish *it*-clefts[12]. That equivalence leads him to suggest that these two cleft constructions share more functional characteristics and "processing instructions" than the formally similar English and Swedish *it*-cleft constructions (2001:579). The examples in (11) and (12) show an English reverse pseudocleft in (11a) translated into Swedish as an *it*-cleft construction in (11b); in (12), the Swedish *it*-cleft construction (12a) is translated as an English reverse pseudocleft ((12b); Johansson 2001:564, 578).

(11) a. (Yes I *do* know it's bad for my health as a matter of fact,) that's why I like it.
b. (Visst, jag *vet* att det inte är bra för min hälsa;) det är därför jag gillar att röka.
'(Sure, I know that it is not good for my health,) it is therefore I like to smoke.'

(12) a. Det är väl så man gör.
'It is surely thus you do.'
b. That's probably what you do.

Johansson's inclusion of other types of cleft in his cross-linguistic study is a reminder that the comparison of formally similar constructions across languages needs to take into account how those constructions "participate in different [language-specific] networks of focusing and backgrounding devices" (Doherty 2001:458). In other words, it is important to take into account the language-specific context of how the use of cleft constructions is connected to the use of other focus constructions.

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[12] Johansson states that Swedish 'fronted' sentences are also commonly used to translate English reverse pseudoclefts, as in (i), suggesting that Swedish more frequently allows such structures, and that these two constructions in the relevant languages share functional characteristics (2001:574; translations as provided by Johansson).

(i) Precis så måste det ha varit när Pinon dog.
'Exactly so must it have been when Pinon died'
Translated as: That is how it must have been when Pinon died.

French is another well-studied language exhibiting different discourse uses for the *c'est*-cleft (*it*-cleft) construction. Rialland, Doetjes and Rebuschi (2002) and Katz (2000), for example, discuss what they respectively term 'explicative all-focus' or 'variable specifying' *c'est*-clefts in French. In contrast to contrastive or 'corrective' clefts, the former type does not have a strongly contrastive interpretation (as illustrated by the examples in (13) and (14) below.) As the (b) examples show, while French *c'est*-cleft constructions are required in these contexts (Katz 2000:258), similarly-placed *it*-clefts are certainly odd in English.

(13) Q : What's going on?

a. C' est le petit qui est tombé dans l' escalier. *C'EST*-CLEFT
it is the little.one who is fallen in the stairs (Rialland *et al.* 2002:2)
'The little one has fallen down the stairs.'

b. !It's the little one who has fallen down the stairs. *IT*-CLEFT

(14) What a beautiful shirt! Where did you buy it?

a. C' est ma mère qui me l'a offerte. *C'EST* CLEFT
it is my mother who to.me it have give (Katz 2000:258)
'My mother gave it to me.'

b. !It's my mother who gave it to me. *IT*-CLEFT

Consideration of the various types of *c'est*-cleft construction in French lead Rialland *et al*. to propose that "cleft sentences do not impose a focus on the XP but focus (or 'zoom') on the relationship between the XP and the…following relative clause" (2002:1). In this thesis, I have agreed with this observation, showing that what is focused in an *it*-cleft construction is a relationship rather than a constituent; in other words, the assertion consists of the act of specification of the value for the variable. The cross-linguistic variations in the interpretations and use of the *it*-cleft construction suggest that analyses that explain the focus structure by assigning some type of focus

feature (particularly an exhaustive or contrastive feature) to the clefted constituent unit (such as Kiss 1998) over-simplify the situation.[13]

More generally, these examples provide evidence against the cross-linguistic applicability of accounts that 'read off' the focus structure from the syntactic form (*e.g.* Kiss 1998 and, to some extent, Davidse 2000).[14] In the Role and Reference Grammar account proposed in chapter 6, the syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft construction is a reflection of its meaning and function, instead of its function being a consequence of its syntactic form.

7.3 Formal and functional motivations for the *it*-cleft construction

The fact that the same cleft construction can have various discourse-pragmatic interpretations in different languages is also a reflection of the fact that various motivations may be involved in invoking one of these "compensatory device[s]" (Doherty 2001:457). These motivations reflect the different syntactic, semantic and pragmatic characteristics of each language and the way these interact. This view presupposes that information structure and the communicative function of language are an integral part of grammar and sentence structure; in other words, that "discourse function is…inherent in the formal system…[and that] grammatical form is motivated by function" (Lambrecht 1994:338-9).

Lambrecht (2001) observes that the motivation for the use of an *it*-cleft construction can be primarily functional or formal depending on the flexibility, or freedom, of syntax and focus structure in the language. He suggests that in terms of formal motivation, the presence of cleft constructions in a language "correlates with the degree of positional freedom of prosodic accents and syntactic constituents in that

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[13] Green & Jaggar (2003:20) dispute Kiss' analysis of English for the same reason.

[14] Johansson (2001) cites Collins (1991), Delahunty (1984) and Delin and Oberlander (1995) as further examples of this type of approach.

language" (2001:488); in other words, it correlates with the relative rigidity of focus structure and ordering of syntactic constituents. Functional motivation, on the other hand, concerns the disambiguation of focus structure; cleft constructions are "focus-marking devices used to prevent unintended predicate-focus construal of a proposition" (2001:489).

In French, for example, cleft constructions are formally motivated. As frequently noted in the literature, French does not permit pre-verbal focus[15] and so the focus must not be on a subject (see for example Katz 2000:259, Lambrecht 2001:491). This rigid focus structure constraint coupled with rigid syntax (in terms of an SVO word order) provides formal motivation for the cleft construction, where a would-be subject becomes the (post-verbal) object of the copular verb.[16] Pragmatic and syntactic constraints thus motivate not only *c'est*-cleft constructions with contrastive focus (as in (15)), but also the non-contrastive 'variable specifying' (Katz 2000) subtype exemplified above (see example (16) repeated from (14)). The (b) examples show the infelicity of the non-cleft versions.

(15) a. C' est <u>mon mari</u> qui est déménagé. (Pavey 2003a:4)
it is my husband who is moved
'It was <u>my husband</u> who moved.'

b. !Mon MARI est déménagé.

[15] The term 'focus' is used here in the sense of Lambrecht, namely the "semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition" (Lambrecht 1994:213), as discussed in section 4.4.1.

[16] Lambrecht (2001) also notes that these constraints correctly predict the absence of reverse pseudoclefts in French, since the focus would precede the verb, as (i) illustrates.

(i) *Le champagne est ce que j'aime. (Lambrecht 2001:492)
the champagne is it that I love
'Champagne is what I like.'

(16) What a beautiful shirt! Where did you buy it?

a. C' est ma mère qui me l'a offerte. (Katz 2000:258)
it is my mother who to.me it have give
'My mother gave it to me.'

b. !Ma MÈRE me l'a offerte.

Setswana (Bantu) also exhibits formal motivation for cleft constructions. Like French, Setswana is an SVO language in which subjects cannot be focal. The sentences in (17) illustrate one consequence of these constraints: a cleft construction (as in (17b) and (c)) has to be used for the narrow focus WH-question since the interrogative pronoun cannot be focused if it occurs pre-verbally (Van Valin 1999:7, citing data from Demuth 1989). In the cleft sentences in (17b) and (c), the focused element (underlined) appears after the copular verb.

(17) a. *Mang o-pheh-ile lijo?
who SUBJ-cook-PERF food
'Who cooked the food?'

b. Ea o-f-ile-ng ntja ke mang? CLEFT
REL OBJ-give-PERF-REL dog COP who
'The one that gave you the dog is who?'

c. Ke mang ea o-f-ile-ng ntja? CLEFT
COP who REL OBJ-give-PERF-REL dog
'It's who that gave you the dog?'

In contrast to formal motivation, functional motivation for cleft constructions arises where there is more than one potential focus structure for a particular syntactic construction. English, for example, has relatively flexible focus structure. Thus, through intonational marking, a sentence such as (18) can be interpreted as having narrow focus

on any constituent (see (18-c)), predicate focus (answering a question such as *What did your cat do?* (18d) or sentence focus (answering the question *What happened?* (18e)).[17]

(18) a. MY CAT killed a squirrel. NARROW FOCUS
b. My cat KILLED a squirrel.
c. My cat killed a SQUIRREL.
d. My cat/It KILLED a SQUIRREL. PREDICATE FOCUS
e. My CAT killed a SQUIRREL. SENTENCE FOCUS

These examples illustrate that one sentence type can have many different focus structure interpretations. The cleft construction is therefore a syntactic means of disambiguating the intended (narrow) focus reading for an utterance since it always has a narrow focus interpretation.

Another language with rigid syntax and flexible focus structure is Toura (a Mande language spoken in the Ivory Coast); the strategies for disambiguating focus structure in this SOV language show some similarities to English, as (19b-c) show. The sentence in (19a) provides an example of a sentence with predicate focus (Van Valin 1999, data from Bearth 1992; narrow focused element underlined).[18]

(19) a. Tià ké gwɛ́ɛ́ lo̱'. PREDICATE (UNMARKED) FOCUS
Tia PRDM peanuts buy
'Tia bought PEANUTS.'
b. Tià ké gwɛ́ɛ́-le lo̱'. NARROW FOCUS (MORPHOLOGICAL MARKER)
Tia PRDM peanuts-FOC2 buy
'Tia bought PEANUTS.'
c. Gwɛ́ɛ́-' Tià-' lo̱' le. NARROW FOCUS (CLAUSE-INITIAL POSITION)
peanuts-FOC1 Tia-PRDM buy TM
'PEANUTS Tia bought', or 'It is PEANUTS (not potatoes) that Tia bought.'

[17] Unlike in French, English focused elements can also potentially appear 'fronted', or appear in a reverse pseudocleft, as in (i) and (ii) (although in this example, the fronted example is questionable).
(i) ?A SQUIRREL my cat killed. FRONTING
(ii) A SQUIRREL is what my cat killed. REVERSE PSEUDOCLEFT

[18] PRDM = predicate marker, TM = terminal marker.

The morphological focus marker *-le* added to the narrow focused element in (19b) indicates a more contrastive reading (Van Valin 1999:5). Like English, Toura also has a syntactic strategy, a "special clause-initial position" for focal elements illustrated in (19c). This construction is a structural solution for the disambiguation of focus structure.

These examples indicate that cleft constructions are one consequence of rigid syntax; Jespersen notes that they are "one of the means by which the disadvantages of having a comparatively rigid grammatical word-order (SVO) can be obviated" (Jespersen 1937:85). Cleft constructions seem more likely to be functionally motivated in languages with relatively flexible focus structure and rigid syntax. In these languages, such as English, "the focus structure adapts, as it were, to the rigid syntax, with focus expressed primarily prosodically" (Van Valin 1999:3-4),[19] thereby creating the ambiguity that the relatively *un*ambiguous cleft constructions resolve. Cleft constructions appear to be formally motivated in languages with both relatively rigid focus structure and rigid syntax (such as French and Italian). In these languages, the rigid focus structure forces the syntax to "adapt" (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:213); because of the accompanying rigid word order, this has to be achieved by creating bi-clausal cleft constructions that place focal elements in post-verbal position (in the case of French and Italian).

In conclusion, various cross-linguistic studies in the literature (such as Clech-Darbon *et al*. 1999 and Ouhalla 1999) note that while there are some formal similarities across languages (to the extent that their form defines them as cleft constructions), what various cleft constructions have in common has more to do with their function than their form. I have shown in this chapter that cross-linguistic study of the *it*-cleft construction

[19] Van Valin adds that this does not mean that English word order cannot be varied for pragmatic purposes, merely that it is not an "obligatory aspect of English syntax" (1999:4).

is valuable in two related ways. Firstly, there are advantages in examining the ways languages differ in encoding a specificational function, and the iconic motivation for focus-initial strategies. Secondly, it is productive to examine the various discourse-pragmatic uses to which the *it*-cleft construction itself is put. I have discussed how these two approaches illuminate the form-function relationship in the *it*-cleft construction and the implications they have for a general analysis of the construction.

8. CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have examined the *it*-cleft construction in English in close detail. In chapter 2, I provided a detailed overview of the main characteristics of the *it*-cleft construction and compared it both to other cleft constructions and to other specificational copular sentences. Through the literature review in chapter 3, I critically examined key studies of the *it*-cleft construction, studies that approach the construction from a variety of theoretical perspectives. From the discussion in these two chapters, problematic issues emerged that fall into two areas: the first area involves the nature of the constituents of the *it*-cleft construction, and the second concerns the relationship between those constituents. Primary among these issues is an overriding mismatch, or lack of iconicity, between the semantic representation and syntactic form of the construction. In chapter 4, the final element of the first part of the thesis, I provided a detailed introduction to the concepts and principles of Role and Reference Grammar theory.

The second part of the thesis concentrated on the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction. The issues raised in chapter 4 were comprehensively discussed and analyzed in chapter 5 and I argued that a satisfactory account of the *it*-cleft construction has to allow for the representation of syntax, semantics and pragmatics and their interaction. The Role and Reference Grammar analysis I presented in chapter 6 proposes such an analysis. I showed the syntactic, semantic and information representations of the *it*-cleft construction to have explanatory significance for previously problematic issues. Finally, in chapter 7, I commented on the cross-linguistic comparability of the *it*-cleft construction, discussing the approaches to formal and functional comparison as well as the implications these have for the analysis of the *it*-cleft construction.

The analysis proposed in this thesis reflects both the copular nature of the *it*-cleft construction and the relationship between the cleft clause and the clefted constituent. The interlinking of the two main characteristics of the *it*-cleft construction forms the core of its contribution since it is only in describing these relationships that the *it*-cleft construction can be fully characterized. The function of the *it*-cleft construction is not necessarily to highlight or place into focus a particular clefted element, but rather to highlight, or assert, a relationship between the clefted constituent and the cleft clause.

The integrated approach developed here has advantages over derivational approaches, and some functional approaches, where these take only one aspect of the construction to be primary. The analysis of specificational *it*-cleft sentences as constructions rather than as derived from component parts permits a more comprehensive understanding of the construction and its comparison with both formally and functionally similar constructions. It is not restricted in having to account for the semantic (and syntactic) similarities between them in terms of syntactic derivations.

Analyzing the main 'predicative' function of the *it*-cleft construction as pragmatic and specificational leads to doubt as to the strict division between semantics and pragmatics and, in a related manner, between reference and predication: in the *it*-cleft construction, a referring semantic argument may function simultaneously as a pragmatic predicate.

These observations are linked to correlations I have drawn between specificational *it*-cleft constructions and definite noun phrases (and also between 'existential' *there*-cleft constructions and indefinite noun phrases). The difference between these constructions lies in the syntactic and semantic level at which they operate. In noun phrases, the specification (coded as definite) or introduction (coded as indefinite) of a referent as the value corresponding to a variable is not the main predicative function of

the sentence in which the noun phrase appears. The retrieval or construction of a referent takes place and it is then interpreted in the context of the sentence as a whole. In the *it*-cleft construction, on the other hand, this act of specification or introduction/presentation is the main predicative function of the sentence. Particularly relevant here is the comparison between *it*-cleft constructions and noun phrases containing relative clauses: differences in the antecedent-variable relationship between *it*-clefts and noun phrases lie, I argue, in the nature of their antecedent and the syntactic environment in which they occur. This difference is represented in both the syntactic and semantic representations for the constructions.

My analysis not only proposes an account of the *it*-cleft construction but also provides insights into the structure and function of both *there*-clefts and pseudoclefts in English. The Role and Reference Grammar representations illuminate comparisons between these constructions and the *it*-cleft construction that broaden the analysis. Finally, in the light of cross-linguistic comparisons, an appropriate analysis of the form and function of the *it*-cleft construction is one that interprets syntactic form as a reflection of meaning and function. The proposals made in this thesis, within a Role and Reference Grammar framework, constitute such an analysis.

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