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### **The comparative syntax of cleft constructions**

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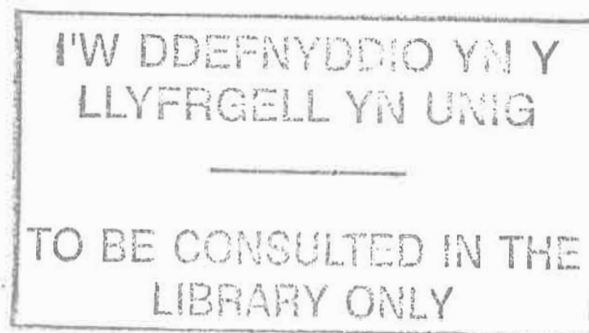
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# The Comparative Syntax of Cleft Constructions

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the syntax of the cleft construction in Standard English, in Hiberno-English and in Irish in the Principles and Parameters/Minimalist theoretical framework. It develops an analysis which accounts for the data in all three, whereas previous accounts, in concentrating only on Standard English, have missed important generalisations.

The Introduction briefly sets out the problem as involving the phenomenon of syntactic displacement, a pervasive and defining property of natural human language. Acknowledgement is made of the fact that, while syntax is the focus of this work, different linguistic disciplines may approach the same data from other perspectives.

Chapter One at once introduces the core syntactic mechanisms which will be seen to be at work here and presents the grammatical facts of the construction in Standard English.

Chapter Two compares and contrasts previous theoretical thinking both on clefts and on constructions which bear representational similarity to them, and develops and motivates a movement analysis for the data, drawing both on theoretical insights and on novel data from a non-standard dialect.

Chapter Three presents cleft construction data from Hiberno-English which has received no previous treatment in the literature. It demonstrates that one of the properties of cleft constructions in Standard English which has always been taken to be categorical is in fact a locus of dialectal variation. It is shown that this data both confirms existing theoretical views on the structure of verb phrases and provides an entirely novel way of investigating that structure. It is demonstrated that a movement analysis is again preferable.

Chapter Four moves away from English and first addresses cleft constructions in Irish, finding that they parallel the Hiberno-English data in unexpected ways. The discussion then extends to Irish copular clauses, which are shown to be concealed clefts. The question of how the grammar of a substrate language could influence the grammar of the superstrate is raised and an answer germane to this construction is proposed.

The dissertation ends with a brief conclusion.

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The object of inquiry

It is a truism that any theory of syntax which attempts even a description of human language must admit the availability of interpretation at a distance. A given interpretation may be available in more than one strict linear order of constituents. This (possibly defining) property of language may be viewed differently from different theoretical perspectives, depending on the mechanisms which are admitted by the theory. Transformational and Principles and Parameters/Minimalist theories (e.g. Chomsky 1957, 1965, 1977, 1995) appeal to a limited set of transformations whose operation derives one order from another;<sup>1</sup> phrase-structure grammars (e.g. Gazdar, Klein, Pullum and Sag 1985) admit no transformational component, but rely instead on an enriched lexicon containing detailed syntactic information.

Regardless of the theoretical bias of the linguist, the data persist. Alternation in the order of constituents of the type illustrated in (1) is found across genetically unrelated languages.

- (1) a. She chose purple for the kitchen walls.  
b. Which colour did she choose \_ for the kitchen walls?  
c. Ils ont repeint les chaises.  
*They have repainted the chairs.*  
d. Quelles chaises ont-ils repeintes \_ ?  
*Which chairs have they repainted?* (French)  
e. Tegnap este be mutattam Pétert Marinak. (Hungarian)  
last night perf. introduced.I Peter.acc Marinak.dat  
*Last night I introduced Marinak to Peter.*  
(Hungarian: adapted from Kiss 1998, p247, her (5))

---

<sup>1</sup> Chomsky (2001, p9), in the context of discussing the ostensible design perfection of human language makes an even stronger claim: namely, that the absence of displacement would constitute an imperfection in the system.

- f. Tegnáp este Marinak mutattam be Pétert \_.  
last night Marinak.dat introduced.I perf. Peter.acc  
*It was to Mary that I introduced to Peter last night.*

- g. Zhejian shi ku-lei-le Zhangsan  
this-cl case cry-tired-LE Zhangsan  
*This thing got Zhangsan tired from crying*

- h. Zhejian shi ba Zhangsan ku-lei-le  
this-cl case BA Zhangsan cry-tired-LE  
*This thing got Zhangsan tired from crying.*

(Chinese: adapted from Sybesma (1999, p164,  
his (80a) and (82a))

This dissertation is an investigation of a sentence-type found in English known as the cleft construction, which displays this property of interpretation at a distance. It was Jespersen (1927) who first coined the term "cleft" to describe these sentences, where, as shown in data such as (2), there is a constituent in a linearly early position in the sentence which is interpreted as if it were in the position of the gap later in the clause.

- (2) a. It was *the man in the trilby* that \_ slipped me the message.  
b. It was *moss roses* that she planted \_ at the back of the border.  
c. It was *Pam* who \_ drove me here.  
d. It was *Chicago* that we landed at \_ in the end.  
e. It was *she* who \_ drove me here.  
f. It's *those* that I prefer \_ .  
g. It was *in the bath* that they kept the coal \_ .  
h. It was *for Allan* that she bought the aftershave \_ .  
i. It was *very grudgingly* that I admitted \_ that he was right.  
j. It's *because she borrowed my copy of The Minimalist Program and hasn't given it back* that I want to get in touch with her \_ .

In what follows, an analysis of this sentence-type will be developed which will have as its central aim to explain how the displacement effect comes about. The main focus of the work will be the syntactic derivation of the cleft construction. This is not

to deny that there are interesting pragmatic and discourse-related facts associated with clefts (see Atlas and Levinson 1981, Collins 1991, Prince 1978 and many others). For example, cleft constructions trigger a presupposition of the truth of the clause which contains the gap:

- (3)    a.        It wasn't moss roses that she planted \_ at the back of the border.  
      b.        She planted something at the back of the border.  
      c.        # It wasn't moss roses that she planted at the back of the border -  
              in fact, she didn't plant anything at all there that year.  
      d.        She didn't plant moss roses in the back of the border - in fact,  
              she didn't plant anything at all there that year.

The truth of (3)a presupposes the truth of (3)b, even when negative; (3)c is thus pragmatically odd, since the second clause contradicts this presupposition. In contrast, the unclefted first clause of (3)d triggers no presupposition, with the result that the contradiction leads to no pragmatic ill-formedness.

Chapter One will be concerned with the structure of cleft sentences in Standard English, with one brief but informative excursus away from that dialect. Following chapters will extend the brief, first to a non-standard dialect, Hiberno-English, and then (linguistically, if not geographically) further afield to Modern Irish, with remarks on other Celtic languages. The work is then an investigation of both cross-dialectal and cross-linguistic difference and correlation. Real questions arise with respect to the genesis of a dialect of English in the presence of an unrelated substrate, which will receive no conclusive answer; it will, however, be demonstrated that the syntactic properties of a dialect may resemble those of the substrate in non-obvious ways.



## CHAPTER ONE

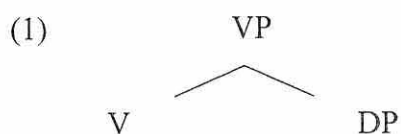
### A SYNTACTIC OVERVIEW OF CLEFT SENTENCES

#### 1.1 Introduction

Having, in the foregoing, briefly described the construction that forms the focus of this dissertation, we move in this chapter to an overview of the major theoretical issues that will be relevant in this work, and thence to a description of the grammatical properties of English cleft constructions which will be analysed in later chapters. In Section 1.2, the most basic properties of the grammar are discussed; further theoretical concepts will be introduced as the work proceeds. In Section 1.3 the distinguishing characteristics of cleft constructions in English are presented.

#### 1.2 Merge, Move and the A/A' distinction

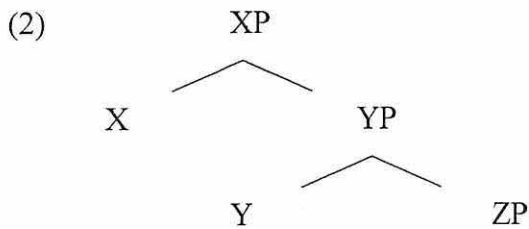
As discussed in detail in Chomsky (1995), syntax, at its most basic, is a combinatorial process. In the simplest case, two elements are combined in order to produce a third, new entity. In other words, a process known as Merge must be a property of human language. When two elements are drawn from the lexicon, they must be combined in order to form a larger unit. To take a straightforward example, where a verb *V* requires a complement DP, the two combine to form a new constituent VP:<sup>1</sup>



Iterative operations of Merge result in the construction of a complex object, where the output of one application can form one term of the input to another, so that, as schematised in (2), the YP which results from merging *Y* and *ZP* can in turn merge with *X* to form *XP*.

---

<sup>1</sup> The discussion which follows does not assume a phase-based model of grammar such as that put forward in Chomsky (2001), although reference will be made to the notion of phase at points in the text.



In the framework adopted in this work, Merge is not the only syntactic operation admitted. Displacement of constituents leads us to propose a second process, Move, whereby a constituent (previously formed by Merge) can be relocated to a new position. In Chomsky (1995), Move is taken to have the effect of copying the moved constituent to its new position, with subsequent deletion of the phonetic content of the lower constituent. The effect is to establish dependencies between different positions in the structure.



This is not to say that dependencies may only be established through Move. Since Merge is independently available in the system, the possibility remains that such a dependency can be established by that means, with coindexation of the merged element with a pre-existing position in the structure. Indeed, it will be shown later on that English makes use of both processes. Where such Merge and coindexation occurs, the result will also be a dependency, but one where both parts of the dependency can have phonetic content:



### 1.2.1 Types of movement

Movement is not a random process. By assumption, it must occur only when independently required. For example, in an English *wh*-question, displacement of the [+ *wh*] constituent is forced; in the absence of an echo-interpretation, leaving it in situ is ungrammatical:

- (5) a. Which sofa did they choose t ?  
 b. \* Did they choose which sofa ?

In recent years, this movement has taken to be forced by the presence of a strong [+wh] feature on C, requiring that a wh-phrase move into its specifier in order to check that feature, since [+wh] is an uninterpretable feature which must be eliminated.<sup>2</sup> The result is to induce an effect similar to that described by the Extended Projection Principle:

- (6) Every sentence must have a subject

If (6) is interpreted as requiring that Spec/TP be filled, then the term Extended Projection Principle (EPP) can be extended to cover all cases where properties of a head require that its specifier be filled. In other words, a [+wh] C with a strong EPP feature will have the effect of forcing movement of a constituent bearing a compatible [+wh] feature into its specifier; positing such a feature on C in (5) will result in the pattern shown. In this view, movement is driven by abstract features on functional heads such as C.

Appealing to such feature-specification will account for movement; it is nonetheless necessary to draw a distinction between two kinds of movement: movement to Spec/CP in order to eliminate a [+wh] feature, and movement of arguments in order to satisfy requirements of Case. The literature amply displays that such movement is motivated; see for example Baker, Johnson and Roberts (1986), Burzio (1986), Chomsky (1981, 1986) and many others. Among the contexts which involve such movement are the passive in (7), raising as in (8) and unaccusatives such as (9):

- (7) The potatoes were planted t by Ellie

- (8) Ellie seemed [ t to like home-grown vegetables ]

---

<sup>2</sup> Uninterpretable features are those which are checked at the syntax-LF interface; a structure containing an uninterpretable feature which has not been checked will crash. In contrast, interpretable features such as  $\phi$ -features on nominals may persist, and consequently give rise to no syntactic operations leading to their elimination. See Chomsky (1995, 277-9)

- (9) Les soldats sont arrivés t  
 the soldiers are arrived-masc-pl  
*The soldiers have arrived.* (French)

In earlier work (e.g. Chomsky 1981, 1986), such movement was taken to occur in order to satisfy a Case Filter, since Case could not be assigned to the object position in passives, to the subjects of non-finite clauses nor to the sole arguments of unaccusatives in their base-generated position. In a system which relies on the necessity of checking abstract features on functional heads to drive movement, the arguments in (7), (8) and (9) move in order to eliminate a strong feature on T.<sup>3</sup>

From the discussion so far, it would appear that there is little difference between movement to Spec/CP and to Spec/TP, apart from the position in the structure of the functional heads which mediate them. This is not in fact the case. In particular, a body of facts first investigated by Barss (1986) indicate that the two types of movement give rise to different properties in contexts where the hierarchical order of constituents is important.

The requirement that anaphors such as *Xself* and *each other* be bound by a c-commanding antecedent would, at first sight, seem to imply that movement of an anaphor, or a constituent containing one, past its antecedent would give rise to a failure of binding, so that in a structure such as (10), construal of the anaphor should be impossible and contrast strongly with (10) contrary to fact.

- (10) a. Ellie reprinted that photo of herself.  
 b. [<sub>CP</sub> Which photo of herself<sub>i</sub> did [<sub>IP</sub> Ellie reprint t<sub>i</sub> ] ] ?  
 c. [<sub>CP</sub> Which photo of herself<sub>i</sub> did [<sub>IP</sub> Ellie reprint which photo of herself ] ]

The theory of movement outlined above readily admits an explanation of this fact: since movement involves copying, the anaphor in the lower position in (10) is bound, and thus the grammatical interpretation of the anaphor results. In fact, evidence for

<sup>3</sup> In what follows, I will finesse the question of whether TP is the sole functional projection targeted by subjects in the inflectional domain. Much debate has surrounded the issue of whether Agr(eement) projections are also present; see for example Pollock (1989) and Belletti (1990) for arguments that they are, and Chomsky (1995) for the contrary view. These questions are largely irrelevant in an investigation of cleft constructions. Agnosticism regarding this question will be indicated by the use of IP to cover the entire inflectional domain.

the successive-cyclicity of wh-movement can be found using similar data. Consider (11): in the declarative version, the co-indexed DP is not a potential binder, since a closer c-commanding argument intervenes, but after wh-movement of the constituent containing the anaphor, the structure is well-formed. This is explained if wh-movement takes place iteratively, so that the wh-phrase in (11) leaves a subsequently deleted copy in the intermediate Spec/CP (indicated by  $t'$ ), and contrual of the anaphor with the higher subject is possible in that position.

- (11) a. \* Ellie<sub>i</sub> thought that Margaret liked that picture of herself<sub>i</sub>.  
 b. [CP Which picture of herself<sub>i</sub> did [IP Ellie<sub>i</sub> think  
 [CP  $t'$  [IP Margaret liked  $t$  ? ]]

In contrast, it appears that there is no such effect in movement to Spec/T. When a constituent containing an anaphor is moved to subject position past its antecedent, the result is ill-formed:

- (12) a. \* Pictures of each other<sub>i</sub> were taken by the children<sub>i</sub>.  
 b. \* That picture of each other<sub>i</sub> seemed to the twins<sub>i</sub> to be the best.

Reconstruction, then, is possible if movement is to Spec/CP but not to Spec/TP. In the light of this, I will assume in what follows that there is a difference between the two types of movement, and that the A/A' distinction is a real one: A'-movement targets CP; A-movement targets a functional position in the inflectional domain. It will be shown below that reconstruction is one aspect of a collection of properties, known as connectivity, which have long been known to hold in clefts (Delahunty (1981), Halvorsen (1978), Higgins (1979)).

### 1.3 The properties of cleft constructions

Before going on to develop an analysis of cleft constructions, it is necessary to examine in some detail the properties of the objects in question. What follows is a largely pretheoretical account of the data.<sup>4</sup>

(13) summarises the properties of cleft sentences and (14) gives examples, taken from Jespersen (1927, p88-9).

- (13) a. a non-referential subject *it* appears;  
b. a form of *be* appears;  
c. a single constituent appears after *be* which is interpreted as co-referent with an obligatory gap in the succeeding clause.
- (14) a. It is the wife that decides \_ .  
b. It was the Colonel I was looking for \_ .  
c. It is champagne I like \_ best.

The points in (13) deserve further elucidation. The *it* subject is expletive: however, the homophony of the expletive with referential *it* leads to a persistent ambiguity. Cleft sentences involving a DP can be string-ambiguous, in that (15) can be interpreted either as a cleft or as if in response to a question such as *Who was that at the door?*, where *it* has a referential reading. This fact has been little remarked on in the literature on clefts, but it is important, since a given string, as we will see later, can be grammatical in one reading but not in the other. Where the cleft reading is ill-formed but the referential reading is not, I will flag the latter as the irrelevant grammatical reading (henceforth IGR).<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> It is worth clarifying, in the light of the discussion of Hiberno-English clefts in Chapter 2, that the judgements which follow are true, unless overtly stated otherwise, of Standard British English. As a native speaker of the former dialect, I have taken pains to check the data here with speakers of British English, so as to avoid any possible contamination of the samples. I would therefore like to thank all those who have been my informants.

<sup>5</sup> Since a major focus of this work is dialectal variation in cleft constructions, it is worth pointing out that there would appear to be one exception to the rule that only *it* may appear in clefts. Welsh English allows the following, taken from Thomas (1994, p138) (see also Taniguchi 1972).

- i. There's tall you are!  
ii. There's strange it was!

It is tempting to analyse these as clefts with expletive *there* as the subject, and the alternation between *it* and *there* as a locus of dialect variation. But no other element other than an adjective (or an adverb

- (15) It was the student that we saw earlier

*Be* may appear with the full range of tense and mood specification. Quirk et al (1985, p1386) state that simple past and present occur most frequently, but add that forms with modals are possible:

- (16) a. It may be his father that you're thinking of.  
b. It would have been at that time that he went to live in Wisconsin.

There are, in addition, interactions between the tense of the lower clause and that of cleft *be*. If the main clause is present, the cleft portion cannot be:

- (17) a. It was tomatoes that she planted every year.  
b. It is tomatoes that she planted every year.  
c. \* It was tomatoes that she plants every year.

Negation can also be present:

- (18) a. It wasn't in the car that she left the dog.  
b. It couldn't have been Ellie that left the dog in the car.

Inversion in yes/no questions is possible, and a wh-question can be formed from a cleft if the wh-phrase represents the cleft constituent, although not otherwise:

- (19) a. Was it in the car that she left the dog?  
b. Could it have been Mo that left the dog in the car?  
c. Who was it that left the dog in the car?  
d. Where was it that he left the dog?  
e. \* Where was it Mo that left the dog in the car?

---

with adjectival form, such as in *There's fast he's running!* (Alan Thomas, pc)) may appear. In the light of this fact, these data are better analysed as exclamatives, analogous to *How tall you are!*. Of course, this points up a different locus of variation, but one which is not relevant to a discussion of clefts.

The effect of (13) is to ensure that only a constituent which is construed as corresponding to the gap in the lower clause can appear as the clefted constituent. Thus [the wife] corresponds to the gap in (14)a; [the Colonel] to that in (14)b; [champagne] to that in (14)c. However, strong restrictions hold of what may be clefted. Consider the following:

- (20) a. The students read every book on the list.  
b. \* It was every book on the list that the students read.
- (21) a. The students read some books on the list.  
b. \* It was some books on the list that the students read.
- (22) a. The students read many books on the list.  
b. \* It was many books on the list that the students read.
- (23) a. The students read few books on the list.  
b. \* It was few books on the list that the students read.
- (24) a. The students read no books on the list.  
b. \* It was no books on the list that the students read.

The examples in (20) - (24) all involve the clefting of a quantifier; none of the grammatical (a) sentences give rise to a grammatical cleft, irrespective of the type of quantifier involved: universal in (20), existential in (21), monotone-decreasing in (23), negative universal in (24).<sup>6 7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> In Beghelli (1995), different scope interactions between different types of quantifiers is taken to indicate that each type has a distinct position in phrase structure. The impossibility of (20) - (24) indicates that phrase-structure position is not relevant to the ungrammaticality of these examples.

<sup>7</sup> The degree of unacceptability of these quantified data appears to vary somewhat from speaker to speaker. For some, with strong contrastive focus on the quantifier, as in *It was EVERY book on the list that the students read, not just the ones the lecturer had written*, there seems to be an improvement in acceptability over bare quantifiers such as *It was EVERYTHING that they read, not just a few things*. This possibly indicates that d-linking in the sense of Pesetsky (1987) is implicated, so that the contrast here is similar to that between (i) and (ii):

- i. ? Which book did they wonder whether she'd read?
- ii. \* What did they wonder whether she'd read?

In Section 2.6 of Chapter Two, where the source of the ungrammaticality of these data is examined in detail, it will be shown that this variability in acceptability of clefted quantifiers is not a major obstacle to the analysis proposed there; in fact, it can be shown to support it. See also note 2 of Chapter Two.



Sentences containing more than one quantifier such as (25)a have two distinct interpretations, (25)b and (25)c. This results from the existence of two different scopal possibilities, one, (26), where *every pie* takes wide scope with respect to *someone*, the other, (26), where the reverse holds.

- (25) a. Someone ate every pie.  
 b. For each pie, there exists a person such that that person ate it.  
 c. There exists a person such that that person ate every pie.
- (26) a. every pie > someone  
 b. someone > every pie

The rich literature that has accumulated over the years on quantifiers (see for example Beghelli (1995), May (1977), (1985), Higginbotham (1985), Hornstein (1995), Reinhart (1997) and many others) assumes that this ambiguity comes about as a result of syntactic movement: quantifiers are subject to A'-movement.<sup>8</sup> Movement creates different c-command relations between the two quantifiers, and scopal interpretations derive from these relations. (27) represents the wide scope reading of the universal; (27) the wide scope reading of the existential.

<sup>8</sup> Hornstein (1995) takes a rather different view of the type of movement involved. He observes that if both subjects and objects move by copying and deletion out of VP to Agr-positions at least by LF, then, after copying, (25) looks as follows:

i. [IP someone every pie [VP someone ate every pie ] ]

Different scopal interactions will then arise, depending on which member of each chain is deleted. Deletion of the head of the chain formed by movement of *someone* will result in *every* in its derived position c-commanding, and taking scope over, the remaining *someone* at the foot of that chain, yielding a wide scope reading for *every*; deletion of the head of the chain containing *every* will leave *someone* with wide scope over *every*. This account depends crucially on the existence of object-shift. Furthermore, it makes no claim about the scopal properties of a quantifier contained in an adjunct, since adjuncts will not shift for Case-checking reasons. However, it seems that quantifiers within adjuncts can also give rise to scope ambiguity, in that (ii) can be interpreted as (iii) or (iv):

ii. Someone followed me in every city.  
 iii. There exists a person such that that person followed me in every city.  
       (someone > every city)  
 iv. For every city, there exists a person such that that person followed me.  
       (every city > someone)

Since such adjuncts are not subject to A-movement, it seems that in order to derive the ambiguity of (ii) by movement, A'-movement must be appealed to. To preserve Hornstein's account, we would then be led to the paradoxical view that if and only if the quantifier is (contained within) an adjunct, its scopal properties derive from an application of A'-movement, to which an argument quantifier is not subject.

- (27) a. [CP [every pie]<sub>i</sub> [someone]<sub>j</sub> [IP t<sub>j</sub> ate t<sub>i</sub> ]  
 b. [CP [someone]<sub>i</sub> [every pie]<sub>j</sub> [IP t<sub>i</sub> ate t<sub>j</sub> ]

The implication is that quantifiers bear a feature which must be checked in an A'-position, and must reach that position by LF.

Higginbotham (1987) draws attention to examples such as (20) - (24); the phenomenon is in fact more extensive than this.

- (28) a. Under no circumstances would the students read the books on the list.  
 b. \* It was under no circumstances that the students would read the books on the list.
- (29) a. Never in my life had I seen such a thing.  
 b. \* It was never in my life that I had seen such a thing.

Haegeman (1995) and Haegeman and Zanuttini (1991) demonstrate that these elements front to a clause-peripheral position, with associated subject-auxiliary-inversion, and overtly identify the position in question with Spec/CP; the phenomenon is formalised as following from the Negative Criterion, a subcase of the Affect Criterion (see also Rizzi (1996)):

- (30) a. [CP never in my life [C had<sub>i</sub> ] [IP I t<sub>i</sub> seen such a thing ]]  
 b. [CP under no circumstances [C would<sub>i</sub> ] [IP she t<sub>i</sub> go there again ]]

(31) AFFECT-Criterion:

- a. An AFFECTIVE operator must be in a Spec-head configuration with an [AFFECTIVE] X<sup>0</sup>.  
 b. An AFFECTIVE X<sup>0</sup> must be in a Spec-head configuration with an [AFFECTIVE] operator.

(Haegeman 1995, p93)

(32) NEGATIVE-Criterion:

- a. An NEGATIVE operator must be in a Spec-head configuration with an [NEGATIVE]  $X^0$ .
- b. An NEGATIVE  $X^0$  must be in a Spec-head configuration with an [NEGATIVE] operator.

(Haegeman 1995, p106)

Haegeman (1995) adduces convincing evidence that the left-peripheral elements in (2) have sentential scope; they induce negative polarity over the entire clause, since they can be coordinated with negative tags:

- (33) a. Never in my life had I seen such a thing, and neither had Ellie
- b. Under no circumstances would she go there again, and neither would I.

In addition to those negative elements which trigger inversion, there exists a set of negative expressions of what Haegeman terms local negation, which do not trigger inversion. Among these are *in no time (at all)*, *not long ago*, *not far away*, *in no small measure*:

- (34) a. In no time at all we got to the station.
- b. Not long ago, she was working in London.
- c. Not far away, Ellie was making muffins.
- d. In no small measure, their contribution has helped the project.

- (35) a. \* In no time at all did we get to the station.
- b. \* Not long ago was she working in London.
- c. \* Not far away was Ellie making muffins.
- d. \* In no small measure has their contribution helped the project.

These do not have sentential scope, as shown by their failure to admit negative tags:

- (36) a. \* In no time at all we got to the station and neither did the others.  
 b. \* Not long ago, she was working in London and neither was I.  
 c. \* Not far away, Ellie was making muffins and neither was Biddy.  
 d. \* In no small measure, their contribution has helped the project  
 and neither has anything else.

While we have already seen in (28) and (29) that negative elements which take sentential scope cannot form grammatical clefts, expressions of local negation can be clefted without difficulty:

- (37) a. It was in no time at all that we got to the station.  
 b. It was not long ago that she was working in London.  
 c. It was not far away that Ellie was making muffins.  
 d. It is in no small measure that their contribution has helped the project.

Furthermore, adverbs which take only clausal scope give rise to ungrammatical clefts - compare the unclefted and clefted versions of (39) and (40). Since the scope domain of these adverbs is the entire clause (see Jackendoff (1972)), it is natural to assume that at some level they must c-command the clause from an A'-position external to IP:

- (38) adverb [IP ... ]

- (39) a. They probably read all the books on the list.  
 b. \* It is probably that they read all the books on the list.
- (40) a. They certainly read all the books on the list.  
 b. \* It is certainly that they read all the books on the list.

This means that their failure to produce grammatical clefts can be aligned with the quantifier data in (20) - (24) and the negative elements in (28) and (29). In addition, there exists a set of adverbs in English which are ambiguous between clausal and

manner interpretation; examples include *frankly*, *naturally*, *happily*, *hopefully*, *sadly*. These show an revealing pattern, depending on which interpretation is at issue.

- (41) a. I frankly doubt that they have read the books on the list.  
b. \* It is frankly that I doubt that they have read the books on the list.
- (42) a. I naturally thought that they would read all the books on the list.  
b. \* It was naturally that I thought that they would read all the books on the list.
- (43) a. The list is sadly unavailable at the moment.  
b. \* It is sadly that the list is unavailable at the moment.
- (44) a. The list will hopefully be available soon.  
b. \* It is hopefully that the list will be unavailable soon.
- (45) a. The list is happily available now.  
b. \* It is happily that the list is available now.

In (41) - (45), the clausal interpretation is forced, and the clefted versions are all equally ungrammatical. However, where these adverbs do not have clausal scope, there is no reason to suppose that they must appear in an A' scope position such as (38). When they have the alternative, manner interpretation, the cleft facts are very different, as (46) - (50) show.

- (46) a. Fachtna spoke frankly to his solicitor.  
b. It was frankly that Fachtna spoke to his solicitor.
- (47) a. They conceived their third child naturally.  
b. It was naturally that they conceived their third child.
- (48) a. She looked sadly at the assembled mourners.  
b. It was sadly that she looked at the assembled mourners.

- (49) a. She embarked hopefully on the trip to Paraguay.  
 b. It was hopefully that she embarked on the trip to Paraguay.
- (50) a. She sang the last aria happily.  
 b. It was happily that she sang the last aria.

The generalisation that can be drawn, then, is that elements with scopal properties are barred from appearing as clefted constituents, whether they are quantifiers, negative elements or clausal adverbs. Any analysis of these constructions must take account of this fact.

There is one further major class of elements which cannot be grammatically clefted in Standard English. Complements to predicative verbs such as *be*, *become*, *remain*, *stay* are ungrammatical (see Akmajian (1970), Bolinger (1972), Emonds (1976), (1985), Higginbotham (1987), Quirk et al. (1985)).

- (51) a. \* It's a teacher that he has always been.  
 b. \* It's that plain white that we should paint the house.  
 c. \* It was my legal residence that I considered this house.  
 d. \* It is chairwoman that they elected Susan.  
 e. \* It's my lawyer that Mary has become.  
 d. \* It was the manager that John seemed happiest as.  
 e. \* It's insulation they will use this cardboard as.  
 f. \* It was John's brother that we introduced Sam as.  
 g. \* It has been my lawyer that Mary has been acting as.  
 h. \* It's a toy village that they made the boxes into.

(Emonds 1985, p270, his (38))

This fact will turn out to be of considerable relevance later in this work, since it is not in fact universal. It has occasionally been noted that Hiberno-English differs from Standard English in this regard (Jespersen (1946), Quirk et al (1985)). It follows that any analysis of clefts which takes it to be a defining property of the construction is missing not only an important locus of syntactic variation but also a fact about the construction in general. I will leave the matter here, however, and pursue it more fully in Chapter Two.

In the last section, allusion was made to the possibility of reconstruction in clefts. In the literature on this construction, especially in Delahunty (1981), Halvorsen (1978)<sup>9</sup> and Pinkham and Hankamer (1975)<sup>10</sup>, this is one of a constellation of properties known as connectivity (a term apparently coined by Higgins (1979)). These properties all emphasise the close connection between the clefted constituent and the following clause. Among them is the fact that the cleft constituent is obligatorily interpreted as representing a gap lower in the clause, and where no such construal is possible, the result is impossible:

- (52) a. \* It was a banana that I denied  
 b. \* It was Bill's incompetence that was frightened by the gorilla.  
 (Pinkham and Hankamer (1975, p430, their (5) and (6)))

The intuition that there is a structural relationship between the clefted constituent and the following clause is supported by data containing anaphors. In the following, adapted from Halvorsen (1978, p6, his (1) and (2)), it is clear that a clefted anaphor is possible when it would be licensed in the position of the gap.

- (53) a. Bill<sub>i</sub> built a house for himself<sub>i</sub>.  
 b. \* Bill<sub>i</sub> built a house for him<sub>i</sub>.  
 c. Bill<sub>i</sub> wanted Jill<sub>j</sub> to build a house for him<sub>i</sub>.  
 d. \* Bill<sub>i</sub> wanted Jill<sub>j</sub> to build a house for himself<sub>i</sub>.  
 e. Bill<sub>i</sub> wanted Jill<sub>j</sub> to build a house for herself<sub>j</sub>.  
 d. \* Bill<sub>i</sub> wanted Jill<sub>j</sub> to build a house for her<sub>j</sub>.
- (54) a. It was for himself<sub>i</sub> that Bill<sub>i</sub> built a house \_.  
 b. \* It was for him<sub>i</sub> that Bill<sub>i</sub> built a house \_.  
 c. It was for him<sub>i</sub> that Bill<sub>i</sub> wanted Jill<sub>j</sub> to build a house \_.  
 d. It was for herself<sub>j</sub> that Bill<sub>i</sub> wanted Jill<sub>j</sub> to build a house \_.  
 e. \* It was for her<sub>j</sub> that Bill<sub>i</sub> wanted Jill<sub>j</sub> to build a house \_.

<sup>9</sup> I use Delahunty's (1981, p3) term "connectivity" here rather than Halvorsen's (1978) "connectedness" in order to avoid any anachronistic confusion with Kayne's (1984) use of the latter term to refer to a rather different concept.

<sup>10</sup> Pinkham and Hankamer (1975) in fact deny the reality of connectivity.

Let us assume that the distribution of anaphors such as *himself* and pronominals such as *her* is restricted in the configurational terms described by binding theory (Chomsky (1981b), Reinhart(1983)).<sup>11</sup>

(55) BINDING CONDITIONS

- a. anaphors must be bound;
- b. pronominals cannot be bound

(56) BINDING

$\alpha$  binds  $\beta$  iff  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are co-indexed,  $\alpha$  c-commands  $\beta$  and  $\alpha$  is in an A-position.

(57) C-COMMAND

$\alpha$  c-commands  $\beta$  iff the first maximal projection dominating  $\alpha$  dominates  $\beta$ .

Assuming that the clefted constituent is construed with the gap, there is nothing in (53) and (54) that is not predicted by a standard theory of binding facts. (53)b fails because the pronominal is illicitly bound; when the cleft in (54)b is formed, the effect persists; the rest of (53) and (54) conform to the same pattern. However, Delahunty (1981) and Pinkham and Hankamer (1975) note the following contrast:<sup>12</sup>

- (58) a. \* Bill<sub>i</sub> asked Sue<sub>j</sub> [ PRO<sub>j</sub> to wash himself<sub>i</sub> ].
- b. It was himself<sub>i</sub> that Bill<sub>i</sub> asked Sue<sub>j</sub> [PRO<sub>j</sub> to wash \_ ].

The view of binding theory in (55) - (57) accounts for (58)a without difficulty, since the closest antecedent for the anaphor is PRO controlled by [Sue]. (58)b, on the other

<sup>11</sup> More recent treatments (e.g. Chomsky (1986a), Reinhart and Reuland (1993)) have proposed that anaphors, even in English, cliticise at LF as they do in Romance by Spell-out:

- i. Jean se<sub>j</sub> lave t<sub>i</sub>  
Jean *se* washes  
Jean *washes himself*
- ii. John self<sub>i</sub>-washes t<sub>i</sub>

Since this movement is clause-bound, there are no consequences for the connectivity facts.

<sup>12</sup> Halvorsen (1978, p5) takes the following to be ungrammatical:

- i. It was for himself that Bill wanted Jill to build a house.

According to the informants I have consulted, there is no difference between status of this and that of (58)b.



- (59) a. \* Ellie<sub>i</sub> thought that Margaret liked that picture of herself<sub>i</sub>.  
b. [<sub>CP</sub> Which picture of herself<sub>i</sub> did [<sub>IP</sub> Ellie<sub>i</sub> think [<sub>CP</sub> t' [<sub>IP</sub> Margaret liked t ? ]]

Thus, the connectivity relation between the clefted constituent and the gap is not in fact threatened by the binding data; with the associated assumption that reconstruction may occur under A'-movement, it in fact confirms it.

Delahunty (1981), Halvorsen (1978) and Pinkham and Hankamer (1975) also draw attention to the following as problematic for connectivity. They take the distribution of elements such as *any* to be clause-bound:

- (60) a. John couldn't find any problems to put on his midterm exam.  
(Halvorsen 1978, p7, his (11c))
- b. They won't be able to take any more sentences like this.
- (61) a. \* It was any problems to put on his midterm exam that John couldn't  
find.  
(Halvorsen 1978, p7, his (11b))
- b. \* It's any more sentences like this that they won't be able to stand.  
(Pinkham and Hankamer 1975, p432, their (17))

The claim put forward here is that, assuming connectivity, (61) should be acceptable, since the unclefted versions in (60) are possible. But *any* is a negative polarity item (NPI), a member of a larger class including *yet*, *a damn*, *at all*, *ever*, *the slightest*; as Progovac (1991) shows, it is licensed under c-command at Spell-out by negation or interrogation.

- (62) a. I don't have any chocolate.  
 b. Do you have any chocolate?  
 c. \* I have any chocolate.
- (63) a. They haven't sat the midterm exam yet.  
 b. Have they sat the midterm exam yet?  
 c. \* They have sat the midterm exam yet.
- (64) a. She doesn't really give a damn.  
 b. Does she really give a damn?  
 c. \* She really gives a damn.

The assumption here is that negation is represented in the structure in an IP-internal position (see for example Haegeman (1995), Pollock (1989) and many others) and that interrogation is encoded on C (Rizzi (1995)). As (62) - (64) show, when an NPI in object position is c-commanded by negation or the interrogation feature, it is grammatical. That c-command is the relevant configuration is confirmed by (65): the subject position is c-commanded by C, but not by Neg. In consequence, an NPI in subject position cannot be licensed by negation in (65)a, but remains grammatical when licensed by interrogative C in (65)b; that this is not a clause-bound phenomenon is illustrated by (65)c, where c-command by Neg in the matrix clause suffices to license the NPI in the embedded clause.<sup>13</sup>

- (65) a. \* Anyone didn't buy chocolate.  
 b. Did anyone have chocolate?  
 c. I don't think that anyone bought chocolate.

If NPIs are licensed under c-command at Spell-out, the apparent problem for connectivity posed by (61) dissolves. In these examples, the NPI contained in the clefted constituent is not c-commanded either by interrogative C or Neg, so that the

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<sup>13</sup> Duffield (1993) and Henry (1995) discuss a dialect of Northern Hiberno-English where NPIs in subject position are apparently grammatical. In order to account for this, the former develops an analysis whereby NPIs can be licensed at LF if they transit a Case-marked position (Spec/TP) which negation c-commands.

ungrammaticality of these examples is predicted. Again, the intuition that clefts involve connectivity can be preserved.

A final observation regarding the interpretation of cleft sentences remains to be made, one which moves outside the boundaries of the sentence itself. It was noted earlier that clefts exhibit a characteristic set of pragmatic properties in terms of their information structure.

- (66) a. It wasn't moss roses that she planted \_ at the back of the border.  
b. She planted something at the back of the border.  
c. # It wasn't moss roses that she planted at the back of the border -  
in fact, she didn't plant anything at all there that year.  
d. She didn't plant moss roses in the back of the border - in fact,  
she didn't plant anything at all there that year.

Closely related to this property of presupposition is the fact that clefts encode a Given/New distinction. In particular, the cleft constituent is interpreted as new information, whereas the gap-containing clause is taken as given. This is illustrated in the following exchange:

- (67) a. Bush won the election.  
b. No, it was Gore that won the election.

In (67)b, "won the election" is old, presupposed information, already given by (67)a; the new information, "Gore", is contained in the cleft constituent. On the other hand, the given/new distinction is not always quite so clear-cut. Consider the following:

- (68) a. You should criticise his callousness.  
b. No, it is his callousness that I shall ignore. (Quirk et al. 1985, p1384)

In (68)b, the clefted constituent in fact contain old information, "his callousness", retained from (68)a. But it remains the case that using a cleft in this context signals that there is a salient contrast between given and new information; the appearance of a cleft here indicates the fact that new information is being introduced in the discourse, not that it is contained in the cleft constituent itself.

While the appearance of a cleft normally signals the newness of the cleft constituent, it also indicates that that constituent should receive an exhaustive-listing interpretation. In other words, (69)a is interpreted as stating not only what Yvonne planted in the border, but that *moss roses* is all she planted. Thus (69)b is anomalous since it contradicts the entailment in (69)a. Although the first conjunct of (69)c contains the same entailment, no anomalous reading is achieved by adding the second conjunct.

- (69) a. It was moss roses that Yvonne planted in the border.  
b. # It was moss roses that Yvonne planted in the border, and she planted Himalayan poppies as well.  
c. Yvonne planted moss roses in the border, and she planted Himalayan poppies as well.

The fact that the cleft constituent receives this exhaustive-listing interpretation will be important later, when cleft constructions in English are compared to Focus constructions in languages which show overt Focus movement in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE SYNTACTIC DERIVATION OF CLEFT CONSTRUCTIONS

#### 2.1. Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the cleft construction was introduced and the major theoretical issues regarding syntactic displacement were discussed. In this chapter, the precise syntactic configurations involved are examined, and an analysis developed. The argumentation consists in part of a review of the theoretical implications of previous analyses, but, more importantly, formulates a proposal for the structure of clefts in terms of current syntactic theory, motivated in part by completely novel data which have received no previous treatment.

Section 2.2 argues that one of the most pervasive assumptions, that clefts are formally similar to relative clauses, cannot in fact be maintained in the face of consistent differences between the two constructions. In Section 2.3, the exhaustive listing interpretation is examined, and the conclusion reached that cleft constructions are consistently different to other constructions which have been argued to have focal or emphatic properties; in consequence, Section 2.4 presents in some detail the hypothesis that Focus in the grammar is represented in a dedicated functional projection in a left-peripheral position, and evaluates cleft sentences as potential Topic or Focus constructions. One of the diagnostics, the availability of resumptive pronouns, is presented at length in Section 2.5; the core data in this section comes from Ghanaian English. Having established whether Topic or Focus presents the most appropriate analysis of the data, an explanation of the distribution of quantificational elements in cleft constructions is given in Section 2.6. Section 2.7 is concerned with the motivation for movement in clefts, and the final section examines some residual problems with the analysis presented.

## 2.2 The (apparent) similarity to relative clauses

Several of the analyses of the English cleft construction that have appeared in the literature have focussed on the resemblance between clefts and relative clauses. In particular, Akmajian (1970) and Percus (1996) have made the overt claim that clefts are derived from structures containing relative clauses, and Chomsky (1977) argues that they are derived by the same processes.

These claims can only be supported, of course, if the data show that there are clear and consistent parallels between the two types of construction.

### 2.2.1 The derivation of relative clauses

To provide an explicit analysis of relative clauses is admittedly not an easy task.

"[...W]e still have no good phrase structure theory for such simple matters as attributive adjectives, relative clauses, and adjuncts of many different types."

(Chomsky 1995, p382, n22)

Nonetheless, two broad approaches can be distinguished: the first, typified by Chomsky (1977), advocates merge of the head of the relative in situ with operator-movement from the position of the gap; the second, exemplified by Vergnaud (1974), Kayne (1994) and Bianchi (1995), argues for derivation of relative clauses by movement of the head of the relative to its spell-out position; the two are represented in much simplified form in (1).

- (1)    a.        [ the derivation [ Op<sub>i</sub> that Chomsky proposes t<sub>i</sub> ] ]  
      b.        [ the derivation<sub>i</sub> [ that Vergnaud proposes t<sub>i</sub> ] ]

The choice between these conflicting analyses must be an empirical question. No final decision will be made between the two here, but they each provide insights into the structure of cleft constructions.

### 2.2.2 An operator analysis (Chomsky 1977)

The aim of Chomsky (1977) is to provide a characterisation of the properties of *wh*-movement, and to unify as much as possible the derivations of the contexts where it occurs. In fact, it amounts to a typology of A'-dependencies. Rather than relying on a set of unrelated, construction-specific transformations, it makes the claim that there are a number of constructions, namely constituent or *wh*-questions, relative clauses (finite and infinitival), clefts, topics, comparative and equative clauses, and *tough*-movement constructions, which instantiate *wh*-movement, a transformation given in (2) whose operation has the properties in (3):

- (2) Move *wh*-phrase freely into COMP

(Chomsky (1977, p85))

- (3) a. it leaves a gap  
b. where there is a bridge, there is an apparent violation of subadjacency, PIC and SSC  
c. it observes CNPC  
d. it observes *wh*-island constraints

(Chomsky (1977, p86, his (49)))

(3)a is illustrated in (4) for each of the construction types.

- (4) a. What<sub>i</sub> did you buy *e*<sub>i</sub> ? (*wh-question*)  
b. the analysis that he proposed *e* (*restrictive relative*)  
c. The sofa, which she had sat on *e* earlier, collapsed.  
(*non-restrictive relative*)  
d. She's looking for a sofa to sit on *e* (*infinitival relative*)  
d. It was the sofa that she sat on *e* (*cleft*)  
e. That sofa, she sat on *e* (*topic*)  
f. That sofa is more comfortable than that one is *e*  
(*comparative*)  
g. Surfing is easy to flunk *e* (*tough-movement*)

Seen from the point of view of Principles and Parameters, the island constraints mentioned in (3) no longer form a natural class. At the time, constraints held not only of dependencies formed by movement, but also dependencies formed by co-indexation, reflexivisation, etc. The specified subject condition (SSC) and the propositional island condition (PIC, or Tensed-S Condition) are largely concerned with ruling out ill-formed sentences which came later to be barred by Case-licensing or binding. For example, (5)a, an SSC violation since *himself* is co-indexed with *Kevin* over an intervening subject, is now regarded as a binding violation, since the anaphor has no possible binder within the embedded clause; (5)b is impossible since movement from the position of the empty category to the matrix subject position is unmotivated - since [<sub>DP</sub> Kevin ] checks its case feature in the embedded clause, it cannot raise to the matrix subject position to check a second nominative feature.<sup>1</sup>

- (5) a. \* Kevin<sub>i</sub> believes [ Rose to have outwitted himself<sub>i</sub> ]  
 b. \* Kevin<sub>i</sub> seems [ e<sub>i</sub> likes Bill ]

These constraints refer from a current point of view to properties that hold of A-dependencies, so it is hardly surprising that A'-dependencies should freely violate them. On the other hand the other constraints in (3), the complex noun phrase constraint (CNPC) and the wh-island constraint, are directly relevant to wh-movement. The first of these bars extraction either from a relative clause contained within a DP or from the sentential complement of a noun, and the second rules out extraction from a clause which has a wh-phrase already in Spec/CP. The following illustrate the ungrammaticality that results for the construction types in question; (6) concerns the CNPC and (7) the wh-island constraint.

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<sup>1</sup> Bridge" in (3) refers to the phenomenon of bridge verbs, first discussed by Ertischik (1973); not all verbs which take a sentential complement allow extraction; *murmur*, *sigh*, *whisper*, for example, are not bridge verbs:

- i. She whispered that she had seen him.  
 ii. \* Who did she whisper that she had seen?

Bridge verbs are verbs such as *say*, *think*, *believe* which permit extraction without difficulty:

- iii. She said that she had seen him.  
 iv. Who did she say that she had seen?

Non-bridge verbs disallow *that*-less complementation:

- v. She whispered \*(that) she had seen him.

See Doherty (1999) for discussion.



- (6) a. \* What<sub>i</sub> did she read [ a book [ which discusses  $e_i$  ] ] ?  
 b. \* What<sub>i</sub> did she doubt [ the claim [ that he had completed  $e_i$  ] ] ?
- (7) \* What<sub>i</sub> did she ask [ whether he was going to buy  $e_i$  ]?

The ungrammaticality of such violations in cleft constructions is shown in (8):<sup>2</sup>

- (8) a. \* It was the sofa that I know the woman that sat on  $e_i$  .  
 b. \* It was Surfing 101<sub>i</sub> that she doubted the claim that he had completed  $e_i$  .  
 c. \* It was the Matisse<sub>i</sub> that she asked whether he was going to buy  $e_i$  .

As the second clause of (3) indicates, wh-movement can operate over indefinitely long distances as long as it proceeds successively-cyclically: i.e. from one possible landing-site to another. Landing-sites for extraction are Spec/CP.<sup>3</sup>

Since subsequent work has shown that both the CNPC and the wh-island constraint can be subsumed under subjacency, clauses (b), (c) and (d) of (3) are in a sense tautologous. Subjacency can be defined as in (9):

- (9) SUBJACENCY CONDITION  
 Movement cannot cross more than one bounding node, where bounding nodes are IP and DP.

(Adapted from Haegeman 1994, p402, her (59))

(9) blocks extraction of the clefted constituent as follows. In (8)a, and (8)b, given in annotated form in (10), extraction from  $e_i$  to the specifier of CP1 is not problematical, since it crosses only one bounding node, IP1; however, the next step, from Spec/CP1

<sup>2</sup> In note 7 in Chapter One, it was remarked that for some speakers, clefts involving quantifiers improve with strong contrastive emphasis, and that there appear to be d-linking effects at work. For the same speakers, it seems that the negative judgements in (10) are similarly attenuated, indicating that d-linking effects may be at work here too. In Section 2.4 below, it will be shown that the data involving quantifiers do not necessarily militate against the analysis proposed.

<sup>3</sup> Depending on the view of locality taken, wh-movement may have additional landing-sites; adjunction to VP is allowed to void the barrierhood of VP in Chomsky (1986b). This is a technical distinction which is irrelevant to the discussion at hand.

to Spec/CP2, crosses DP and IP2. The difference between the two, that (8)a involves extraction from a relative clause and (8)b from a sentential complement, is not a factor here.

- (10) a. \* It was the sofa [CP2 that [IP2 I know [DP the woman [CP1 that [IP1 sat on  $e_i$  ]]]]]  
 b. \* It was Surfing 101<sub>i</sub> [CP2 that [IP2 she doubted [DP the claim [CP1 that [IP1 he had completed  $e_i$  ]]]]]

(8)c, on the other hand, is blocked by (9) for different reasons. Whereas in (8)a and (8)b no property of CP blocks movement, in (8) it is the fact that Spec/CP is filled by *whether* that interferes with extraction.

- (11) \* It was the Matisse<sub>i</sub> [CP2 that [IP2 she asked [CP1 whether [IP1 he was going to buy  $e_i$  ]]]]

Extraction from the position of  $e_i$  is problematical, since Spec/CP1 is filled by *whether*. In order for extraction to proceed, it must take place from the base position straight to CP2, a movement which crosses both IP1 and IP2 in one step, which violates (9). In this way, (9) is successful in blocking both CNPC and wh-island violations, a fact which is supported by the deviance of extraction from the other constructions in (4):

- (12) a. \* Who did you notice the present that you gave to ?  
 b. \* What did you believe that the article made the claim that Bacon wrote ?  
 c. \* What did you believe whether Bacon wrote ?
- (13) a. \* the play that the book that claims that Bacon wrote  
 b. \* the play that the book that made the claim that Bacon wrote  
 c. \* the play that the book questions whether Bacon wrote
- (14) \* the woman a book to give to

- (15) a. \* That play, I'd like to meet the person who wrote.  
 b. \* That play, I'm prepared to give credence to the claim that  
       Bacon wrote.  
 c. \* That play, I don't think it matters whether Bacon wrote.

The fact that clefts are blocked by the same factors that block extraction in other wh-constructions is an extremely important one. The recognition that there is a number of construction types which exhibit similar behaviour is the first major contribution to the theory of Chomsky (1977). Proposing that syntactic behaviour can be generalised over constructions represents a major advance over the stipulation of construction-specific rules. In essence, the claim is that A'-dependencies are formed by moving a wh-element successive-cyclically. The second contribution to the framework is the claim that there exists in the grammar the possibility of a null element which bears [+wh] properties. This issue arises particularly sharply with respect to cleft constructions. Chomsky's assumption regarding their derivation is that they involve base-generation (i.e. merge) of the cleft constituent *in situ*; if this is the case, and that constituent is not itself moved from the position of the gap, then there are two facts which require an explanation: first, the appearance of the gap itself, and second, the fact that these constructions behave as if something is undergoing wh-movement. If the cleft constituent is not undergoing that movement, then there must be another element which does.

The claim here is that the grammar allows co-indexed operators to appear in the structure. Of course, clefts are not special in this regard. For example, a relative clause, such as (16), also involves base-generation of the head of the relative *in situ*. In this case, the grammar allows two options. Either a null operator, as in (16)b, or an operator with phonetic content, as in (16)c, is merged at the extraction site and wh-moved to Spec/CP, and a rule of predication identifies the head of the relative with the operator. The movement of this operator guarantees both that a gap will appear in the structure and that there will be positive results for diagnostics of wh-movement.

- (16) a. the claim that Chomsky makes  $e_i$   
 b. the claim [<sub>CP</sub> Op<sub>i</sub> that [<sub>IP</sub> Chomsky makes  $t_i$  ]]  
 c. the claim [<sub>CP</sub> which<sub>i</sub> [<sub>IP</sub> Chomsky makes  $t_i$  ]]

This derivation therefore assigns a particular status to wh-pronouns - they are the overt forms of wh-operators.<sup>4</sup> This makes a rather direct prediction: the distribution of null and overt wh-operators should be similar in the rest of the constructions in (4) to its distribution in relative clauses; as we will see in Section 2.2.4 below, there are good grounds to question this.

But it is important to notice that Chomsky (1977) does admit the possibility of another derivation for cleft constructions. On the basis of data involving clefted adverbials, he claims that there must be another mechanism for deriving these. His data is given in (17).

- (17) a. It was out of spite that I asked the students to refuse to hand in their assignments.  
 b. It was only reluctantly that I ordered the students to refuse to hand in their assignments.  
 c. It is only under highly unusual circumstances that I ask students to refuse to hand in assignments.

(Chomsky 1977, p96, his (92))

The relevant argumentation is as follows. Since there is no bar to extraction from the embedded clauses in (17), the fact that construal of the clefted constituent is not available in these data indicates that there must be a second way of deriving them. The underlying structure of a cleft sentence is given in (18); since Topics appear under S" (i.e. CP), it is possible for an S" which already contains a Topic to appear:

- (18) *it - be - S"*

(Chomsky 1977, p94, his (85))

The data in (17) seem oddly chosen. It is undoubtedly true that the adverbials in (17) are most easily construed as qualifying the matrix clause. However, it is not certain that they are capable of qualifying anything else. The unclefted versions of these sentences are given in (19), with the adverbial placed in a position where it is most easily interpreted as qualifying the embedded clauses.

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<sup>4</sup> The derivation discussed in the text requires that the Doubly-filled Comp filter bar only the occurrence of two phonetically realised elements in Comp; otherwise (16)b would be ruled impossible.

- (19) a. i. # I asked the students to refuse out of spite to hand in their assignments.  
 ii. # I asked the students to refuse to hand in their assignments out of spite.
- b. i. # I ordered the students to refuse only reluctantly to hand in their assignments.  
 ii. # I ordered the students to refuse to hand in their assignments only reluctantly
- c. i. # I ask students to refuse under highly unusual circumstances to hand in assignments.  
 ii. # I ask students to refuse to hand in assignments under highly unusual circumstances.

As indicated by the # diacritic, these sentences all appear to be pragmatically odd; in (19)a and (19)b, in particular, it seems that the speaker is asking and ordering, respectively, the students to have a propositional attitude, a philosophical incongruity the nature of which I will be content merely to remark here. It is possible to construct examples where no such pragmatic factors interfere, such as those in (20).

- (20) a. It was on Tuesday that I asked the students to agree to hand in their assignments.
- b. It was in clear plastic folders that I asked the students to agree to hand in their assignments.
- c. It was out of the goodness of my heart that he asked me to do it.
- d. It was for love that he was willing to ask me to do it.

While *on Tuesday* in (20)a can have matrix construal, it may also have scope over *agree* or *hand in*; (20)b is nonsensical with matrix construal, but is acceptable when qualifying the lower embedded clause; (20)c can only have embedded construal, and (20)d is three-ways ambiguous. This means that the dependency formed by the adverbial is not strictly local. In fact, it is subject to exactly the same constraints that were demonstrated in (10).

- (21) a. \* It was [ on Tuesday ]<sub>i</sub> that I made [ the decision to ask the students  $e_i$  to agree to hand in their assignments ].
- b. \* It was [ in triplicate ]<sub>i</sub> that I asked the students to sign [ an agreement  $e_i$  to hand in their assignments ].
- c. \* It was [ on Tuesday ]<sub>i</sub> that I asked the students to agree to [ the marking of their assignments  $e_i$  ].
- d. \* It was [ on Tuesday ]<sub>i</sub> that I wondered [whether the students would bother to hand in their assignments  $e_i$  ]]

This asymmetry is worrying. To admit that clefts which focus adverbials are derived by a different process to that which clefts arguments is stipulative. Further, such a stipulation leads to the conclusion that the interpretive properties of clefts should be identical to those found in topicalisations, since the claim is that (17) simply involve embedded topics. As will be discussed in detail later on, clefts have an exhaustive interpretation while topics do not. It is this which leads to the anomalous interpretations assigned to (22). Topicalisation does not have an exhaustive interpretation, with the result that the data in (23) are not anomalous.

- (22) a. \* It was on Tuesday that I asked the students to hand in their assignments, and I asked them on Wednesday as well.
- b. \* It was in clear plastic folders that they handed in their assignments, and in brown envelopes.
- (23) a. On Tuesday, I asked the students to hand in their assignments, and I asked them on Wednesday as well.
- b. In clear plastic folders, they handed in their assignments, and in brown envelopes as well.

The major contribution to the theory of grammar, however, of Chomsky (1977) is its recognition that the construction-types in (4) have something in common, in that they all feature A'-dependencies. It makes a further claim, however: that their derivations are parallel. But this conclusion rests on the assumption that Move, rather than

Merge, is the only mechanism by which such a dependency can be established. The effect is to make A'-dependency a derivational property rather than a representational one. Should it turn out to be the case that an A'-dependency can be formed by Merge rather than Move, then the unitary treatment of the constructions in (4) no longer follows, thus yielding support for representation over derivation. Given such an eventuality, the question arises which of the two is the correct analysis for cleft constructions.

### 2.2.3 A head-raising analysis (Bianchi 1995)<sup>5</sup>

The important work of Kayne (1994) has led to a re-examination of a number of core assumptions about syntactic theory. Previously, the standard view of phrase structure was that Universal Grammar (UG) provides a template for the construction of phrases: a head X and its complement YP combine to form an intermediate constituent X', which, with the addition of a specifier, form the phrasal category XP:<sup>6</sup>

$$(24) \quad [_{XP} \text{Specifier } [_{X'} X \text{ YP } ]]$$

In spite of the apparent ordering, no claims regarding the order of head-complement or specifier-head are made by (24). The relative order of these pairs derives instead from a parameter setting, so that individual languages can exhibit either (25)a or (25)b for head-complement order, and either (26)a or (26)b for specifier-head order.

$$(25) \quad \begin{array}{ll} \text{a.} & [_{X'} X \text{ YP } ] \\ \text{b.} & [_{X'} \text{ YP } X ] \end{array}$$

$$(26) \quad \begin{array}{ll} \text{a.} & [_{XP} ZP [_{X'} \dots X \dots ] ] \\ \text{b.} & [_{XP} [_{X'} \dots X \dots ] ZP ] \end{array}$$

<sup>5</sup> The term "head-raising" is perhaps a little misleading, since it can be taken to mean that relative clauses involve X<sup>0</sup>-movement. This is not the intended reading; it refers to an analysis whereby the head of the relative originates in a lower position. Indeed, this movement must be XP-movement, given that the head of a relative clause can be internally complex:

i. the [ picture of Ellie ]<sub>i</sub> that I framed t<sub>i</sub>

<sup>6</sup> See Jackendoff (1977) and Chomsky (1986b).



Kayne (1994) embodies an extremely strong claim about the nature of human language, and about the range of possibilities allowed by UG. Taking as a starting point the plain fact that language is linearised, at least in PF, the output of which is a linear set of terminal nodes, he notes that the notion of c-command encapsulates two of the three properties of linear order:

- (27) a. It is transitive; that is,  $xLy \ \& \ yLz \rightarrow zLz$ .  
 b. It is total; that is, it must cover all the members of the set: for all distinct  $x, y$ , either  $xLy$  or  $yLx$ .  
 c. It is antisymmetric, that is,  $\text{not}(xLy \ \& \ yLz)$ .

(Kayne 1994, p4, his (1))

Dominance relations defined on a syntactic tree are transitive; if one node  $X$  dominates another,  $Y$ , and  $Y$  dominates  $Z$ , then  $X$  dominates  $Z$ . It is also antisymmetric, since if  $X$  dominates  $Y$ ,  $Y$  does not dominate  $X$ . But it is not total, since for two nodes, it is possible that neither should dominate the other. Restricting the system to strict binary branching, however, yields the result that local ordering can be total.

Taking it to be the case that linear order of terminals is determined by asymmetric c-command, it follows that if  $X$  precedes  $Y$  in linear order, then  $X$  asymmetrically c-commands  $Y$  in hierarchical order. To take a concrete example, since heads c-command their complements, they must precede them; in other words, (25)a is the only possible order allowed by the system. In turn, since specifiers c-command heads, (26)a is the only option.<sup>7</sup>

Kayne's claims represent an extremely restrictive system in terms of phrase structure, and one which has enormous consequences for the theory of grammar. In particular, two implications arise. First, any language which appears to have

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<sup>7</sup> There is in fact no intrinsic reason why Kayne's system cannot yield another order, where heads are always preceded by complements and followed by specifiers. This would not represent a parametric choice, but rather a global mirror image of the system outlined in the text. From an empirical point of view, Greenberg (1966, p76) states that constituent orders where subjects follow verbs (OSV, OVS and VOS) are "excessively rare". If these sequences are taken to reflect the position of subjects *qua* specifiers, then head-specifier order is an extremely marked order, thus weakening the case for a complement-head-specifier base order. Kayne (1994, pp36-8) relates the choice of the order discussed in the text to the linearisation of time itself. See also Fukui and Takano (1998) for a proposal that Kayne's basic insight, that there is a universal ordering, is correct, but that it is specifier-complement-head.



complement-head or head-specifier order must derive that result through movement. Thus, any language which appears to have the order in (25)b, such as Japanese, which has postpositions and object-verb order, cannot base-generate these. Instead, they must arise by leftward movement of the complement to some functional projection to the left of the head.<sup>8</sup>

- (28) a. nihon kara  
Japan from  
*from Japan*
- b. Sensei wa [ Taroo o sikata ]  
teacher TOP Taroo ACC scolded  
*The teacher scolded Taroo.* (Roberts 1997, p22, (his 29a,b))

Second, the status of adjunction in the grammar is considerably constrained. Since all relations between a head and any element which is attached to it must be asymmetric, only one element can be attached to a non-head (Kayne 1994, p22). In consequence, multiple adjunction is impossible. A phrase may only contain one specifier, which must c-command it. To take a concrete example, a view of Topicalisation such as that in Lasnik and Saito (1992) which takes it to adjoin a preposed constituent to IP as in (29) must be incorrect, since this would result in IP essentially having two phrasal elements in adjoined positions.

- (29) [IP Topic [IP Subject ... ] ]

The consequences for the structure of relative clauses are as follows.<sup>9</sup> The relative clause in (30) is an adjoined phrase; since the introduction into the derivation of

<sup>8</sup> It is not surprising that such a strong claim has given rise to a vast amount of debate. Zwart (1993) implements it for Germanic, where inflectional heads appear to the right of their complements; Kural (1997) presents data from Turkish which, he claims, falsify it. See also the important work on verb-complement order in Old English by Pintzuk (1996, 1998, 1999), where the claim that Old English allowed both OV and VO orders in the base is defended at length.

<sup>9</sup> No distinction is drawn in the text here between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses. This is a long-standing problem in the literature. The two exhibit different properties with respect to the scope of the determiner:

- i. Mary knows few boys who enjoy knitting.
  - ii. Mary knows few boys, who enjoy knitting.
- (Stockwell, Schachter and Partee (1973) and Vergnaud (1974), cited in Bianchi (1995, p35))

phrasal elements is restricted to merging them as specifiers, and since specifiers can only precede, and not follow, heads, then CP in (30) must be introduced in a left-peripheral position. Since the observed order is *book* - CP, the head of the relative must move from CP-internal position, as shown prior to movement in simplified form in (31).

(30) [DP the book [CP that Richard wrote ]]

(31) [DP the [CP that Richard wrote book ]]

One facet of this analysis will be important for the discussion of clefts in what follows. If the element which moves in relative clauses is in fact the head of the relative, then there is no operator movement in the sense of Chomsky (1977). If there is no operator movement, then the alternation between  $\emptyset$  and wh-pronouns must be reinterpreted. In particular, a wh-pronoun can no longer be taken to be the phonetically realised counterpart of the null operator. Instead, it is reanalysed as a relative determiner. It is shown in pre-movement position in (32) and thereafter in (33):

(32) [DP the [CP Richard wrote which book ]]

(33) [DP the book<sub>i</sub> [CP [DP which t<sub>i</sub>]<sub>j</sub> Richard wrote t<sub>j</sub> ]]

The most fully articulated application of Kayne's proposals for the structure and derivation of relative clauses is Bianchi (1995). She agrees that a relative clause

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(ii), but not (i), entails *Mary knows few boys*. The difference between the two types of relatives can either be seen as following from attachment in a different position or from generation of the two in similar positions with subsequent differences in syntactic processes. The first view, that the attachment site of restrictive relatives is as a complement of N while that of non-restrictives is at the phrasal level, is found in Vergnaud (1974) and Jackendoff (1977). The second is advocated in Chomsky (1982) where it is claimed that the difference resides in the level at which co-indexation of the head of the relative and the associated gap takes place and in Safir (1986) where the difference between the two types of relative is taken to derive from the introduction of restrictive relatives in the derivation leading up to LF, while non-restrictive relatives, as well as other "extraneous" elements such as parentheticals, are only attached at a later level LF'. Kayne (1994, p110ff) argues that in the derivation up to LF the two types of relative do not differ, but that non-restrictives are subject to an additional movement at that level which removes them from the scope domain of D. Since the feature that triggers such movement has not been checked by Spell-out, it is present at PF and can be detected as the intonation break that appears in non-restrictive relatives.

is a CP selected by a determiner, and that the nominal head (i.e. *book* in (30)) raises to Spec/CP. But her analysis differs from Kayne's (1994) proposals in a number of respects.<sup>10</sup> In particular, the claim implicit in (33), that *book* has two determiners, is criticised as a violation of Full Interpretation: essentially, if the NP [book] is closed off by D *which* (as argued by Higginbotham (1987)), the other determiner has no function. If it has no function, then it qualifies as a superfluous symbol in the sense of Chomsky (1995) and the derivation should crash. Bianchi retains the notion that relative pronouns are of category D, but provides evidence to the effect that the two determiners differ with respect to definiteness. She notes that in some languages there is direct evidence that the relative determiner is syntactically indefinite; in particular, she cites observations by Ingria, Horvath and Szamosi regarding such an effect in Hungarian (Bianchi 1995, Chapter 2, Section 5.3.1). Hungarian verbal morphology varies according to the definiteness of the direct object:

- (34) a. Akart egy könyvet  
he wanted-indef a book
- b. Akarta a könyvet  
he wanted-def the book
- c. \* Akarta egy könyvet  
he wanted-def a book
- d. \* Akart a könyvet  
he wanted-indef the book

(Adapted from Bianchi 1995, Chapter 2, her (57))

Hungarian restrictive relative clauses are introduced by an obligatory relative determiner *amit*, composed of the definite article *a* and an interrogative D. When the non-specific interrogative *mi* forms the second member of this pair, the verb in the relative clause has indefinite form regardless of the definiteness of the head of the relative:

<sup>10</sup> The other main objection to Kayne's view of relative clauses put forward by Bianchi (1995) involves the relation between the external D and the relative head; although there is no sense in which there is complementation between the two, the two regularly agree cross-linguistically for  $\phi$ -features, a fact which is surprising insofar as the relative CP qualifies in Chomsky (1986b) as a barrier. A particular view of locality (Manzini 1992) is shown to provide an account of this.

- (35) a. Egy könyv amit akart  
           a book which he wanted-indef
- b. A könyv amit akart  
       the book which he wanted-indef
- c. \* Egy könyv amit akarta  
       a book which he wanted-def
- d. \* Egy könyv amit akarta  
       a book which he wanted-def

(Adapted from Bianchi 1995, Chapter 2, her (58))

In this way, it is possible to retain the insight that relative pronouns are Ds: the relative D can be seen as a type of expletive, but one which bears the feature which triggers movement to Spec/CP.

The structure which Bianchi proposes for (restrictive) relative clauses is given in (36).

- (36)  $[_{DP} D_1 [_{CP} [_{DP} NP [_{DP} D_2 t_{NP}]]_i [C [_{IP} \dots t_i \dots]]]]$

(Adapted from Bianchi 1995, cChapter 2, her (93))

The external determiner ( $D_1$ ) is the one which introduces the relative clause; it takes a CP complement. From some position internal to the IP complement of C, a DP is raised to Spec/CP; this DP has as its head the relative determiner. The complement of  $D_2$  raises to the specifier position of the raised DP, yielding the order NP -  $D_{rel}$ . In consequence, any need for the movement of empty operators in relative clauses is dispensed with. In addition, there is no need for the rule of predication suggested by Chomsky (1977, 1982). Such a mechanism is required in an operator analysis in order to rule out deviant relative clauses such as (37):

- (37) \* the purity  $[_{CP} Op_i \text{ that he tickled } t_i]$

In this example, the operator is identified vacuously as receiving the same interpretation as the trace, since it originates in that position. But identification of the operator and the head of the relative must be guaranteed; otherwise the grammar is allowed to freely generate deviant relative clauses doomed to oblivion at LF. This is

achieved by the rule of predication. In contrast, a head-raising analysis such as (36) needs no such rule: the head of the relative is interpreted as identified with the trace within IP because it originates there. In keeping with the minimalist spirit of reducing unnecessary computation in the grammar, this is a welcome step.

The consequences of Kayne (1994) and Bianchi (1995) for the grammar are extremely far-reaching; for our purposes, it should be noted that the possibility of a derivation for A'-dependencies which does not involve positing an empty operator opens up the possibility that clefts can be derived in a similar fashion. But the existence of that possibility does not imply that clefts are identical in their properties to relative clauses. Indeed, there is direct evidence that they are not, and this evidence constitutes the basis of the following.

#### 2.2.4 The lack of similarity to relative clauses

When presented with a pair such as that given in (38), it is tempting to assume that the cleft in (38)a is simply derived by exactly the same processes which derive the relative clause in (38)b, with the addition of *it - be* at the beginning. Such a view would take [<sub>CP</sub> that I saw ] to be a restrictive relative clause qualifying [ picture of Ellie ]. Only a restrictive relative would qualify here, since in order to receive a cleft interpretation, [<sub>CP</sub> that I saw ] is required (insofar as *It was a picture of Ellie* is purely predication and receives no possible cleft interpretation); furthermore, (38)a does not exhibit the intonation break that characterises non-restrictive relatives.

- (38) a. It was the picture of Ellie that I saw  
       b. the picture of Ellie that I saw

This unification of the two constructions only follows, of course, if it can be shown that the properties of the two are identical. In fact, as the discussion in this section reveals, the properties of the two are so divergent that no such unification is possible. This divergence is found both in the range of elements which can form the head of the dependency and in the internal composition of the structure.

To begin with, the range of elements which can appear in clefts is much wider than that which can appear in relative clauses (Huddleston 1984, Rochemont

1986). In particular, a restrictive relative cannot have as its head a proper name, a pronoun, an adverbial or a prepositional phrase:

- (39) a. \* Pam who drove me here is leaving shortly.  
b. \* She who drove me here is leaving shortly.  
c. In the bath (\*that they kept the coal) is the best place to sit.  
d. Very grudgingly (\*that I admitted that he was right) seemed the best way to react.

These phenomena follow without complication from a head-raising analysis. As Bianchi (1995, Chapter 2, 3.1) points out, a proper name can only move from N to D as proposed by Longobardi (1994) if D is empty; this holds whether the movement is in overt syntax, or at LF, as Longobardi claims is the case in English. But a relative clause cannot be formed in the absence of a relative D. Similarly, adopting the standard assumption that pronouns are intransitive Ds (Postal 1966, Abney 1987), the pronoun itself occupies the D position, thus blocking the formation of a relative. Since adverbials and prepositional phrases cannot be headed by a relative D, their appearance in (39) is also ruled out.<sup>11</sup> Consider now the following clefts:

- (40) a. It was Pam who drove me here.  
b. It was she who drove me here.  
c. It was in the bath that they kept the coal.  
d. It was very grudgingly that I admitted that he was right.

In contrast with the relative clauses, these are firmly grammatical. This contrast indicates that whatever is driving displacement in (40) cannot be the same as what triggers movement in (39). In the terms of Bianchi (1995), the formation of a cleft does not depend on the existence in the structure of a particular type of determiner.

Further evidence to support the idea that relative clauses involve a D which clefts do not comes from an examination of relative pronouns. English displays rather a wide range of these.

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<sup>11</sup> It is not clear how the operator-movement analysis of relative clauses rules out relative clauses headed by proper names or pronouns.

- (41)
- a. The Part One student [ that pointed that out ] got a first.
  - b. The Part One student [ who pointed that out ] got a first.
  - c. The bottle of Austrian liqueur [ which Rolf sent me ] didn't last very long.
  - d. The woman whom I lived with was reading English.
  - e. The house [ where I lived in my first year in Bangor ] leaked.
  - f. The years [ when I was in Wales ] were some of the happiest of my life.
  - g. Getting to know Ellie was the main reason [ why I liked living in that house ]

It is undoubtedly the case that *that* is not the only member of the set in (41) which can appear in a cleft. But the distribution of these forms is in fact rather constrained (cf Huddleston 1984, Rochemont 1986, Quirk et al. (1985, p1387).

- (42)
- a. It was the Part One student that pointed that out.
  - b. It was the Part One student who pointed that out.
  - c. \* It was a bottle of Austrian liqueur which Rolf sent me. IGR
  - d. \* It was the redhaired woman whom I was living with. IGR
  - e. \* It was in Bryn Teg Terrace where I lived in my first year in Bangor. IGR
  - f. \* It was from 1994 to 1997 when I was in Wales. IGR
  - g. \* It was for that reason why I liked living in that house.

Contrary to expectations, only *that* or *who* in (42) are grammatical in clefts; the other relative pronouns are ruled out in the cleft reading (although they are quite acceptable in the other, referential, reading). The problem of *who* will be taken up in Section 1.7 below, but with this exception the generalisation is clear: relative pronouns are not acceptable in clefts. We can therefore assume, following Bianchi (1995), that this implies that there is no relative determiner present in the structure, which follows without stipulation if the clefts in (42) do not contain relative clauses.

Since Ross (1967), it has been recognised that pied-piping of the type shown in (43) is possible in relative clauses.



- (43) a. Reports which the government prescribes the height of the lettering on the covers of which are invariably boring.
- b. Reports *the covers of* which the government prescribes the height of the lettering on which almost always put me to sleep.
- c. Reports *the lettering on the covers of* which the government prescribes the height of are a shocking waste of public money.
- d. Reports *the height of the lettering on the covers of* which the government prescribes should be abolished.

(Ross 1967, p121, his (4.163))

The problem for an analysis of relative clauses in (43) is that, in addition to the appearance of the relative pronoun, these data exhibit the displacement of additional material to the left of the pronoun, italicised for clarity. A number of proposals have been made to account for this effect: for example, a mechanism of feature percolation which results in the [+wh] feature of an operator to percolate upwards is required in Rizzi (1996) to account for the fact that a PP can satisfy the Wh-Criterion in (44); since PP in Spec/CP appears in a Spec-head relation with [+wh] [C did<sub>j</sub> ], the PP must itself bear a [+wh] feature. By a similar mechanism the [+wh] features of the relative could be said to percolate upwards to a DP in (43).

- (44) [CP [PP For whom<sub>i</sub> ] [C did<sub>j</sub> ] [IP you t<sub>j</sub> buy a present t<sub>i</sub>]]

The parallelism between interrogatives such as (44) and pied-piping in relatives is not complete, however. Pied-piping in the latter is possible in contexts where it is ungrammatical in the former.

- (45) a. The picture, a reproduction of which you bought, has been stolen.
- b. \* A reproduction of which have you bought?
- c. \* A reproduction of what have you bought?

This indicates that factors are at work in relatives which are not involved in interrogatives. For Moritz and Valois (1994), a recursive application of Spec/head agreement at LF is what accounts for the feature percolation effects. When a [+wh] constituent moves into a specifier position, the associated head comes to carry the



same feature. The LF character of this process is demonstrated by the fact that an interrogative pronoun is grammatical *in situ* in French in (46), but not under overt movement. Assuming that by LF, all *wh*-phrases raise to Spec/CP, (46)a should have the same status as (46)b, unless pied-piping is possible in LF.

- (46) a. Louise est partie [<sub>PP</sub> avec [<sub>DP</sub> l'amie de qui ]] ?  
 b. \* [De qui]<sub>i</sub> Louise est-elle partie [<sub>PP</sub> avec [<sub>DP</sub> l'amie t<sub>i</sub> ]]

LF-movement of (*de*) *qui* to Spec/DP allows D to bear the [+wh] feature; this derived [+wh] DP then moves to Spec/PP, whereby P becomes [+wh]; the entire PP can then move to [+wh] Spec/CP.

Assuming that Spec-head agreement is also what derives pied-piping in relatives makes a certain prediction.<sup>12</sup> In order for relatives such as (43) to appear, there must be a specifier position present in the structure to host the pied-piped constituent; the internal structure of a relative must allow for such a position. (36) above is an example of such a structure. Since we have already concluded that there is good reason to doubt that clefts do not involve a DP with similar internal constituency, then the fact that pied-piping is similarly not available (a fact noted in Quirk et al (1985, p1387) and in Huddleston (1984, p460) comes as no surprise.

- (47) a. \* It was the children to whom we spoke. IGR  
 b. It was the children that we spoke to.  
 c. It was to the children that we spoke.
- (48) a. \* It was existing subscribers to whom they sent the catalog IGR  
 b. It was existing subscribers that they sent the catalogue to.  
 c. It was to existing subscribers that they sent the catalogue.

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<sup>12</sup> Bianchi (1995, Chapter 6) presents an explicit defence of this claim for pied-piping in relatives, drawing on the fact that pied-piped relatives show different sensitivity to island constraints than their interrogative counterparts.

- (49) a. \* It was syntax about which he was talking. IGR  
 b. It was syntax that he was talking about.  
 c. It was about syntax that he was talking.

- (50) a. \* It was the bed under which we hid. IGR  
 b. It was the bed that we hid under.  
 c. It was under the bed that we hid.

In each case in (47) - (50), pied-piping results only in a referential reading for the string, rather than in a cleft reading; this latter reading is available either with preposition-stranding, or with the entire PP clefted.

There is, however, one exception to the generalisation that clefts cannot involve pied-piping. If the cleft constituent is a proper name, then there is considerable improvement in the acceptability of pied-piping. This is a rather mysterious contrast; although (51)b seems acceptable, (51)c, (51)d and (51)e are not.

- (51) a. \* It was the children to whom we spoke.  
 b. It was Ellie to whom we spoke.  
 c. \* It was Chicago to which we flew.  
 d. \* It was France about which they were talking.  
 e. \* It was *Blade Runner* after which they were scared.

The data in (51) present two separate problems. First, why does a proper name seem to allow pied-piping when a DP such as *the children* does not? Second, why does this effect seem sensitive to particular types of proper names? These issues are discussed at the end of this chapter, where a solution is suggested.

#### 2.2.5. Deriving clefts from pseudo-clefts

In the preceding sections, the relation between clefts and relative clauses has been examined, showing that the two cannot be reconciled in terms of their derivation. There exists in the literature, however, another strand of analysis for clefts which also attributes to them relative-like properties. Akmajian (1970), Emonds (1976) and

Percus (1996) all draw attention to the fact that, in their interpretive properties, clefts and pseudo-clefts such as those in (52) are very similar.

- (52) a. It was a purple jumper that she bought.  
b. What she bought was a purple jumper.

For Akmajian (1970), pseudo-clefts such as (52)b are ambiguous, both in their derivation, and, consequently, in their interpretation. He observes that copular clauses such as (53) can have either a specificational/equative or a predication reading.<sup>13</sup> In the specificational clause in (53), the two terms are reversible; this is not true of the predication clause in (54)

- (53) a. The first candidate for the trip to Mars is Spiro Agnew.  
b. The first candidate for the trip to Mars is short and fat  
(Akmajian (1970, p162, his (1a, b)))

- (54) a. Spiro Agnew is the first candidate for the trip to Mars.  
b. \* Short and fat is the first candidate for the trip to Mars.  
(Akmajian (1970, p164, his (3a, b)))

Accordingly, he takes it as a primitive of the grammar that any sentence involving the copular verb must yield one (or both) of these readings. Since pseudo-clefts involve *be*, they are subject to this generalisation.

- (55) What John wants his next wife to be is fascinating.  
(Akmajian (1970, p170, his (16)))

(55) is then ambiguous, in that it either predicates *fascinating* of the variable bound by *what*, or identifies *fascinating* as a property John wants his next wife to possess. In other words, in the latter reading, (55) is true iff John wants a fascinating next wife; the former can be true if he wants his next wife to be quite the opposite of fascinating. These two readings are associated for Akmajian with two distinct deep

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<sup>13</sup> A much fuller treatment of predication will be given in Chapter 3.

structures. The latter, predication reading features base-generation of the predicate; the former generates the predicate within NP and moves it to the predicate position.

- (56) a. [S<sub>1</sub> [NP it [S<sub>2</sub> what he wants his next wife to be]] [VP be [Adj fascinating ]]  
 b. [S<sub>1</sub> [NP it [S<sub>2</sub> what he wants his next wife to be fascinating ]] [VP be  
 [Pred Δ ]]  
 (Adapted from Akmajian (1970, p171-2, his (21) and (22)))

His next step depends on the fact that the same ambiguity holds if the post-copular phrase is not adjectival since (57)a is also ambiguous, although (57)b is not, given that it is definite.

- (57) a. What John threw away was a valuable piece of equipment.  
 b. What John threw away was the valuable piece of equipment.  
 (Akmajian (1970, p175-6, his (23) and (28)))

Since (57)b has a specificational reading only, it can be derived by the same transformational process which yields (56)b, although nothing in the grammar can prevent its parallel derivation by the same direct insertion of *the valuable piece of equipment* that inserts *Spiro Agnew* in (53)a.

Observing that the cleft constituent in a (it-)cleft sentence always bears a specificational reading, the reading that is associated with movement to the post-copular position, his claim is that cleft sentences are derived from a pseudo-cleft base. This derivation has two stages. First, a pseudo-cleft is derived transformationally, from (58)a, by movement of the cleft constituent to the predicate position within VP as in (58)b, and then the (it-) cleft is formed after extraposition of S<sub>2</sub>, as shown in (58)c:

- (58) a. [S<sub>1</sub> [NP it [S<sub>2</sub> that I gave the book to John ]] [VP be [Pred Δ ]]  
 b. [S<sub>1</sub> [NP it [S<sub>2</sub> that I gave the book ]] [VP be [Pred to John ]]  
 c. [S<sub>1</sub> [NP it ] [VP be [Pred to John ]] [S<sub>2</sub> that I gave the book ]  
 (Adapted from Akmajian (1970, p68))

This account derives the surface order of cleft sentences in a most ingenious way. It is, however, open to criticism on a number of points. Perhaps the least of these is that movement into the empty Pred position would almost certainly amount to a violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of the  $\theta$ -Criterion of Chomsky (1981).<sup>14</sup> Higgins (1979) in fact provides convincing evidence to show that pseudo-clefts cannot be transformationally derived,<sup>15</sup> but that does not in itself mean that the second step, from (58)b to (58)c, cannot feature in the derivation of cleft sentences.

Indeed, that extraposition is involved is proposed by Percus (1996). Again taking as a starting point the observation that the cleft constituent has an obligatorily specificational reading, he suggests that clefts are derived, not from pseudo-clefts exactly, but from predication structures such as (59)a, where a definite subject DP contains a relative clause headed by *one*. Extraposition moves the relative clause out of the subject, resulting in a DP consisting of [the one *t*], a sequence which spells out as *it*.

- (59) a. [ The one that he wants ] is an MGB.  
 b. [ the one  $t_i$  ] is an MGB [ that he wants ]  
 (Relative-clause extraposition)  
 c. [ it ] is an MGB [ that he wants ] (*[the one  $t$  ]* spells out as *it*)

There are, again, several points at which this derivation is open to question. First of all, this approach seems rather at odds with standard minimalist assumptions. First, assuming that the numeration underlying (59)a contains a number of lexical items, each with a bundle of formal, phonological and semantic features in the manner discussed by Chomsky (1995, p235-41), the claim in the second step, (59)c, that the sequence [the one t] spells out as [it], requires the phonological matrix of those lexical items to be rather radically altered. It is, of course, possible to write a rule

<sup>14</sup> The  $\theta$ -Criterion is normally taken to apply to arguments; while the predicate in (56) or (58) is not an argument, the first step in (58) substitutes into a position which cannot have the character it has unless it is previously filled by a predicate.

<sup>15</sup> Higgins (1979, pp48-52) shows that there exists a large body of pseudo-clefts which are specificational, but which arise from no possible deep structure source along the lines outlined by Akmajian (1970). For example, (i) is well-formed, but its putative sources would be the entirely deviant (ii) - (iv):

- i. What I like about John is his sense of humor.
- ii. \*I like John's sense of humor about him.
- iii. \*I like his sense of humor about him.
- iv. \*I like about John his sense of humor. (Green (1971), cited in Higgins (1979, p48))

which will describe the change (although writing a syntactic rule for the change will present much less complexity than writing the associated phonological rule); if such a rule exists, it will apply where its structural description is met. This makes rather a strong prediction: wherever the sequence [the one *t*] is derived by extraposition, the rule should apply, and the output should be [it]; furthermore, the resulting string should be grammatical. In other words, extraposition should never result in [the one *t*] persisting beyond Spell-out. This prediction is contradicted by (60).

- (60) a. I randomly assigned articles to most of the students, but I gave the one to Jo [ that argues that chocolate cake is slimming ].
- b. \* I randomly assigned articles to most of the students, but I gave it to Jo [ that argues that chocolate cake is slimming ] .

A further problem with this analysis is that it assigns different derivations to DP- and non-DP clefts; indeed, it assigns no explicit derivation to the latter at all. For the sake of argument, it might be possible to relax the strict character of [the one ] in order to account for clefts such as (61)a. But this means that the spell-out rule which results in the appearance of *it* must also be relaxed. Since the interpretational and locality properties of DP and non-DP clefts are so similar, an analysis which can derive one but not the other must be missing something.

- (61) a. It was in the bath that they kept the coal.
- b. [ the place *t* ] was in the bath [ that they kept the coal ]

But it is in its appeal to extraposition that this analysis is found most wanting. Akmajian (1970) admits that the process which removes the relative clause to a clause-final position does not pattern as normal relative clause extraposition and, for this reason, proposes a separate process which he calls Cleft Extraposition; Percus (1996) makes no such distinction. It is not my intention here to provide an explicit theory for extraposition;<sup>16</sup> it is sufficient to note that a number of well-known

<sup>16</sup> See Kayne (1994, Chapter 9) for a recent treatment which argues that extraposition involves, not rightward movement of the relative, but stranding of the relative CP following leftward movement of the relative head. In the light of the text discussion of the properties of [the one *t* ], it is worth pointing out that he bases part of his analysis on an apparent definiteness effect in relative clause extraposition:

i. A man just walked in who we knew in high school.

properties of established extraposition do not pattern as a proponent of the analysis in question would wish.

The first fact to be noted is that extraposition does not yield grammatical results when it operates over a predicative NP or PP, as shown in (62), but the derived clefts are quite unremarkable. It might be argued that the predication nature of (62)a and (62)b does not conform to the specificational reading that Percus (1996) wishes to derive. In that case, it is mysterious why (62)e and (62)f are not ruled out to begin with. If specificational clauses are taken instead, the problem persists, as (63) shows.

- (62) a. The fruit that I ate was a kumquat.  
 b. \* The fruit was a kumquat that I ate.  
 c. The pigeon that John shot was on the roof.  
 d. \* The pigeon was on the roof that John shot.  
 e. It was a kumquat [ that John ate ]<sub>i</sub>.  
 f. It was on the roof [ that John shot the pigeon ]<sub>i</sub>.
- (63) a. The last car that she ever drove was her Ford Fiesta.  
 b. \* The last car was her Ford Fiesta that she ever drove  
 c. It was her Ford Fiesta that was the last car she ever drove.

As Weisler (1980) shows, relative clauses without *that* cannot extrapose. (64)a and (64)b are equally grammatical, but the relative clause in (64)c occupies the only possible position; (64)d is ungrammatical.

- (64) a. Angela sent a letter that Bob dictated to the students.  
 b. Angela sent a letter to the students that Bob dictated.  
 c. Angela sent a letter Bob dictated to the students.  
 d. \* Angela sent a letter to the students Bob dictated.

The relevance of these data is not so much that a derivation by extraposition of subject clefts such as those in (65) should be impossible, but rather that the non-

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ii. ?? The man just walked in who we knew in high school.

(Kayne (1994, p124, his (33) and (34)

Such a definiteness effect would, of course, cast further doubt on Percus's proposal.



appearance of *that* should be ruled out in any cleft at all; in short, all of the clefts in (66) should be ill-formed.

- (65) a. It was the lecturer said that.  
b. It was Beauty killed the Beast.
- (66) a. It was Margaret I wanted to see.  
b. It was on Tuesday I wanted to see her.  
c. It's lemon yellow Angela is painting the bedroom.

Since clefts can routinely lack *that*, this constitutes a serious objection to the claim that clefts involve extraposition.

In sum, while analyses of cleft constructions which rely on their supposed resemblance to relative clauses are superficially attractive, closer inspection reveals a consistent failure of clefts to pattern as relatives; in the range of elements which can head the dependency in each, and in their internal composition, the two must be regarded as separate entities.

## 2.3 Focus and Topic

In this section, the notions of topic and focus will be examined with respect to their interaction (or lack thereof) with the syntax of cleft constructions. It will be shown that with one important exception, clefts pattern with the latter rather than the former, a fact which must necessarily receive prominence in their analysis.

There is a vast literature on topic and focus, dating back almost to the beginnings of the generative paradigm (see Culicover (1986, Chapter 1) for a useful overview of the field). It is not my intention here to address the complex interactions of the information structure of sentences with the phonology, since we are concerned here with the syntactic structure of cleft sentences.<sup>17</sup> But it must be recognised that English allows a focal interpretation without recourse to any dedicated syntactic

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<sup>17</sup> For discussion of these interactions, see Chomsky and Halle (1968) and Selkirk (1984).



process at all, relying on the phonology to isolate a constituent as informationally prominent.

- (67)
- a. A letter from ENGLAND arrived for you.
  - b. A car that she hadn't noticed at the LIGHT pulled out ahead of her.
  - c. ROBIN HOOD ran into the forest.
  - d. A large old SOFA stood next to the fireplace.
  - e. A small BOATHOUSE was at the edge of the lake.
  - f. The people without JOBS are less fortunate.
  - g. His long lost BROTHER was sitting on the bed.
  - h. They elected the man they most FEARED as their leader.
  - i. An ominous cloud with a long FUNNEL was heading towards them.
- (Culicover (1986, p110, his (2))

This being said, there is ample evidence to show that one of the options UG makes available is displacement with correlated focus effects. For example, Kiss (1998) discusses a range of languages where a focal interpretation is consistently associated with dislocation of a constituent leftwards.<sup>18</sup>

- (68)
- a. [ Ston Petro [IP dhanisan to vivlio ]]  
to-the Peter lent -3pl the-acc book  
*It was to Petro that they lent the book.*  
(Modern Greek; adapted from Kiss (1998, p246, her (2a))
  - b. [Annalle [IP Mikko antoi kukkia ]]  
Anna-adess. Mikko gave flowers  
*It was to Anna that Mikko gave the flowers.*  
(Finnish; adapted from Kiss (1998, p246, her (3a))
  - c. [ Del calaix [ la Núria (els) va treure els esperons ]]  
of-the drawer the Núria them has taken-out the spurs  
*It was out of the drawer that Núria took the spurs.*  
(Catalan; adapted from Kiss (1998, p247, her (4a))

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<sup>18</sup> The cleft translations in (68) are Kiss' own.

- d. Tegnap este [ Marinak [mutattam be Pétert ]] (Hungarian)  
 last night Mary-dat. introduced-1sg perf. Peter.acc  
*It was to Mary that I introduced Peter last night.*  
 (Hungarian; adapted from Kiss (1998, p246, her (5a))

### 2.3.1 Exhaustive listing in focus constructions

It was noted in 1.3 above that cleft sentences carry an exhaustive-listing reading. According to Kiss (1998), the same is true of the data in (68). Further, she makes a further claim, that there is no such exhaustive-listing effect associated with focalised elements *in situ*.<sup>19</sup> Adopting a test devised by Szabolcsi (1981), she observes that the Hungarian data in (69)a and (69)b are mutually incompatible - (69)b contradicts (69)a. On the other hand, (69)c can be interpreted as a logical consequence of (69)d.

- (69) a. Mari **egy kalapot és egy kabátot** nézett ki magának.  
 Mary a hat-acc. and a coat-acc. picked out herself-to  
*It was **a hat and a coat** that Mary picked out for herself.*
- b. Mari **egy kalapot** nézett ki magának.  
 Mary a hat-acc. picked out herself-to  
*It was **a hat** that Mary picked out for herself.*
- c. Mari ki nézett magának EGY KALAPOT ÉS EGY KABÁTOT.  
 Mary out picked herself-to a hat-acc. and a coat-acc  
*Mary picked out A HAT AND A COAT for herself.*
- d. Mari ki nézett magának EGY KALAPOT.  
 Mary out picked herself-to a hat-acc.  
*Mary picked out A HAT for herself.*  
 (Adapted from Kiss (1998, p250, her (12) and (13)))

Further, she shows that the following dialogues also reinforce the interpretive distinction between the two types of focussed elements. In (70)b, the negation of the

<sup>19</sup> When referring to her examples, I follow Kiss's convention of representing displaced focalised constituents in bold text and *in situ* focalised elements in small capitals.

focussed element is interpreted as the negation of the exhaustive listing in (70)a. Since (70)b corrects the exhaustiveness of (70)a, the exchange is felicitous.

- (70) a. Mari **egy kalapot** nézett ki magának.  
 Mary a hat-acc. picked out herself-to  
*It was **a hat** that Mary picked out for herself.*
- b. Nem, egy kabátot is ki nézett  
 No, a coat too out picked  
*No, she picked a coat too.*

(Adapted from Kiss (1998, p251, her (15a))

In (71), on the other hand, the fact that (71)b is not a felicitous response to (71)a indicates that no such exhaustive interpretation is available. Since there is no such listing present in the context of *in situ* focalisation, it cannot be negated.

- (71) a. Mari ki nézett magának EGY KALAPOT.  
 Mary out picked herself-to a hat-acc.  
*Mary picked herself **A HAT**.*
- b. # Nem, egy kabátot is ki nézett  
 No, a coat too out picked  
*No, she picked a coat too.*

(Adapted from Kiss (1998, p251, her (15b))

These facts indicate that there is an interpretive distinction between displaced and *in situ* focalised phrases in Hungarian. This point remains to be made for cleft and non-cleft foci in English, however. This is demonstrated in (72) for each of the sentences in (67). In each case, the latter example does not contradict the former, indicating, as is the case with (69), that no exhaustive listing is present. The same effect can be observed in (73), where the presence of *too* forces the negation of an exhaustive listing. Since no such listing is in fact present in (73), the resultant responses are pragmatically odd.

- (72)
- a. A letter from ENGLAND and a parcel from FRANCE arrived for you.
  - a'. A letter from ENGLAND arrived for you.
  - b. A car she hadn't noticed at the LIGHT and a truck which came from a SIDE STREET pulled out ahead of her.
  - b'. A car that she hadn't noticed at the LIGHT pulled out ahead of her.
  - c. ROBIN HOOD and FRIAR TUCK ran into the forest.
  - c'. ROBIN HOOD ran into the forest.
  - d. A large old SOFA and a battered BOOKCASE stood next to the fireplace.
  - d'. A large old SOFA stood next to the fireplace.
  - e. A small BOATHOUSE and a wooden LANDING STAGE stood at the edge of the lake.
  - e'. A small BOATHOUSE was at the edge of the lake.
  - f. The people without JOBS and adequate HOUSING are less fortunate.
  - f'. The people without JOBS are less fortunate.
  - g. His long lost BROTHER and his SISTER were sitting on the bed.
  - g'. His long lost BROTHER was sitting on the bed.
  - h. They elected the man they most FEARED and RESPECTED as their leader.
  - h'. They elected the man they most FEARED as their leader.
  - i. An ominous cloud with a long FUNNEL and a strange BLACK colour was heading towards them.
  - i'. An ominous cloud with a long FUNNEL was heading towards them.
- (73)
- a. A letter from ENGLAND arrived for you.
  - a'. # No, a parcel from France arrived for you too.
  - b. A car that she hadn't noticed at the LIGHT pulled out ahead of her.
  - b'. # No, a truck which came from a side street pulled out ahead of her too.
  - c. ROBIN HOOD ran into the forest.
  - c'. # No, Friar Tuck ran into the forest too.

- d. A large old SOFA stood next to the fireplace.
- d'. # No, a battered bookcase stood next to the fireplace too.
- e. A small BOATHOUSE stood at the edge of the lake.
- e'. # No, a wooden landing stood at the edge of the lake too.
- f. The people without JOBS are less fortunate.
- f'. # No, the people without adequate housing are less fortunate too.
- g. His long lost BROTHER was sitting on the bed.
- g'. # No, his sister was sitting on the bed too.
- h. They elected the man they most FEARED as their leader.
- h'. # No, they elected the man they most respected as their leader too.
- i. An ominous cloud with a long FUNNEL was heading towards them.
- i'. # No, an ominous cloud with a strange black colour was heading towards them too.

So far, it has been shown that *in situ* focalisation in English appears to pattern with *in situ* focalisation in Hungarian; that both languages lack an exhaustive-listing reading in these constructions. There exist, however, a number of syntactic operations which are argued by Rochemont (1986) necessarily to contribute focus properties to the sentence. The examples in (74) involve extraposition of a PP and a relative clause, various types of inversion (predicate and locative), heavy DP shift and an existential construction.<sup>20</sup> If there is an exhaustive listing reading associated with the focus associated with these construction-types, then the pairs in (75) should be contradictory.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Rochemont takes the sentences in (74) to be transformationally derived from those in (67). Although this does still hold of the extraposition and inversion cases, the current view of expletive-associate constructions is rather different.

<sup>21</sup> It is not possible to construct examples to test the hypothesis for (74)a and (74)b, since the relevant sentences would require extraposition from both conjuncts simultaneously.

- (74)
- a. A letter arrived for you from ENGLAND.
  - b. A car pulled out ahead of her that she hadn't noticed at the LIGHT.
  - c. Into the forest ran ROBIN HOOD.
  - d. Next to the fireplace stood an old SOFA.
  - e. At the edge of the lake stood an old BOATHOUSE
  - f. Less fortunate are the people without JOBS.
  - g. Sitting on the bed was his long lost BROTHER.
  - h. They elected as leader the man they most FEARED.
  - i. There was heading towards them an ominous cloud with a long black FUNNEL.

(Adapted from Culicover (1986, p110, his (1))

- (75)
- a. Into the forest ran ROBIN HOOD and FRIAR TUCK.
  - a'. ROBIN HOOD ran into the forest.
  - b. Next to the fireplace stood an old SOFA and a battered BOOKCASE.
  - b'. A large old SOFA stood next to the fireplace.
  - c. At the edge of the lake stood a small BOATHOUSE and a wooden LANDING STAGE.
  - c'. A small BOATHOUSE was at the edge of the lake.
  - d. Less fortunate are the people without JOBS and adequate HOUSING.
  - d'. The people without JOBS are less fortunate.
  - e. Sitting on the bed were his long lost BROTHER and his SISTER
  - e'. His long lost BROTHER was sitting on the bed.
  - h. They elected as their leader the man they most FEARED and RESPECTED.
  - h'. They elected the man they most FEARED as their leader.
  - i. There was heading towards them an ominous cloud with a long black FUNNEL and a strange black colour.
  - i'. An ominous cloud with a long FUNNEL was heading towards them.

On the contrary, there is no contradiction present in (75) above, which indicates that no exhaustive listing is associated with the focal displacement identified by

Rochemont (1986). This conclusion is supported by the data in (76) below, where the exchanges are as infelicitous as those in (71) and (73).

- (76)
- a. A letter arrived for you from ENGLAND.
  - a'. # No, a parcel from France arrived for you too.
  - b. A car pulled out ahead of her that she hadn't noticed at the LIGHT.
  - b'. # No, a truck which came from a side street pulled out ahead of her too.
  - c. Into the forest ran ROBIN HOOD.
  - c'. # No, Friar Tuck ran into the forest too.
  - d. Next to the fireplace stood an old SOFA.
  - d'. # No, a battered bookcase stood next to the fireplace too.
  - e. At the edge of the lake stood an old BOATHOUSE
  - e'. # No, a wooden landing stage stood at the edge of the lake too.
  - f. Less fortunate are the people without JOBS.
  - f'. # No, the people without adequate housing are less fortunate too.
  - g. Sitting on the bed was his long lost BROTHER.
  - g'. # No, his sister was sitting on the bed too.
  - h. They elected as leader the man they most FEARED.
  - h'. # No, they elected the man they most respected as leader too.
  - i. There was heading towards them an ominous cloud with a long black FUNNEL.
  - i'. # No, a cloud with a strange black colour was heading towards them too.

What these tests show is that, even in the presence of syntactic processes which plausibly make a constituent more prominent, focus *in situ* in English does not have the exhaustive listing interpretation that Kiss (1998) claims for leftward-moved focussed phrases in Hungarian. At the same time it appears that cleft constructions involve precisely this exhaustive interpretation. Given that it has already been shown that cleft constructions involve displacement leftwards, this symmetry between the two constructions constitutes evidence that the two constructions feature displacement to similar positions. The evidence so far is, however, only partial, since it relies on a single property of the focussed element.

What is required is evidence that there exists a particular syntactic position which exhibits all the properties associated with focus under displacement. If it could be shown that such a position exists, and that cleft sentences exhibited the properties in question, the case for unifying cleft displacement with focus displacement would be much stronger.

## 2.4 Focus as a functional projection

It has become evident in recent years that an atomic CP is not adequate to deal with the syntactic complexity that appears at the left edge of the clause. This is true for two separate reasons. First, allowing a CP which contains only a single, atomic, complementiser as its head cannot account for the fact that complementisers vary cross-linguistically in the features that they exhibit. For example, Haegeman (1992) demonstrates that complementisers in West Flemish show overt agreement, and Shlonsky (1992) shows that in relative clause contexts, agreement is found on C.<sup>22</sup>

- (77) a. Kpeinzen dan-k (ik) morgen goan  
 I-think that-1sg (cl-1sg) tomorrow go  
*I think that I'll go tomorrow.*
- b. Kpeinzen da-se (zie) morgen goat  
 I-think that-3sg (cl-3sg) tomorrow go  
*I think that she'll go tomorrow*
- c. Kpeinzen da-n Valère en Pol morgen goan  
 I-think that-3pl Valère and Pol tomorrow go  
*I think that Valère and Pol will go tomorrow.*
- (Adapted from Haegeman 1992, p49, her (9))

<sup>22</sup> See Cottell (1995) for evidence that the C-system in Irish contains a Tense specification to account for the alternation seen in the following.

- i. Deir sé go dtógfaidh sé an peann.  
 say-pres. he comp take-fut. he the pen  
*He says that he will take the pen.*
- ii. Deir sé gur thóg sé an peann  
 say-pres. he comp-past take-past he the pen  
*He said that he took the pen.*



- (78) a.      ʔal-rajul-u   llaðii           raʔaytu-(hu)  
           the-man-nom. that-masc.sg. (I) saw-(him)  
           *the man that I saw*
- b.      ʔal-marʔat-u   llatii           raʔaytu-(ha)  
           the-woman-nom. that-fem.sg. (I) saw-(her)  
           *the woman that I saw*
- c.      ʔal-ʔawlaad-u llaðiina       raʔaytu-(hum)  
           the-boys-nom. that-masc.pl. (I) saw-(them.masc)  
           *the boys that I saw*
- d.      ʔal-nisaʔ-   llawaati       raʔaytu-(hunna)  
           the-women-nom. that-fem.-pl. (I) saw-(them-fem.)  
           *the women that I saw*
- e.      ʔal-waladaani   llaðaani       raʔaytu-(huma)  
           the-boys-dual-nom. that-masc.-dual (I) saw-(them.dual)  
           *the two boys that I saw*

(Shlonsky 1992, p457, his (25))

The second type of evidence comes from a consideration of the distribution of maximal projections in CP. If it were assumed that the C-system is atomic, then only one position, the traditional Spec/CP, would be available for phrasal elements. In a language such as English, where specifiers linearly precede their heads, a constituent in Spec/CP must therefore precede C.

In the discussion of negative inversion in Section 1.3 above, the fact that negative elements prepose to Spec/CP, with correlated subject-auxiliary inversion from I to C in order to satisfy the Negative Criterion (Haegeman (1995), Haegeman and Zanuttini (1991)) was discussed. As pointed out by Muller and Sternefeld (1993), an account in terms of an atomic CP is challenged by data such as (79)b (see also Kayne (1984) and May (1985)).

- (79) a. [CP [ In no case ] [C [I would ]<sub>i</sub>] he t<sub>i</sub> give up.  
 b. I personally think [C that] [CP under no circumstances [C[I would]<sub>i</sub>] he t<sub>i</sub> be willing to go along with us ].

(Adapted from Muller and Sternefeld 1993, p481, their (38))

In this datum, a negative constituent *under no circumstances* has been preposed, with concomitant auxiliary inversion. However, the presence of the overt complementiser in (79)b indicates that the inverted auxiliary and *that* are not in competition for position. In other words, there must be a functional projection beneath C which can host in its specifier the negative constituent and in its head the preposed auxiliary. Similar evidence can be found in Yiddish and Icelandic, where, in contrast to the rest of the Germanic languages, verb-second (V2) effects are found in embedded as well as in root contexts. This is illustrated for Yiddish in (80); asymmetric V2 is shown in German in (81).

- (80) a. oyb dos yingl vet oyfn veg zen a kats  
 whether the boy will on-the way see a cat  
*whether the boy will see a cat on the way*  
 b. oyb oyfn veg vet dos yingl zen a kats  
 whether on-the way will the boy see a cat  
*whether on the way the boy will see a cat*  
 c. \* oyb oyfn veg dos yingl vet zen a kats  
 whether on-the way the boy will see a cat

(Adapted from Santorini 1995, p54, her (4))

- (81) a. Ich habe schon letztes Jahr diesen Roman gelesen.  
 I have already last year this novel read  
 b. Diesen Roman habe ich schon letztes Jahr gelesen.  
 this novel have I already last year read  
 c. Schon letztes Jahr habe ich diesen Roman gelesen  
 already last year have I this novel read  
*I have already read this novel last year.*

- d. \* dass ich habe schon letztes Jahr diesen Roman gelesen  
that I have already last year this novel read
- e. dass ich schon letztes Jahr diesen Roman gelesen habe  
that I already last year this novel read have

(Adapted from Battye and Roberts 1995,  
p18, their (19), (20), (21))

Thus there is evidence that the structure of CP must be enriched in order to provide more than one landing site for preposed phrases. So far it is not evident that these phrases occur in specifier positions which have particular interpretive effects. This is the claim made in Rizzi (1997).

The core observation in Rizzi (1997) is that CP is in effect Janus-like: there is a sense in which it is sensitive to external factors such as complementation requirements in a higher clause. For example, verbs such as *wonder*, *ask*, and so on impose syntactic conditions in the form of an interrogative feature on the content of the CP layer in their complement clauses, as shown in (82); in Standard English this feature is indicated by Merge of *whether*; in Hiberno-English, it triggers Move of I to C. Thus the verb selects a CP bearing a particular value for the feature [Force].

- (82) STANDARD ENGLISH
  - a. I wonder whether she has arrived home yet.
- HIBERNO-ENGLISH
  - b. I asked had she arrived home yet.

On the other hand, not only does the CP layer host material moved upwards from within the clause in the case of V2 effects, but constituents appearing on the left periphery of the clause can bear particular interpretation, typically as Topic or Focus.

The specific claim put forward in Rizzi (1997) is that CP is not atomic; it can (and therefore should) be split into a set of functional projections, each of which correlates with a characteristic interpretation either of its head or of the constituent hosted by its specifier. If the highest of these projections is ForceP, then direct complementation requirements by a selecting verbs, as in (82), can proceed irrespective of the internal structure of the lower clause. The head of Force can then be lexicalised by *that* in a finite non-interrogative clause, by *whether* in Standard

English embedded interrogative contexts, and in Hiberno-English by the same phonetically null feature which triggers Move in direct questions.

In English, Topic and Focus are apparently similar in their structure. Both feature a preposed constituent, typically with a co-referent gap lower in the structure.<sup>23</sup>

- (83) a. Your book, you should give *t* to Paul, (not to Bill).  
 b. YOUR BOOK you should give *t* to Paul (not mine).

(Rizzi 1997, p285, his (1) and (2))

In their interpretation, the two diverge rather sharply: the former preposes old information and features the familiar comma intonation; the latter has no such intonation and preposes new information. In other languages, however, the bifurcation between the two interpretations is reinforced by a set of syntactic properties; Rizzi (1997) illustrates with Italian. These are, in turn the acceptability of resumptive clitics, weak crossover, bare quantificational elements, uniqueness and compatability in wh-questions.

Resumptive clitics are grammatical (and obligatory in the case of a preposed direct object) in Topic constructions, but not in Focus.

- (84) a. Il tuo libro, lo ho comprato  
           *Your book, I bought (it)*  
 b. \* Il tuo libro, ho comprato.  
           *Your book, I bought.*

(Cinque 1990, p63, cited in Rizzi 1997, p289, his (15))

- (85) a. \* IL TUO LIBRO lo ho comprato.  
           *YOUR BOOK I bought (it).*  
 b. IL TUO LIBRO ho comprato.  
           *YOUR BOOK I bought.*

(Cinque 1990, p63, cited in Rizzi 1997, p290, his (16))

<sup>23</sup> In the following discussion, I follow Rizzi's (1997) convention of indicating Focus constituents in uppercase, and Topics in lowercase.

Weak crossover effects are detectable in Focus, but not in Topic constructions:

- (86) a. Gianni, sua madre lo ha sempre apprezzato  
*Gianni, his mother always appreciated him*  
b. ? GIANNI sua madre ha sempre apprezzato  
*GIANNI his mother always appreciated*  
(Rizzi 1997, p290, his (17) and (18))

Bare quantificational elements can appear in Focus constructions, but they are ungrammatical as Topics.

- (87) a. \* Nessuno, lo ho visto  
*Nothing, I saw it.*  
b. NESSUNO ho visto  
*NOTHING I saw.*  
(Rizzi 1997, p290, his (19) and (20))

The uniqueness property refers to the fact that, while more than one element can be topicalised from a given clause, only one constituent can appear as Focus, yielding the contrast in (88).

- (88) a. Il libro, a Gianni, glielo darò senz'altro  
*The book, to Gianni, I'll give it to him for sure*  
b. \* A GIANNI IL LIBRO darò (non, a Piero, l'articolo)  
*TO GIANNI THE BOOK I'll give (not to Piero, the article)*  
(Rizzi 1997, p290, his (17) and (18))

Furthermore, Topic and Focus can co-occur, with the former either preceding or following the latter:

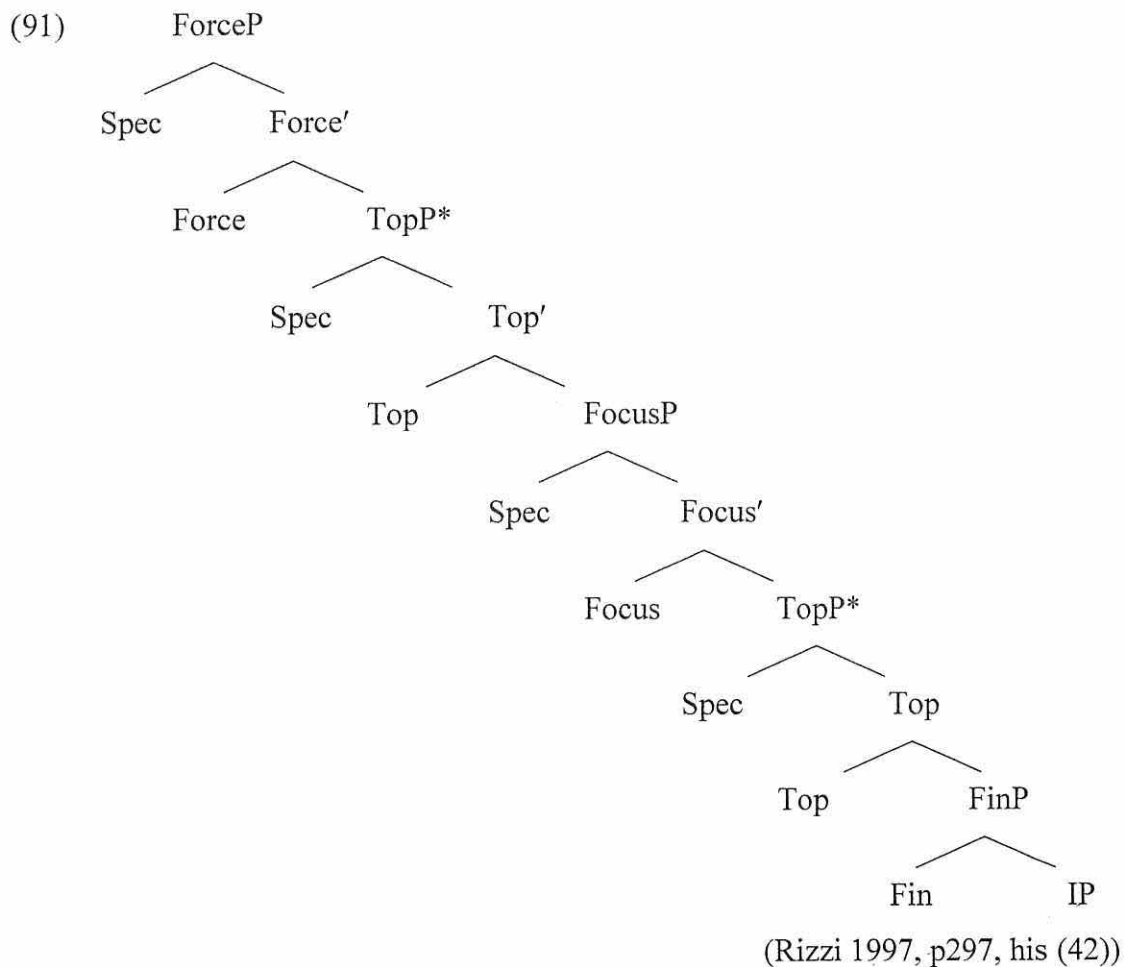
- (89) A Gianni, QUESTO, domani, gli dovrete dire.  
*To Gianni, THIS, tomorrow, you should tell him*  
(Rizzi 1997, p291, his (23))

Only a Topic can appear together with a preposed wh-constituent in a wh-question, as shown in (90). A Focussed element cannot, thereby constituting evidence that the Focus position in Italian is actually the same as that occupied by wh-constituents; the failure of the two types of constituent to co-occur will then result from competition between the two for one syntactic position.

- (90) a. A Gianni, che cosa gli ha detto?  
*To Gianni, what did you tell him?*  
 b. \* A GIANNI che cosa ha detto?  
*TO GIANNI what did you tell?*

(Rizzi 1997, p290, his (24a) and (25a))

When these properties are taken into account, Rizzi (1997) proposes the following structure for the internal constituency of CP.



As noted earlier, the highest projection is ForceP; since multiple Topics can appear (see (88)), TopP must be recursive, as indicated by the Kleene star. Since Topic can precede Focus (see (89)), TopP must dominate FocusP; since it may also follow it, there must be a similarly recursive TopP beneath FocusP. Beneath the second TopP lies FinP.

To return to cleft constructions, it is instructive to examine the five properties shown by Rizzi to distinguish Topic from Focus. In the case that there is a clear correlation between clefts and either Topic or Focus, this will provide evidence that cleft constructions also involve a particular functional projection, and furthermore evidence of the nature of the relationship between the clefted element and its coindexed empty category.

The first issue, the availability of resumptives, is not clear-cut in Standard English; it will therefore be postponed until the end of this discussion. The second, then, is whether or not cleft constructions exhibit weak crossover effects. It appears that they do. So in this case, the cleft patterns with Focus and against Topic.

- (92) a. \* It was Mary<sub>i</sub> that her<sub>i</sub> little lamb followed down the road.  
b. \* It was the elderly woman<sub>i</sub> that her<sub>i</sub> daughter was looking for.

As was noted in Chapter One, Section 1.3, quantificational elements are not grammatical in cleft constructions. Thus, in this case, the cleft patterns with Topic, and against Focus.

- (93) a. The students read every book on the list.  
b. \* It was every book on the list that the students read.

- (94) a. The students read some books on the list.  
b. \* It was some books on the list that the students read.

- (95) a. The students read many books on the list.  
b. \* It was many books on the list that the students read.

- (96) a. The students read few books on the list.  
 b. \* It was few books on the list that the students read.

- (97) a. The students read no books on the list.  
 b. \* It was no books on the list that the students read.

Topicalisation can occur with a cleft, although the combination is more felicitous with initial Topic; (99)a is to be preferred over (99)b. This in itself does not indicate whether the correlation between cleft and Focus or cleft and Topic, since multiple Topic is possible. What indicates that there is a correlation with respect to this property is the fact that from a single clause, only one element can be clefted at a time. (99) indicates this; thus it appears that clefts pattern with Focus here, in that only one operation of either can occur at a time, in contrast with Topic.

- (98) a. In London, it's Mullie that I stay with.  
 b. ? It's Mullie, in London, that I stay with.
- (99) a. \* It was in London that it was Mullie that I stayed with.  
 b. \* It was the poussin that it was Ellie that cooked.

Rizzi's final property concerns compatibility in a wh-question. It is undoubtedly the case that a cleft construction can give rise to a grammatical wh-question, as amply illustrated in (100).

- (100) a. What was it that you read?  
 b. How was it that said that?  
 c. Where was it that you met him?  
 d. How was it that you came to be at the party?  
 e. Why was it that you phoned her?

In all of these data, however, it is the clefted constituent itself that is the wh-element. The crucial data involve the construction of a wh-question from a cleft sentence where the clefted constituent is distinct from the wh-element. As (101) indicates, attempts to do this yield unacceptable results.



- (101) a. \* What was it in Paris that you were reading?  
 b. \* What was it to Ellie that you sent?  
 c. \* How was it for Ellie that you fixed the car?

So far, the comparison with Topic and Focus indicates that clefts have more in common with the latter than the former; the results can be shown in the following table.

	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Cleft</b>
<b>WCO</b>	No	Yes	No
<b>Bare quantifiers</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Uniqueness</b>	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Compatibility w/ wh</b>	No	Yes	No

When taken together with the interpretative facts in the previous section, the structural correlation here is such that it is tempting to suggest that clefts are in fact Focus constructions. Before doing so, there remains one residual property which distinguishes Topic and Focus. It concerns the acceptability of resumptive pronouns in cleft constructions, and it is the subject of the next section.

## 2.5 Clefts and resumptive pronouns in Ghanaian English

Standard English does not exhibit a fully productive resumptive pronoun strategy. For this reason, it is not possible to draw firm conclusions about the first property discussed in Rizzi (1997) on the basis of that dialect alone. It is, however, worth

noting at the outset that those contexts where resumptives are marginally permitted relative clauses in Standard English, such as (102), degrade even further when used as clefts, a fact illustrated by (103).

- (102) a. ? the guy who we wondered whether \*(he) was sane  
 b. ? the book that I wondered whether I would get \*(it) in the mail  
 (Safir 1986 and Kayne 1984, cited in Shlonsky 1992, p447, his (13))

- (103) a. \* It was the guy who we wondered whether he was sane. IGR  
 b. \* It was the book that I wondered whether I would get it in the mail.  
 IGR

In languages such as Hebrew, Irish, and Arabic, which exhibit a productive resumptive strategy, resumptives are typically a property of A'-dependencies, although their actual distribution can vary from language to language. I illustrate with Irish.

- (104) a. daoine nár shroich an tsibhialtacht fós iad  
 people comp-neg-past reach-past the civilisation yet them  
*people whom civilisation has not yet reached*  
 b. Tháinig an saighdiúir eile, nach bhfaca mé roimhe é,  
 come-past the soldier other comp-neg saw I before him  
 aníos chugainn.  
 up to-1pl  
*The other soldier, whom I hadn't seen before, came up to us.*  
 c. D'inis siad cén turas a raibh siad air.  
 tell-past they what journey comp be-past they on-3-sg-masc  
*They told what journey they were on.*  
 d. Tháinig níos mó daoine ná a raibh súil leo.  
 come-past more people than comp be-past expectation with-3-pl  
*More people came than were expected.*  
 e. Bhí Risteard doiligh cur suas leis.  
 be-past Richard difficult put-[-fin] up with-3-sg-masc  
*Richard was difficult to put up with.*

- f. Bhí mórán aige le smaoineamh air.  
 be-past a lot at-3-sg-masc to think-[-fin] on-3-sg-masc  
*He had a lot to think about.*

(Adapted from McCloskey 1990, p238-9,  
 his (96a), (97a), (98a), (100a), (101a), (103a))

- g. an ghirseach a bhfuil a máthair breoite  
 the girl comp be-pres her mother sick  
*the girl whose mother is sick*

(Adapted from McCloskey 1990, p214, his (42))

All of these data involve a A'-dependency. (104)a is a restrictive relative clause; (104)b a non-restrictive. (104)c an interrogative complement; (104)d is a comparative clause; (104)e is an example of tough-movement; (104)f is a purpose clause, and (104)g involves weak crossover. In Irish, resumptive pronouns are in free variation with gaps, with one extremely important exception: a resumptive can appear where the corresponding gap would be ungrammatical - where wh-movement is blocked for reasons of locality (one further caveat to free variation of gap and resumptive is discussed immediately below). It is this property, common also to Hebrew, and, according to Shlonsky (1992), to Arabic under a particular view of A'-relations, which has led to the characterisation of resumptives as a "last resort" strategy. Given that this behaviour has been shown to be similar across languages, I take it to be a core function of resumption; in other words, it is behaviour diagnostic of a true resumptive strategy. To illustrate, (105)a and (105)b form a minimal pair, in that the dependency in the former between the head of the relative and the gap violates subjacency, while with a resumptive in the place of the gap in the latter, the violation is obviated; (105)c and (105)d make the same point.

- (105) a. \* bean nach bhfuil fhios agam  
 woman comp-neg-nonpast be-pres knowledge at-1-sg  
 an bpósfadh duine ar bith  
 comp-interr-nonpast marry-cond. person any  
*a woman that I don't know whether anyone would marry*

- b.      bean   nach       bhfuil   fhios       agam  
 woman comp-neg be-pres knowledge at-1-sg  
 an bpósfadh       duine   ar bith í  
 comp-interr-nonpast marry-cond.   person any   her  
*a woman that I don't know whether anyone would marry (her)*
- c.      \* fear   nach               bhfuil   fhios       agam   cén   cineál  
 man comp-neg-nonpast be-pres knowledge at-1-sg which kind  
 mná a       phósfadh  
 woman-gen marry-cond.  
*a man that I don't know what kind of woman would marry*
- d.      fear   nach               bhfuil   fhios       agam   cén   cineál  
 man comp-neg-nonpast be-pres knowledge at-1-sg which kind  
 mná a       phósfadh       é  
 woman-gen comp marry-cond. him  
*a man that I don't know what kind of woman would marry (him)*  
 (Adapted from McCloskey 1979, pp32-3, his (86), (87), (90), (91))

A further property of resumptive systems is that while they are relatively free regarding the positions where the pronoun can appear, there is one environment where they are persistent in unacceptability: the subject position most immediately c-commanded by the head of the relative cannot be filled by a resumptive pronoun. McCloskey (1990) terms this the Highest Subject Restriction (HSR). This is shown for Irish in (106), for Hebrew in (107) and for Palestinian Arabic in (109).

- (106) a.      \* an fear   a       raibh   sé breoite  
 the man comp be-past he sick  
*the man that was sick*
- b.      an t-ór   seo ar       chreid       corr-dhuine go       raibh   sé ann  
 the gold this comp believe-past few-people comp be-past it there  
*this gold that a few people believed was there*  
 (Adapted from McCloskey 1990, p210, his (29a), (30a))

(107) \* ha-ʔiʃ ʃe- (\*hu) ʔohev ʔet Rina  
 the-man that-(he) loves acc. Rina  
*the man who loves Rina* (Shlonsky 1992, p445, his (6))

(108) \* l-bint ʔilli (\*hiy) raayha ʃal beet  
 the-girl that (she) going to home  
*the girl that is going home* (Shlonsky 1992, p446, his (12))

While Standard English lacks a full resumptive system, those which can appear marginally also exhibit the first of these properties. (102)a, repeated here as (109)a, is much preferable to (109)b.

- (109) a. ? the guy who we wondered whether \*(he) was sane  
 b. \* the guy who we wondered whether was sane

As noted at the beginning of this section, the marginality of such pronouns in Standard English makes any claim about the possibility of resumption in cleft constructions rather weak. However, there exists a dialect of English which has a fully productive resumptive strategy, and which also allows cleft constructions. This makes it possible to evaluate the compatibility of the two.

Ghanaian English (GhE) is the dialect of English spoken in the West African state of Ghana. It is a street language, not to be confused with the variety of Standard English which is taught in schools.<sup>24</sup> Trudgill and Hanna (1982) state that the dialect both allows resumptive pronouns and uses cleft constructions rather extensively. This, then, provides a means of investigating whether cleft constructions pattern here with Focus or with Topic. It is of course important to note that generalising from one dialect to another can be dangerous, but in the absence of the relevant data in the standard language, the use of the non-standard dialect is in my opinion quite justified, particularly since it is possible to evaluate Rizzi's claims with respect to Topic and Focus for the other properties he identifies.

<sup>24</sup> On this, my Ghanaian English informant is adamant. Speakers of the non-standard dialect are aware of the grammatical and lexical differences between the two, but the standard language is not a target language other than in educational contexts.

Although general descriptions of Ghanaian English have identified resumptive pronouns, this is to my knowledge the first time that their syntactic distribution has been examined. The first task is to identify the environments in which they appear. (110) - (116) are examples of construction types which involve A'-dependencies: restrictive and non-restrictive relatives, wh-questions, comparatives, purpose clauses and tough-movement constructions; in short, all but one of the clause-types identified by Chomsky (1977) as showing A'-relations.

- (110) a. I'm worried about the people that the doctor hasn't reached  
 b. I'm worried about the people that the doctor hasn't reached them.  
 (GhE)
- (111) a. ? The other soldier, that I hadn't seen before, came up to us.  
 b. The other soldier, that I hadn't seen him before, came up to us.(GhE)
- (112) a. ? Which soldier did you think would be there?  
 b. Which soldier did you think that he would be there? (GhE)
- (113) a. More people came than there was room for.  
 b. More people came than there was room for them. (GhE)
- (114) a. ? The bags are ready to fill.  
 b. The bags are ready to fill them. (GhE)
- (115) a. She had a of food to prepare.  
 b. ? She had a lot of food to prepare it. (GhE)
- (116) a. That boy was easy to get rid of.  
 b. \* That boy was easy to get rid of him. (GhE)

In all but the purpose clause and the tough-movement case, the resumptive is either preferred or in free variation with the gap. This is behaviour strongly reminiscent of documented resumptive strategies.

(117) - (122) illustrate the distribution of Ghanaian English resumptive pronouns with respect to clausal position. Of particular interest here is the contrast between (117) and (119); in the former, a pronoun appearing in the highest subject position is ungrammatical, although, as the latter shows, resumptives may appear in other subject positions, and indeed, are preferred there. In other words, the HSR is found here too.

- (117) a. the horses that are always jumping and dancing  
 b. \* the horses that they are always jumping and dancing (GhE)
- (118) a. the girl that the ghosts stole  
 b. the girl that the ghosts stole her (GhE)
- (119) a. ? There are a few families that you could say are poor.  
 b. There are a few families that you could say they are poor. (GhE)
- (120) a. the thing that he made me swear that I would hide  
 b. ? the thing that he made me swear that I would hide it (GhE)
- (121) a. ? There isn't anyone that you would like to greet you in the street.  
 b. There isn't anyone that you would like him to greet you in the street.  
 (GhE)
- (122) a. the thing that they were looking  
 b. the thing that they were looking it (GhE)

So far it has been established that this dialect permits resumptive pronouns in A'-dependencies, except in the highest subject position. Given the last resort nature of resumptives cross-linguistically, the next point to determine is whether Ghanaian English also makes use of such pronouns to obviate locality violations. (123) and (124) show that it does: both subjacency violations are remedied by the use of the pronoun.

- (123) a. \* the man who I know the woman who married  
 b. the man who I know the woman who married him (GhE)

- (124) a. ? the teacher that John asked you whether you meet yesterday  
 b. the teacher that John asked you whether you meet him yesterday  
 (GhE)

The next question that arises is whether it is in fact possible for a resumptive pronoun to appear in a cleft construction, the remaining A'-dependency identified by Chomsky (1977). Perhaps unexpectedly, the combination of resumptive and cleft is impossible, as the data in (125) indicate. The contrast between (125) and (126) was, for my informant, very marked indeed.

- (125) a. It was John that they put the coat on.  
 b. \*\* It was John that they put the coat on him. (GhE)

- (126) a. It was a little narrow house that we lived in.  
 b. \*\* It was a little narrow house that we lived in it. (GhE)

This is not by itself entirely conclusive, however. Given that we have seen that Ghanaian English uses resumptive pronouns as a last resort strategy, so that otherwise ungrammatical dependencies such as those in (123)a and (124)a can be avoided, it is at least possible that the same could be true in cleft constructions; in other words, a cleft construction which would otherwise fall foul of locality considerations would be improved by the use of the pronoun. This is not the case.

- (127) a. \* It was the book that I knew the boy who stole it.  
 b. \* It was the maths teacher that John didn't know whether I meet him.  
 (GhE)

The relevance of (127) is clear: even in a context where a last-resort resumptive pronoun would rescue the derivation, no such pronoun is possible.

There are, of course, many important questions which this data raises. The nature of resumptive strategies in general remain poorly understood. One line of enquiry which has been rather fruitful is the relation between the resumptive and dominating C positions. McCloskey (1979, 1990) shows that in Irish this relation is important to the syntax, in that gap-constructions and resumptive constructions exhibit



different complementisers, leniting *a* (*aL*) and eclipsing *a* (*aN*) respectively; Shlonsky (1992) appeals to agreement in C as a mediating factor in resumptive strategies. One might perhaps expect to find a correlation in Ghanaian English between the content of C and the availability of a resumptive; however, my informant strongly maintains that *that*-less clauses are not found in the dialect, with the effect that both clauses with a gap and clauses with a pronoun share *that* (or a relative pronoun, as shown in the data). It is to be hoped that further examination of the resumptive strategy in Ghanaian English will shed light on resumption in general, but such work is beyond the scope of the work in hand. It must be admitted, however, that while resumption is little understood, the Minimalist operations of Move and Merge predict that both gaps and pronouns should occur; as pointed by McCloskey (to appear), the theory of grammar now provides in those two operations the mechanisms for producing the two sorts of dependency.<sup>25</sup> In other words, Move, factored into Copy and Delete, will leave a gap, by its nature; Merge of the head of the dependency at the root will not. There remains, on the other hand, a fundamental problem in dealing with resumptive pronouns in a Minimalist framework. While it is relatively simple to conceive to resumptives as audible traces, some instruction must be made to the articulatory system as to when to assign phonetic content. Assuming that locality is relevant at LF and that, once Spell-out is past, no interaction between LF and PF is possible, even indirectly, it is difficult to explain how a locality violation detected at LF should serve to trigger the articulatory system to assign phonetic content to a trace, thereby yielding a resumptive pronoun. This problem is further complicated by the existence of languages such as Irish and Hebrew, where the appearance of the pronoun is forced in the context of a locality violation, but where the pronoun may appear, *pace* the HSR, in free variation with the gap where there is no violation.

On the assumption that the two grammatical mechanisms of Move and Merge are reflected in the availability of gap and resumptive constructions respectively, the conclusion that this data forces is that cleft constructions are derived by Move.

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<sup>25</sup> Very recent work, such as Chomsky (2001), has argued against the separate existence of Move, suggesting instead that only Merge be admitted as a grammatical mechanism. How such a system would deal with the alternation between resumptive and gap is unclear.

## 2.6. Topic and Focus revisited

Setting these issues aside, however, the Ghanaian English data presented here fills a lacuna for our purposes. While it is true that it is simply not possible to evaluate the status of clefts as Topic or Focus with respect to the grammaticality of resumptive pronouns in Standard English, the data here show that clefts in Ghanaian English pattern with Focus rather than Topic. The result is that cleft constructions can be said to have the constellation of properties shown in the following table:

	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Cleft</b>
<b>WCO</b>	No	Yes	No
<b>Bare quantifiers</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Uniqueness</b>	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Compatibility w/ wh</b>	No	Yes	No
<b>Compatibility with resumptive</b>	No	Yes	No

In short, with one exception, the acceptability of bare quantifiers, clefts pattern perfectly with Focus constructions. This is an extremely revealing result, since it strongly indicates that cleft and focus constructions have extremely similar syntactic properties. The null hypothesis, then, is that they share syntactic representation - that the position which is identified by Rizzi (1997) as the locus of Focus is the same as that where the cleft constituent appears. This conclusion has two advantages: first, appealing to a syntactic position which has been independently postulated, the array of functional projections is restrained (insofar as to propose

another with identical properties would be redundant); second, the similarities in interpretation between the two types of construction will follow without stipulation - indeed, they are unavoidable.<sup>26</sup>

But as the table above shows, the symmetry is not perfect. While Rizzi (1997) shows that bare quantifiers can be foci, they are barred from cleft constructions. This is an important point, since Rizzi, following Lasnik and Stowell (1991), derives the unacceptability of weak crossover in Focus constructions from the assumption that Focus is quantificational while Topic is not. Since there is also a WCO effect in the cleft in (128)b, we are led to a paradox: WCO effects are found in clefts, so the relation between the cleft constituent and its associated empty category is by this diagnostic quantificational, but a quantifier cannot appear as the head of a quantificational dependency.

- (128) a. ?? GIANNI<sub>i</sub> sua<sub>i</sub> madre ha sempre apprezzato t<sub>i</sub> (non Piero)  
           *GIANNI his mother always appreciated* (Rizzi 1997, p290. his (18))  
       b. \* It was the elderly woman<sub>i</sub> that her<sub>i</sub> daughter was looking for.

There are a number of ways out of this impasse. One would be to claim that the functional projection occupied by the cleft constituent is not a position from which a quantifier can take scope. This amounts either to postulating a second type of A'-position, one which is by stipulation non-quantificational; another would be to claim that the position in question is not an A'-position at all. The first of these alternative

<sup>26</sup> There is one way in which cleft constructions differ from the structure predicted by the split CP given in (91). For Rizzi (1997), default complementisers such as *that* occur at the top of the structure, a fact which can be observed in the linear order in (i), and one on which Rizzi relies in his discussion of *that-t* effects (p305ff):

i. Credo [<sub>C</sub>che] [<sub>Topic</sub> a Gianni [<sub>Focus</sub> QUESTO [<sub>Topic</sub> domani [<sub>IP</sub> gli dovremmo dire]]]]  
     *I believe that, to Gianni, THIS, tomorrow, we should say.*

(Adapted from Rizzi 1997, p295, his (37a))

In clefts, on the other hand, where *that* appears, it appears to the right of the cleft constituent. This indicates either that the order of functional projections in English is different to that in Italian, or that the *that* that appears in clefts appears lower in the structure, perhaps in Fin. It is worth pointing out that a number of native speakers have observed to me that they find omission of *that* in clefts more acceptable than in ordinary *that*-less relatives, that they prefer (ii) over (iii):

ii. It was my sister used to go there.  
    iii. I knew a woman used to go there often.

Since analyses of relative clauses (see Section 2.2 above) have assumed the identity of complementiser *that* and relative *that*, this observation may reflect a real difference between these two and cleft *that*.

proposals is undesirable since it is *ad hoc*; it simply reduces to a restatement of the problem.

The second is at first sight more attractive, in that claims have been made in the literature that the CP complex does feature A-positions; Shlonsky (1992) asserts this to account for the distribution of resumptive pronouns in Semitic. This is an attractive proposal, since it makes sense of the fact that resumptive constructions do not show full reconstruction effects in the sense of Barss (1986). This fact can be illustrated for Ghanaian English by the following:

- (129) a. Which pictures of themselves<sub>i/j</sub> did the girls<sub>i</sub> think that the boys<sub>j</sub> liked ? (GhE)
- b. Which pictures of themselves\*<sub>i/j</sub> did the girls think that the boys liked them<sub>j</sub>? (GhE)

However, this is to ignore the conclusions reached in the previous section. While the postulation of an A-position occupied by the head of the dependency in a resumptive context is perhaps attractive, resumptives are not permitted in clefts, which constitutes clear evidence that no such A-position is involved. We are then led back to the conclusion that the position occupied by the cleft constituent is in fact an A'-position. This A'-position, however, seems to be one which is dedicated to hosting non-quantificational elements, which returns us to the first, stipulative, solution. Furthermore, matters are complicated by the fact that wh-movement is possible from the cleft position, as (130) indicates; simply stated, the movement indicated in (130)a would require two different sets of conflicting A'-features on the clefted constituent.<sup>27</sup>

- (130) a. Who<sub>i</sub> was it t<sub>i</sub>' that drank my gin and tonic t<sub>i</sub>?  
 b. What was it that he drank?  
 c. Where was it that you lost your luggage?  
 d. Why was it that they failed that student?  
 e. How was it that she fixed the microwave?

<sup>27</sup> Implicit in the discussion here is the assumption that quantificational relations are determined from A'-positions, as in May (1977), Beghelli (1995) and Reinhart (1997), rather than from A-positions as in Hornstein (1995). In the light of the difficulties with the latter proposal discussed earlier, this is a valid assumption.

In the light of these difficulties presented by the unavailability of bare quantifiers in cleft constructions, a solution can be found by appealing to a property of these constructions which is independently motivated. As Kiss (1998) points out, the information structure of cleft constructions involves the restriction of a possible set. For example, in (131), the cleft constituent restricts the possible reference of the subject in the presupposed *X bought the newspaper*, where the possible reference set of *X* is every individual in the universe in question. In (131)a, the universe is understood to contain a number of individuals, among them an elderly woman, and the cleft identifies that individual. Quantifiers by themselves do not identify the reference of a variable. (131)b is deviant because it fails to identify which individual out of the set of elderly women in the universe is in question. The same holds for the other quantifiers in (131).

- (131) a. It was the elderly woman that bought the last newspaper  
 b. \* It was every elderly woman that bought the newspaper  
 c. \* It was some elderly women that bought the newspaper  
 d. \* It was few elderly women that bought the newspaper

In other words, the reason for the unacceptability of quantificational elements in clefts is semantic in nature, rather than syntactic. The same reasoning holds for the other scope-bearing elements. There is no reason in the syntax why quantifiers, and other scope-taking elements, cannot be clefted; they can be, but the resultant string is assigned no meaningful interpretation. This has important consequences, since it means that the identification of the cleft position with Rizzi's (1997) Focus position can be complete. Evidence that this may indeed be the correct solution has already been noted in passing (see note 7 of Chapter One and note 2 above). For some speakers, judgements involving quantifiers are less strong than indicated in, for example, (131), meriting “?” instead of “\*”. Furthermore, for these speakers the judgement strengthens to “\*” where the quantifier is bare, resulting in the following pattern:

- (132) a. ? It was every elderly woman that bought the newspaper.  
 b. \* It was everyone that bought the newspaper.

As remarked earlier, this recalls the contrast between d-linked and non-d-linked wh-constituents, discussed in Pesetsky (1987), where asymmetries such as those in (133) are found.

- (133) a. ?? Which book did they wonder whether she had read?  
b. \* What did they wonder whether she had read?

The similarity to Kiss' proposal are obvious: for speakers who find (132)a more acceptable than (132)b, the contrast derives from the greater restriction of the possible range of X in *X bought the newspaper*, from all individuals to only those who are elderly women. Note, on the other hand, that the improvement does not go so far as to invoke full grammaticality; a cleft construction focussing a quantifier remains deviant, but the discussion here indicates clearly that the deviance is not syntactic in nature.

## 2.7. Movement in cleft constructions

In the preceding sections it has been shown that an analysis of cleft constructions which derives them by movement of the cleft constituent is motivated. However, it remains to be seen what precisely moves. This section addresses this question in the light of the theory of movement implicit in Minimalist syntax.

In the strongest Minimalist terms (see Chomsky 1995, p276ff), all syntactic operations occur to eliminate uninterpretable features, where "uninterpretable" refers to abstract features which are not meaningful at LF. For example the sentence in (134) contains a number of different features, among them the number features on the DPs *the children* and *the watermelon*, the tense and agreement features on *ate*, and Case features on the nominals. Some of these are intrinsic features, in that they are an inherent part of lexical entries, such as the word-level semantic features of *children* and *watermelon* and the number features borne by the DPs, and rather importantly, the phonological features associated with them. For the sentence to receive an interpretation, these features must be interpretable at LF; if things were otherwise, there is nothing to prevent the string in (134) receiving as its interpretation *the alligator trampled the grapes*. On the other hand, features such as Case are



contingent on the context. In (134) *the children* bears Nominative Case and *the watermelon* bears Accusative, neither of which are an inherent property of these DPs, since in (135), the distribution of Case features is the reverse. Similarly, the [plural] agreement feature on *eat* in (134) bears no role in the interpretation of the sentence, and is thus irrelevant at LF.

(134)           The children eat the watermelon

(135)           The watermelon sickened the children

Since an LF computation presented with uninterpretable features will stall, any such features which are present in the derivation must be eliminated at least by that interface. This then provides a *raison d'être* for syntactic movement: it must occur in order to eliminate uninterpretable features from the array of features in the numeration.

This conception of syntactic movement is not without a certain tension - since they are present in the numeration which draws elements from the lexicon and combines them into larger units by Merge, features are properties of heads rather than of maximal projections, since maximal projections have no existence prior to Merge. The most economical derivation would then require only the movement of heads in order to eliminate the uninterpretable features they bear, especially since head movement is an option in the grammar. But this is not what is observed in human languages. To preserve the insight that the need to eliminate syntactic features drives movement, some account must be provided for the fact that more material than strictly necessary can be moved.

An answer to this question is to be found in the fact that even syntactic heads are not instantiations of single features. To illustrate, let us take the example of *has* in (136). This head bears the interpretable features corresponding to its lexical semantics,  $\phi$ -features of number and person and, arguably, Tense. In I, the uninterpretable inflectional features are checked and deleted, but the C-feature remains, together with all the interpretable features borne by the head. Subsequent movement to C allows the C-feature to be eliminated, but the rest persist through to LF, where they are interpreted. So a given head can bear more than one feature.

- (136) Has the child  $t_i$  eaten the watermelon ?

It is apparent, then, that a given syntactic movement is blind to the presence of features of the moved element which are not relevant for that movement; in the movement shown in (136), what is triggering the movement is the C-feature on *has*, but the rest of the features of *has* travel along as free riders, in Chomsky's terminology. Among the features which have no syntactic relevance are those which provide instruction to the phonological component. They are irrelevant in the syntax, and also, by definition at LF.<sup>28</sup> But they demonstrably move, as shown by the fact that the initial syllable of the string in (136) is /hæz/. The term given to this phenomenon is "generalised pied-piping", adapting the name given by Ross (1967) to cases where a preposition moves along with its complement DP in examples such as (137)b.

- (137) a. Which box did they put the rice into?  
b. Into what box did they put the rice?

The implication of generalised pied piping is that syntactic movement can displace more material than strictly required for convergence at the LF.

This is particularly relevant for cleft constructions. On the one hand there exist clefts such as those in (138), where the cleft constituent is a single word. It is undoubtedly the case that that constituent is syntactically complex; since in each case it is a definite nominal, it consists of at least a DP which, according to Longobardi (1994), contains an instance of N to D movement. But there is in each case only one element drawn from the numeration which bears phonological features, precisely the element which bears the Focus feature which is eliminated in the course of the derivation.

- (138) a. It might be Mary who gets elected.  
b. It's kittens that she's most afraid of.  
c. It's Paris that we're visiting in March.

<sup>28</sup> A complication arises in the case of covert movement. Since covert movement has no phonetic or phonological consequences, there is, according to Chomsky (1995, p261ff), no need for such features to move at all. The result is that in cases of covert movement single features can move alone, since pied-piping of phonological features is not required for convergence at LF.



On the other hand, however, there are clefts which focus constituents which are overtly syntactically complex. In such circumstances, the focus feature can be assigned to any of a number of heads. The string in (139)a, depending on intonation, can carry any of the interpretations in (b), (c), (d) or (e), where the Focus feature is borne by a sub-part of the clefted constituent to the exclusion of the rest of the constituent. In this way, (139)b has an information structure which can be represented as (139)b'; only *GREY* bears the Focus feature, and the rest of the clefted constituent is interpreted as presupposed information. The same is also true of the remainder of the pairs in (139); (139)b', c', d' and e' represent the cleft interpretation which is barred by the unavailability of extraction in each case.

- (139) a. It's a red-haired woman wearing a grey suit that I'm meeting.
- b. It's a redhaired woman wearing a GREY suit that I'm meeting.
- b'. It's GREY that I'm meeting a red-haired woman wearing a *t* suit.
- c. It's a RED-HAIRED woman wearing a grey suit that I'm meeting.
- c'. It's RED-HAIRED that I'm meeting a *t* woman wearing a grey suit tonight.
- d. It's a red-haired WOMAN wearing a grey suit that I'm meeting.
- d'. It's WOMAN that I'm meeting a *t* wearing a grey suit.
- e. It's a red-haired woman wearing a GREY suit that I'm meeting.
- e'. It's SUIT that I'm meeting a woman wearing a grey *t*.

There is no need for any novel account of this phenomenon; the prior postulation of generalised pied-piping in syntactic movement in Chomsky (1995) in fact predicts that this type of behaviour will be found. Since features cannot move independently in overt syntax, bundles of features do; when Merge has formed a complex constituent from which extraction is not possible, the entire DP *a red-haired woman wearing a grey suit* moves, although only one sub-part of it bears the feature which triggers the movement. Similar behaviour is of course found in wh-movement. The

wh-feature borne by D in (140) triggers movement to eliminate it, but the entire DP is moved, pied-piping NP.

- (140) [DP [D Which <sub>[+wh]</sub> ] [NP woman ]] did you meet?

It is worth noting in passing that a movement analysis of cleft constructions provides a more principled account of these facts than would an null-operator analysis such as that in Chomsky (1977). Generalised pied-piping is independently motivated by the theory of movement. In order to account for data such as (139), the null operator, by assumption a maximal projection, would have to be identified, not with the base-generated cleft constituent, but with a subpart of it. The null operator, which by assumption has no internal structure, since it is merged simply as a wh-element without independent interpretation, would have simultaneously need to represent three distinct entities: first, its DP trace, as shown by the subscript; second, a subpart of the base-generated DP with which it is identified through predication, indicated by the superscript, in order for the correct cleft interpretation to be derived; third, the entire base-generated DP, in order to ensure that that DP is associated with the gap. It is the combination of the second and third requirements here that is suspect, since they require predication between the operator with two distinct entities, one a subpart of the other.

- (141) It's [a red-haired woman wearing a GREY<sup>j</sup> suit] Op<sub>i</sub><sup>j</sup> that I'm  
meeting t

The recognition of generalised pied-piping in cleft constructions also provides at no additional cost whatsoever an account of a phenomenon observed by Higginbotham (1987). We have seen that quantificational elements cannot appear as the focus of a cleft construction; nevertheless, it is not impossible for a quantifier to appear in a cleft constituent, with the sole proviso that some other element in that constituent bear focus. For Higginbotham, in contrast with Kiss (1998), the reason why quantifiers cannot appear in clefts is that they cannot be predicates. Since he assumes that there is predication in the cleft in (142)b, the sentence is ruled out for the same reason that (142)a is impossible. Since predicates must contain an open position which is filled in the subject of predication, no predication is possible in

(142)b, since the quantifier itself fills the open position, leaving no means for the subject to become associated with the predicate.

- (142) a. \* He is every doctor in Pittsburgh.  
b. \* It was every doctor in Pittsburgh that I met.

We shall see in later chapters that there is much more to be said with respect to predication and cleft constructions, and will therefore postpone a detailed discussion of the topic until then. However, for Higginbotham (1987), some difficulty arises when the following data are taken into consideration.

- (143) a. It was every doctor in PITTSBURGH that I met.  
b. It was every IRISH poem that John recited.

The data in (143) are unquestionably grammatical, although in each case the cleft constituent is a quantified DP. It is then a question why (143) should be grammatical, while (142)a is not, particularly in view of the fact that similar intonation on a subpart of the predicate does not reduce the ungrammaticality of (144) in the slightest.

- (144) \* He is every doctor in PITTSBURGH

If the notion that clefts involve predication in the sense of Higginbotham (1987) is abandoned in favour of a movement analysis with generalised pied-piping, then the problem vanishes. (142)a is ungrammatical only on the reading where the quantifier bears Focus, and we have seen that scopal elements are ruled out for reasons of information structure. If any other element bears Focus, as is the case in (143), then the presence of that feature will trigger movement of the entire quantified DP, but LF does not recognise the quantifier as focussed, since it is only a free rider. So the grammaticality of (143) is in fact no more remarkable than that of the unclefted versions of the same sentences in (145).

- (145) a. I met every doctor in PITTSBURGH.  
b. John recited every IRISH poem.

The ungrammaticality of (144), is of course irremediable. There is no A'-movement at work in this example, so pied-piping plays no part at all.

So the case for the derivation of cleft constructions by movement to eliminate a Focus feature is rather convincing. It avoids a great number of the stipulations that are required by alternative analyses, and it derives entirely from independently motivated grammatical postulates. This is not to say that there are no residual problems. These exist, and are dealt with in the final section of this chapter.

## 2.8 Residual problems

We have seen in the preceding sections of this chapter that there is good evidence to prefer a movement analysis of cleft constructions which treats them as Focus constructions in the sense of Rizzi (1997) and Kiss (1998) over either an operator analysis such as that in Chomsky (1977) or one which regards them as derived from pseudo-cleft-like structures such as those suggested by Akmajian (1970) and Percus (1996). It is inevitable, however, that some facts which receive a straightforward interpretation in one analysis will be more cumbersome in another. In this section, I will address two such issues: the first concerns the distribution of certain relative pronouns in cleft constructions; the second a set of agreement facts which are found in Standard English clefts.

### 2.8.1 The problem of *who*

In Section 2.2.4 above, we saw that the distribution of "relative pronouns" in relative clauses and in clefts is rather distinct. To summarise the findings there, only *that* can appear except where the cleft constituent originates as a subject, when *who* (or, for some speakers, *which*) is possible.

- (146) a. It was the Part One student that pointed that out.  
b. It was the Part One student who pointed that out.  
c. \* It was a bottle of Austrian liqueur which Rolf sent me. IGR  
d. \* It was the redhaired woman whom I was living with. IGR  
e. \* It was in Bryn Teg Terrace where I lived in my first year in Bangor.  
IGR

- f. \* It was from 1994 to 1997 when I was in Wales. IGR
- g. \* It was for that reason why I liked living in that house.

The question that arises here is why *who* is acceptable in a cleft while the rest are not. Preventing relative pronouns from appearing in clefts is easily done; it follows naturally from the conclusion that clefts do not contain relative clauses, and from the claim in Bianchi (1995) that, rather than true pronouns or *wh*-operators, relative pronouns are in fact relative Ds. This would lead one to expect that none of the *wh*-forms should be acceptable in clefts. In fact, the grammaticality of (146)b indicates that *who* has a separate existence other than as a relative pronoun.

A first possibility that comes to mind is that the appearance of *who* results from locality considerations such as those which determine the distribution of *that* in *wh*-extraction. In other words, the familiar *that*-*t* effect appears when a subject is extracted:

- (147) a. What did she say that Ellie was going to do?
- b. \* Who did she say that *t* was going to do it?
- c. Who did she say *t* was going to do it?

There have been many attempts to account for these facts: see, for example, Chomsky and Lasnik (1977), which proposes a surface filter barring the linear sequence *that*-*t*; Pesetsky (1982) where a binding-theoretic approach is advocated; Rizzi (1990), which argues that extraction of a subject over an overt C is only possible where C bears agreement features which are congruent with those borne by the subject; Doherty (1993), which takes the rather more radical step of barring subject extraction from CP completely, while allowing IP-complementation in *that*-less clauses, with extraction of subjects from IP permitted.

Several of these approaches, in particular those of Pesetsky (1982) and Rizzi (1990), rely on the intuition that the relation between the moved subject and its trace is disturbed in the presence of *that*. This chimes with the generally observed fact that extraction of complements is in some sense easier than that of other constituents, whether subjects or adjuncts, a core observation behind much of the work on locality theory in the last 20 years; see for example the connectedness theory in Kayne (1984), the Barriers system in Chomsky (1986b), Relativised Minimality in Rizzi (1990), and

the notion of chain-formation in terms of address-based dependency in Manzini (1992).

It is tempting to account for the appearance of *who* in clefts by appealing to similar intuitions, since if clefts are derived by movement, problems with respect to the movement of subjects are expected to arise. A pretheoretical account along the lines of Rizzi (1990) might run as follows. Since subjects are difficult to move, some particular mechanism must be appealed to - such a mechanism as an agreeing complementiser such as *qui* in French or the null complementiser in English. *Who* could then be said to be a form of agreeing complementiser, not least because it shows overt agreement in animacy with the subject (a point underlined by the possibility for some speakers that *which* is also permitted with non-animate subjects).

There are several reasons, however, why such an account is doomed to failure. The first concerns the fact that clefts, like relative clauses, show an anti-that-t effect, in that in neither construction does the sequence *that-t* lead to ungrammaticality.

- (148) a. It was the Part One student that *t* pointed that out.  
b. the Part One student that *t* pointed that out

In other words, whatever difficulty obtains in extracting a subject past *that* in a constituent question does not appear here. If there is no difficulty, then there is no reason why the grammar should make use of a particular agreeing form, *who* in this instance, to avoid the problem. Indeed, the use of such a mechanism would be redundant and in Minimalist terms impossible.

Second, it is evident that that-t effects are extremely local; they subsist precisely at the extraction site of the subject. As (149) indicates, the presence or absence of *that* in the CP introducing higher clauses is quite simply irrelevant.

- (149) a. \* Who did she say that Ellie said that her mother said that *t* was going to clean the church?  
b. Who did she say that Ellie said that her mother said *t* was going to clean the church?

- c. Who did she say that Ellie said  $\emptyset$  her mother said  $t$  was going to clean the church?
- d. Who did she say  $\emptyset$  Ellie said that her mother said  $t$  was going to clean the church?

(149)a represents a that-t violation; (149)b has no *that* in the C position immediately dominating the subject trace, and is completely acceptable, despite the presence of *that* in the two next highest Cs; (149)c and (149)d are of equal grammaticality regardless of the absence of *that* in those Cs. The implication of this data is that that the that-t effect is entirely a local phenomenon; the content of higher CPs between the head of the subject dependency and its trace has no effect at all. This is in contrast to the situation that we find in clefts.

- (150) a. It was Mike that she said that Ellie said that her mother said that was going to clean the church.
- b. It was Mike who she said that Ellie said that her mother said that was going to clean the church.

In (150)a, *that* appears as the head of CP all the way up the sequence of CPs; in (150)b, we find *who*, not, as might be expected if locality concerns were involved, at the C closest to the foot of the chain, but in the C position closest to the cleft constituent in its displaced position. In fact, it appears that the reverse is ungrammatical. (151) features *who* in the position where it would be able to remedy a locality problem if such existed, but is nonetheless impossible.

- (151) \* It was Mike that she said that Ellie said that her mother said who was going to clean the church.

So it appears that the possibility of *who* in a subject cleft is not due to locality considerations. If it were, it should be the only grammatical option allowed by the grammar, which (148)a indicates is incorrect; and it should be in a local configuration with the extraction site of the subject, which is disproved by (150)b and (151). In



fact, all that *who* signals is that somewhere in a lower clause there exists a subject gap.

It appears that there are two remaining approaches to this problem. The first is to allow that the elements which Bianchi (1995) characterises as relative Ds can have a wider distribution; that alongside their function as relative determiners, elements such as *who* have homophones which can appear in clefts. This would permit us to retain the conclusion that clefts are derived by different processes to relative clauses. Again, problems are apparent with this solution too. If such homophones exist, then there would appear to be no reason why their appearance should be contingent on the grammatical function of the clefted element. In other words, we should expect that the homophone should be equally acceptable regardless of the extraction site of the cleft constituent.

- (152) a. It was Ellie's father who *t* said that.  
b. \* It was Ellie's father who(m) I met *t*. IGR

As (152) indicates, this is not the case. The availability of *who* in a cleft is dependent on the cleft constituent originating as a subject. A further objection concerns the fact that *which*, the non-animate counterpart of *who*, is acceptable only for some speakers in a cleft, whereas there is no such variation for relative *which*.

- (153) a. % It was the antibiotic which caused the allergy.  
b. It was the antibiotic that caused the allergy.  
c. The antibiotic which caused the allergy was withdrawn.  
d. The antibiotic that caused the allergy was withdrawn.

For many speakers, myself among them, *which* cannot appear in a cleft even when a non-animate subject is clefted; the only available grammatical reading for (153)a is the non-cleft one, where *it* is referential. For the same speakers, there can be variation between *which* and *that* without difficulty in relatives. In short, it seems that a homophone account is not viable.

The remaining possibility is that the appearance of *who* in these contexts is not strictly syntactic. The first piece of evidence that might lead one to this conclusion is the fact that animacy is rather strongly implicated. Animacy, although a



pervasive semantic feature, is an interpretable feature in the sense of Chomsky (1995); in other words it is not one which syntactic mechanisms are expected to take notice of. Second, Sigley (1997), in a quantitative study of relativiser choice in New Zealand English, notes that the proportion of *that* and *who* appearing in clefts varies enormously from written to spoken corpora. In written contexts, out of 53 tokens of clefts with human subjects, *that* accounts for 4% and *who* for 94%; in conversational contexts, out of 24 tokens of human subject clefts, 54% use *that* and 29% use *who*. The figures are even more divergent for non-human subjects, where out of 114 tokens of subjects in written contexts, *who* accounts for 37% and *that* for 62%; in spoken contexts, out of 11 tokens, 100% use *that*. So it seems that for New Zealand English at least, there are stylistic factors which intervene in the choice between *who* and *that*. The possibility then exists that the appearance of *who* in subject clefts is not syntactically determined, but rather due to stylistic and processing considerations.<sup>29</sup>

Indeed, there is one other type of cleft sentence where animacy seems to play a role. It concerns the possibility of pied-piping (in the traditional sense) in data such as the following:

- (154) a. It was Ellie to whom I spoke.
- b. It was to Ellie that I spoke.
- c. It was Ellie that I spoke to,

Sentences such as these figure prominently in the discussion of clefts in Chomsky (1977), where they are adduced as evidence for operator movement. Simply put, if the cleft constituent itself moves, then one would expect to find only (154)b, where the preposition has pied-piped with the DP, or (154)c, where it remains *in situ* following movement of the DP. There would appear to be no way of deriving the linear order DP-P-relative pronoun by movement. On the other hand, the native speakers that I have consulted on this matter are unanimous in rejecting (154)a as a spoken form, substituting instead (154)b or (154)c. It appears that clefts of the form in (154)a are accepted only as written forms. Furthermore, there appear to be extremely narrow constraints on the type of nominal that can appear in such clefts.

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<sup>29</sup> I am grateful to Liliane Haegeman for bringing the relevance of the New Zealand facts to my attention.

They appear most felicitous where the cleft constituent is a proper name, as in (154)a, and seem less so when the cleft constituent is a [+human] DP:

- (155) ? It was your mother to whom I was referring. IGR

On the other hand, [- human] proper names appear to be completely impossible here:

- (156) a. \* It was Chicago to which we flew.  
b. \* It was France about which they were talking.  
c. \* It was *Blade Runner* after which they were scared.

This distribution is rather odd. Animacy is again in question, although even that is not enough by itself to yield a grammatical cleft, as (155) indicates. The impossibility of [-human] proper names indicates that no process such as that proposed by Longobardi (1994) to account for the distribution of determiners with proper names in English and Italian; in that context, a regular syntactic process which observes differences in definiteness is at work. Pied-piping in these clefts seems a rather different phenomenon.

### 2.8.2. Case and agreement in cleft constructions

Under A'-movement, Case and agreement relations are typically preserved.<sup>30</sup> These are features which are involved in the licensing of arguments, which is the preserve of the inflectional part of the clause, the part subsumed under the label IP. When an

<sup>30</sup> A potential contradiction of the claim made in the text would appear to be found in Belfast English (similar facts are found in Dublin English). The phenomenon described as singular concord by Henry (1995) is found in declaratives, where a plural subject can appear with either "singular" or plural agreement in data such as the following:

- i. Them machines makes/make a lot of noise.
- ii. The eggs is/are cracked.

In contexts which involve I-to-C movement, only the plural form is available with a plural subject.

- iii. Do/\*does them machines make a lot of noise?
- iv. Are/\*is the eggs cracked?

The contradiction is illusory: there is no variation between the two forms under I-to-C movement, unlike the cleft data discussed in the text. Henry (1995) accounts for the Belfast English facts by proposing that, in that dialect, subjects may remain in Spec/TP and that the "singular" form is in fact a default form showing no agreement. Once I-to-C movement occurs, AgrP is activated, and only agreeing forms can appear.

argument is *wh*-moved, one does not expect to find its Case altering. But there exists a body of data, first pointed out by Akmajian (1970), where this appears to occur in cleft constructions. Two sets of related facts are relevant: first, if the cleft constituent is a pronoun and originates as a subject, either the accusative or nominative form can appear; second, if the accusative form of the pronoun appears, then third singular inflection is found in the remnant clause, and if the nominative form of the pronoun appears, inflection is appropriate to the person and number of the subject.

- (157) a. It is me that is/\*am making the noise.  
 b. It is you that is making the noise.  
 c. It is him that is making the noise.  
 d. It is us that is/\*are making the noise.  
 e. It is them that is/\*are making the noise.

- (158) a. It is I that am/\*is making the noise.  
 b. It is you that are making the noise  
 c. It is he that is making the noise.  
 d. It is we that are/\*is making the noise.  
 e. It is they that are/\*is making the noise.

At first sight, this might seem to be merely a case of hyper-correction, but this cannot be the case. If it were, then one would expect the nominative form to be possible in all contexts, regardless of the origin of the cleft pronoun. That this is not the case is shown by the data in (159).

- (159) a. It was me/\*I that she was talking to.  
 b. It was her/\*she that I met yesterday.  
 c. It was us/\*we that she expected to leave.

In addition, native speakers who do not hypercorrect also have the judgements indicated.

Those cases where a nominative pronoun, clefted from subject position, appears with the expected form of agreement do not pose any problem. Neither do those where an accusative pronoun appears clefted from non-subject position. The

same cannot be said of accusative pronouns which originate in subject position and are associated with third singular agreement. Note that it cannot be claimed that there is a process of "anti-hyper-correction" at work here, since such a low-level process would not be expected to reach down into the remnant clause and affect the inflectional pattern there. It must be admitted that the operator analysis is more promising here, since it would permit Merge of the accusative pronoun straight into the cleft position, together with Move of a default singular operator in the remnant clause. But this solution is not without its problems. By assumption the null operator would be merged in Spec/VP of the remnant clause, thereby satisfying the selectional requirements of the verb. In order to check the default third singular agreement, the operator would have, first of all, to be singular, and second, to transit through (all) the A-positions in the clause, as shown in (160).

(160) it is them [<sub>CP</sub> Op<sub>i</sub> that [<sub>IP</sub> t<sub>i</sub>' is [<sub>VP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> making the noise ]]]

In other words, the derivation of IP would follow exactly the same trajectory as normal; the internal feature-checking mechanisms of the clause would proceed just as if the subject had lexical content. As a *bona fide* subject, the operator would be able to function as an antecedent for an anaphor within IP. Since anaphors must agree in  $\phi$ -features with their antecedents, only a singular anaphor should be permitted to appear in the remnant clause when the cleft position is occupied by an accusative pronoun representing a subject gap. But this is not what is found:

- (161) a. It's them that's making fools of themselves.  
 b. \* It's them that's making fools of himself/herself.

Of course, proposing that the operator is plural will make sense of the binding facts in (161), but that will then leave the third singular inflection unexplained.

If the recalcitrant data, here and in the preceding section, result from processes which are strictly speaking extra-syntactic, it is worth pointing out that they involve phenomena, namely case and agreement, which are claimed in Sobin (1997) and Lasnik and Sobin (2000) to be prone to infection from what they term "grammatical viruses". Such viruses are, they argue, responsible for constructions

such as the following; they check features which the grammatical system does not otherwise check:

- (162) a. It was I.  
b. ?? It was just I.  
c. ?? It was we.  
d. \* It was just we. (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, p350, their (7))

- (163) a. It was me.  
b. It was just me.  
c. It was we.  
d. It was just we. (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, p350, their (8))

When “hypercorrect” *I* appears in post-copular position in (162)a, it is subject to rather unusual restrictions: interpolation of an adverb causes the datum to degrade, and changing the pronoun from singular to plural also causes disimprovement; compare (163): where the accusative form of the pronoun appears, none of these restrictions apply. Similarly, agreement patterns in expletive-associate constructions appear to show that there is a similar virus at work.

- (164) a. Books are on the table.  
b. There are books on the table. (Sobin 1997, p332, his (19a))

- (165) a. A pencil and some stamps are on the desk.  
b. \* There are a pencil and some stamps on the desk.  
(Sobin 1997, p332, his (22))  
c. There is a pencil and some stamps on the desk.  
d. There are some stamps and a pencil on the desk.

With a plural, non-conjoined subject, (164) shows that plural agreement can appear with either an expletive, or with the full lexical subject. When the subject is conjoined, with a singular DP as the left conjunct, however, plural agreement is no longer available with the expletive, as (165)b shows, although (165)d exemplifies the rather surprising fact that when the left conjunct is plural, plural agreement is again

possible. Since specifier-head agreement does not see into the internal structure of the conjoined DP, it would be expected that the agreement with both linear orders should be identical, contrary to fact. Sobin (1997) argues that the plural agreement in (165)d is due to a grammatical virus, a “*there are...*” Rule, which sees the linear order *there are DP<sub>plural</sub>* and checks the agreement feature, essentially distorting the normal agreement patterns in the language.

The relevance of this to the properties of agreement and case in cleft constructions is that grammatical viruses are, for the authors cited, a property of Prestige English, and it is in just such a variety that clefts such as (166) are found.

- (166) a. It is I that am making the noise.  
       b. It is we that are making the noise.  
       c. It is they that are making the noise.

Thus it is possible that there may be factors which are, strictly speaking, extra-computational involved in the derivation of these clefts. As for the issues which arise with respect to *who* and *whom*, Lasnik and Sobin (2000) explicitly deny that there is any real connection with Case involved in these forms.

In this chapter, it has been demonstrated that cleft constructions are best analysed in terms of movement of the cleft constituent to a left-peripheral Focus position. This conclusion is motivated by the asymmetries between clefts and relative clauses, and by an examination of the syntactic properties of clefts. They exhibit diagnostics of syntactic movement in their rejection of resumptive pronouns, and their reconstruction properties. Some residual problems remain, but no previously proposed analysis fares any better in dealing with these.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CLEFT CONSTRUCTION IN HIBERNO-ENGLISH

#### 3.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapters the properties of cleft constructions in Standard English have been examined, and a movement proposal for their derivation motivated. This chapter examines cleft constructions in (Southern) Hiberno-English, and demonstrates that the differences between that dialect and the standard with respect to these constructions is attributable to a single grammatical fact. The chapter takes the following form: first, general information is provided about the dialect in question, together with a presentation of the syntactic divergences from the standard that are found. Section 3.3 outlines the facts surrounding cleft constructions in the dialect, and Section 3.4 examines in some detail the phenomenon of VP-clefting, a construction which has never been treated in the generative literature prior to this research. Section 3.5 presents current thinking regarding the structure of VP and the mapping of thematic distinctions to that structure, and it is demonstrated that such theoretical insights provide a straightforward account of VP-clefts in Hiberno-English. Section 3.6 unifies this account with the clefting of predicates, which is the other dialect-specific phenomenon encountered in the data. Finally, the implications of the findings in this chapter for the structure of predication are examined.<sup>1</sup>

#### 3.2 Southern Hiberno-English: an overview

The ancestral language of the island of Ireland is Irish, a Q-Celtic language which has now an estimated 30,000 native speakers (Ó Siadhail 1991). The population of the island is currently around 5,000,000 people, 3,500,000 in the Republic of Ireland and 1,500,000 in Northern Ireland.

At the time of the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in 1169, Ireland was exclusively Irish-speaking. While there had been Viking settlement in a number of

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<sup>1</sup> An early version of some of the material in this chapter appears in Cottell (1997a).



centres of population such as Waterford, Wexford and Dublin, Scandinavian languages left little linguistic impression on the island apart from a small number of place-names, such as Leixlip ("salmon-leap") in County Kildare. Although the leaders of the Anglo-Norman expeditionary force were the descendants of the Norman French nobility which had come to England a century earlier with William of Normandy and were therefore French-speaking, the common troops were English, mostly from South Wales and the south-west of England (Kallen 1994). Although Latin and French were used for certain political and legal functions, English was widely used as a vernacular, and, by the middle of the thirteenth century, was used as the official language of Dublin guilds and, from the middle of the fourteenth century, in the records of the Corporation of Waterford. (This dialect may be referred to as Anglo-Irish, in order to distinguish it from the modern dialect, Hiberno-English.) By the end of the fifteenth century it was also dominant in Galway, and was being used in the Irish Parliament alongside French. In the sixteenth century, English was adopted for all official purposes under Henry VIII. However, during all of this period, the vast majority of the population spoke Irish, and from the late thirteenth century the authorities began to express concern that the English-speaking community was assimilating to the native culture in matters of language, dress and customs.

There is debate concerning how completely English had been displaced by Irish at the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> But what is certain is that the British policy, known as plantation, which deliberately encouraged migration from Britain to Ireland in the seventeenth century, introduced a number of contemporary English dialects into Ireland; it is from these later dialects that Modern Hiberno-English derives. The geographical origin of the immigrant population is reflected today in the existence of two dialect areas on the island: in the northeastern area, where the incomers were largely from Scotland, the dialect is heavily influenced by Scottish English, especially in its phonology and lexicon, a influence which has been strengthened by the geographical and cultural closeness of this part of Ireland to Scotland. In more

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<sup>2</sup> The older English dialects have no modern descendants, although in Fingal in North Dublin and in Forth and Bargo in County Wexford, archaic dialects survived later. The only written evidence of Fingal English dates from 1659, but the Forth and Bargo dialects persisted into the nineteenth century and were of interest to folklore enthusiasts, who collected poems and sayings from native speakers. While Anglo-Irish has received some attention with respect to its lexicon and morphology (see Irwin 1935), its syntax is virgin territory, thus providing ample scope for research, particularly in terms of Middle English dialect syntax and of the genesis of a dialect in a contact situation. One would expect that the former area of research would yield interesting results, given that the centuries when Anglo-Irish was used were a time of massive change in the syntax of English.



southern plantations, the immigrants were largely from Wales and the West Midlands of England, and in consequence the southern dialect differs from the northern. As with all dialect boundaries, the exact isogloss between the two varies depending on which feature is at issue, but it is possible to generalise that Northern Hiberno-English is found north of a line drawn roughly from Sligo in the northwest to Dundalk in the east; in other words, it lies slightly south and to the west of the political boundary. Therefore, it cannot be said that Southern Hiberno-English is the native language of the whole Republic, but one may confidently state that it has upwards of 3,000,000 native speakers.

### 3.2.1 The syntactic peculiarities of Southern Hiberno-English

In the last fifteen years or so, syntactic differences between dialects have received new attention; this has been largely due to the overtly comparative bias of generative syntax since the Government and Binding model of the early 1980s. This new interest in dialectal variation has been perhaps most noticeable in work on Germanic and Romance dialects, but there is also valuable work on dialects of English, among them Henry (1995), McCloskey (1992, 1997) on Northern Hiberno-English, Duffield (1993), Guilfoyle (1985) on Southern Hiberno-English and Close (in prep) on Scottish English.

Before going on to examine the distinctive cleft constructions which are found in Southern Hiberno-English,<sup>3</sup> it is worthwhile examining the syntactic differences between this dialect and the standard. While it is of course true that phonological and lexical differences are found, the cleft construction is by no means the only distinctive syntactic peculiarity of the dialect.

Perhaps the best-known characteristic of the dialect, due to the work of McCloskey (1992) and Guilfoyle (1985), is that in embedded yes/no questions, Hiberno-English (HiE) shows I-to-C movement.<sup>4</sup> While examples such as (1) are not unknown in informal Standard English, they are categorical in Hiberno-English, to the

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<sup>3</sup> In what follows, "Hiberno-English" will be used in place of "Southern Hiberno-English", except where the distinction between the two dialects is relevant.

<sup>4</sup> Northern Hiberno-English also has embedded I-to-C movement, as McCloskey (1992) and Henry (1995) show, and in addition permits wh-movement in embedded constituent questions. In consequence, (i) is grammatical in the northern dialect, but not in the southern:

i. I wondered where did they go.

extent that native speakers of the latter are surprised when informed that Standard English (StE) does things differently. In both dialects, *wonder* and *check* assign an interrogative feature to their CP complements; the difference between the two is that the feature in Standard English is checked by Merge of *if* or *whether*, while in HiE, it is checked by Move of I, just as it is in Standard English matrix questions.

- (1) a. I wonder is he in the office at the moment. (HiE)
- b. I'll go and check did I leave it in the office. (HiE)
- c. I wonder if/whether he is in the office at the moment. (StE)
- d. I'll go and check if/whether I left it in the office. (StE)

Hiberno-English perfects are distinct in two ways. First, the dialect has an immediate perfect, which conveys the meaning that *just* does in Standard English, but which has rather different syntax:

- (2) a. I'm just after seeing her. (HiE)
- b. I have just seen her. (StE)

As Guilfoyle (1985) points out, this phenomenon in Hiberno-English appears to derive from Irish, in that it reflects the following construction:

- (3) Ta mé       (díreach) tar éis í               a   fheiceail.  
      be 1sg-nom (directly) after   3sg.fem-acc part. see  
      *I have (just) seen her.*

Further, as Kallen (1989) shows, Hiberno-English uses a simple present or preterit to convey a perfect, as (4) shows.

- (4) a. I'm in Dublin for two years now. (HiE)
- b. I have been in Dublin two years now. (StE)

Among the grammatical phenomena which are found in Northern Hiberno-English is the singular concord pattern discussed by Henry (1995, pp16-44). This is also a feature of the type of Southern Hiberno-English spoken in Dublin. As Henry points

out, a plural subject, with the exception of nominative pronouns, can appear with a verb which appears to bear singular agreement:

- (5)
- a. Men is terrible messy creatures.
  - b. The eggs is cracked.
  - c. \* They is terrible messy creatures.
  - d. \* They is cracked.
  - e. Them's terrible messy creatures.
  - f. Them's cracked.

This is not a matter of free variation, since singular subjects cannot appear with plural agreement. Neither can singular agreement occur in cases of I-to-C movement:

- (6)
- a. Are men terrible messy creatures?
  - b. Are the eggs cracked?
  - c. \* Is men terrible messy creatures?
  - d. \* Is the eggs cracked?

Henry's analysis of this phenomenon draws on the split-Infl hypothesis of Pollock (1989) and Belletti (1990): in this dialect, subjects can appear in a lower position, specifically Spec/TP, than the Spec/AgrP they occupy in Standard English, and what appears to be singular agreement is in fact default morphology with no specification for number. The facts in (6) are explained if Agr is necessarily transitted in the course of I-to-C movement, thereby avoiding a violation of the Head Movement Constraint of Travis (1984), which bars movement of X to Z directly in the following configuration, where X does not move to Y:

- (7)
- [ ... Z...Y...X... ]
- where Z, Y and X = heads;
- Z c-commands Y;
- Y c-commands X.

In (6)c and (6)d, C instantiates Z, Agr is Y and T is X; movement directly from T to C would violate (7). But in order to transit Agr in order to avoid the violation, the

verb must bear features which can be checked at Agr, since the movement is otherwise unmotivated and therefore impossible. The result is that only the form bearing full, rather than default, agreement, can move from T through Agr to C.<sup>5</sup>

The forgoing is not intended as a full inventory of the grammatical differences between the standard and the non-standard dialect.<sup>6</sup> Nor is it a complete list of the syntactic differences which are found on the island of Ireland; several of the phenomena which exist in various types of Northern Hiberno-English, such as the quantifier-stranding discussed in McCloskey (1997) and overt-subject imperatives (Henry 1995) are not found in the southern dialect. But the point has been sufficiently made that the syntax of Southern Hiberno-English differs from that of Standard English on a number of points. Having established this, it is time to examine in some detail the locus of dialectal variation which is the focus of this chapter: the distinctive cleft constructions which are found in the dialect.

### 3.3 "The excessive use of cleft sentences"

Throughout the last few decades, there have been many analyses of cleft constructions; these have been examined in the preceding chapter. Although they differ greatly in their theoretical assumptions and implementation, they have all had one thing in common. Akmajian (1970), Bollinger (1972), Emonds (1976, 1985), Higginbotham (1987) and so on are as one in claiming that predicates cannot be clefted. This is undoubtedly true of the standard language; however, it is not a defining feature of cleft constructions. Nor is this a particularly new discovery. Jespersen (1949, p149) states that "[t]he Irish make an excessive use of cleft sentences." Not only is that use excessive,<sup>7</sup> it is also untypical of the cleft construction in the standard; in the data which follow his pronouncement, he cites the following:

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<sup>5</sup> See also Radford (1997) for a rather different approach to the facts in (5) and (6).

<sup>6</sup> See also Harris (1993) and Filppula (1986, 1999) for descriptions of Hiberno-English.

<sup>7</sup> There is also evidence that Hiberno-English differs quantitatively from the standard dialect. Harris (1993) and Filppula (1986) claim that clefts are more frequent in the former than the latter.

- (8)
- a. Is it reading you are? <sup>8</sup>
  - b. It is angry that he was.
  - c. It's right weel you look.
  - d. It's yourself should have been there.
  - e. It's the fine tale you're spoiling.
  - f. It's proud and pleased I am to see you home again.
  - g. It's an angel you are to forgive me.
  - h. Is it bitten you are?

To ears and eyes accustomed to Standard English, these are exotic indeed, but they are fully grammatical in Hiberno-English. In fact, not all of Jespersen's data exemplify the same phenomenon. For example (8)d is in fact not an unusual cleft at all. Hiberno-English uses the *-self* pronouns as emphatic pronouns just as Standard English does, with the exception that the former places them in argument positions, rather than adjunct position.

- (9)
- a. Herself came in late last night.
  - b. I was talking to himself the other day.

These emphatic pronouns bear a certain pragmatic effect in the third person, in that they are taken to refer to a person especially salient in the universe of discourse. First and second persons are simply interpreted as emphatic. Given this, there is nothing particularly unusual about (8)a *qua* cleft; the cleft constituent is an emphatic pronoun which can independently appear as a subject.

- (10) Yourself should have been there.

If (10) were ungrammatical then the cleft would need further explanation; since it is not, then (8)d is not really very different to Standard English.<sup>9</sup> In fact, although the Hiberno-English use of cleft constructions may be deemed excessive, it is not as

<sup>8</sup> Jespersen (1949, p149) in fact gives *Is it reading your are?* I alter this above, since I assume that *your* is an erratum. On the other hand, since I do not know whether *weel* in (8)c is intended to indicate a non-standard pronunciation, I have left it uncorrected to *well*.

<sup>9</sup> Filppula (1999), in a corpus-based study of Hiberno-English, claims that these pronouns do have some special grammatical status, and regards them as unbound anaphors. In my opinion, this is to underplay the pragmatic and discourse effects which surround their use.

unregulated as some published sources claim. The following is an example of this sort of hyperbole:

“Similarly on the syntactic level, it is a characteristic feature of H[iberno-]E[nglish] that in almost every sentence some word is *topicalized*, or brought forward, resulting in a complex sentence with a relative clause. In colloquial HE one would rarely hear the sentence *I’m going to Dublin tomorrow*. Rather, one of the following would be preferred:

- a. It’s me that’s going to Dublin tomorrow.
- b. [\*] It’s going that I am to Dublin tomorrow.
- c. It’s to Dublin that I’m going tomorrow.
- d. It’s Dublin that I’m going to tomorrow.
- e. It’s tomorrow that I’m going to Dublin.”

(Jeffers and Lehiste 1980, pp154-5)

Jeffers and Lehiste's claim about the all-pervasiveness of clefts in Hiberno-English is simply wrong; their [b] is ungrammatical, for reasons of non-constituency which will become apparent.

On the other hand, most of the data in (8) exemplify a type of cleft which has been supposed not to exist - the clefted predicate. It is this phenomenon which forms the focus of this chapter, since the existence of these data not only calls into question any treatment of cleft sentences which regards the impossibility of such sentences in the standard language as a defining property of the construction, but also misses a point of grammatical variation between dialects.

It is worthwhile here defining the term "predicate" as it will be used henceforth in this work, since the word has come to have a number of meanings, not all of them mutually compatible, in the generative literature. I use the term here in its traditional (i.e. non-generative) sense of a constituent which excludes the subject: in the simplest case, a verb and its complement(s), or as in copular constructions, a property-denoting maximal projection. This is in contrast with, for example, the use of "psych-predicate" by Belletti and Rizzi (1988), where the term seems simply to mean "verb".

To take first the copular sense of predicate, Jespersen's data include a number of examples of predication. The consensus regarding Standard English is that sentences such as those in (11) are impossible, to the extent that Emonds (1985) uses this fact as a diagnostic of predicatehood. There is, for speakers of the standard dialect, a clear distinction in grammaticality in the minimal pairs in (12), which are, for speakers of Hiberno-English, of equal acceptability.

- (11) a. It is angry that he was.  
 b. It's right weel you look.  
 c. It's proud and pleased I am to see you home again.  
 g. It's an angel you are to forgive me.  
 h. Is it bitten you are?

- (12) a. It's a linguist that he is. (\* in StE)  
 b. It's a linguist that I met.  
 c. It's in the garden that he is. (\* in StE)  
 d. It's in the garden that he's standing.

The fact is that all of Emonds' data are grammatical in Hiberno-English, a fact which requires explanation. Before embarking on a full account of the data in (11) and (12), however, it should be noted that these do not exemplify the full range of dialect-specific cleft constructions.

(8) also includes a sentence which appears to involve the clefting of a VP-like constituent, which is given below together with additional examples.

- (13) a. Is it reading you are?  
 b. It is looking for more land a lot of them are. (Filppula 1986)  
 c. It won't be drinking milk that we'll be tomorrow night.  
 d. It's going home they are.

To my knowledge, these constructions have received no previous syntactic treatment; they will be referred to in what follows as VP-clefts. Before returning to the questions raised by the clefted predicates in (11), these construction deserve further investigation.

### 3.4 VP-clefts

To refer to data such as (13) as VP-clefts perhaps prejudges the issue, since it is at least possible that they are not clefts. Before determining that they are, it is necessary to investigate whether they behave in the same way as clefts do in Standard English. Chapters One and Two above have made it possible to perform a number of tests to identify a true cleft construction.

- (14) a. cleft sentences take the form  
 $IT + BE + [clefted\ element]_i (C)[_{IP} \dots e_i \dots]$ ;
- b. cleft sentences trigger a presupposition of the truth of the remnant clause;
- c. cleft sentences invoke an exhaustive listing effect for the clefted constituent
- d. cleft sentences cannot focalise a quantifier, although a non-focalised quantifier can be pied-piped in the cleft constituent;
- e. cleft constituents, like focussed elements but unlike topics, are not separated by comma intonation from the rest of the sentence and contain new information while the remnant clause contains contextually given information.

(14)a gives positive results for these VP-data. Admittedly, the presupposition in such clauses is rather impoverished, but it is present:

- (15) # It's looking for more land a lot of them are, but they're not doing anything.

So the second property in (14) is also present. As for the third, the oddness of (16) indicates that it holds for these sentences.

- (16) # It's looking for more land a lot of them are, and they're thinking of investing in derivatives.



As for the ability of quantifiers to appear, (17) shows the pattern typical of clefts; while a cleft which assigns the Focus feature to a quantifier is not possible, quantifiers may be pied-piped in the cleft constituent:

- (17) a. \* It's buying EVERY pair of shoes she is.  
b. It's buying every pair of PURPLE shoes she is.

The intonation pattern found in these sentences is identical to that found in Standard English clefts: comma intonation is not possible as (18) shows:

- (18) # It's looking for more land, a lot of them are

Finally, the fact that the preposed constituent conveys new information while the remnant clause contains contextually given information is demonstrated by the following exchanges:

- (19) a. Q. What are the women doing?  
A. It's playing backgammon that they are.  
b. Q. Who is playing backgammon?  
A. # It's playing backgammon that the women are.

The conclusion to be drawn here is that sentences which appear to cleft a VP are indeed clefts; they share the same properties and restrictions as other cleft constructions. They should thus be assigned a similar analysis.

As we saw in Chapter Two, the main competition between analyses of cleft constructions is whether their derivation occurs by Merge or by Move. The former implies base-generation of the cleft constituent, with concomitant operator movement to capture the A'-movement properties. Although the conclusion reached in that chapter is that Move is the preferable account, it is worthwhile revisiting the question here, since these VP-clefts offer a fresh insight into the question. The issue only arises if the existence of a suitable operator can be motivated. In this case, the operator would need to represent VP.

The class of operators is closely identified, at least since Chomsky (1977), with the class of wh-words. It is true that English does possess pro-forms which

correspond to verbal constituents. *So* and *what* in the following represent such elements:<sup>10</sup>

- (20) a. She made nectarine marmalade, and so did I.  
b. What did she do?

In spite of the existence of these pro-forms in Standard English, no grammatical verbal clefts exist in that dialect. Thus the following problem arises: if the ability of a language to form a cleft depends on the existence of a suitable operator, then Standard English, since it has *so* and *what*, should be able to construct clefts parallel to those in Hiberno-English. One way of avoiding this problem would be to restrict the range of suitable operators to solely the class of null operators, which is, in essence, the claim of Chomsky (1977); it would then be possible to stipulate that Hiberno-English possesses such an element, in contrast to the standard language.

Support for such a stipulation would need to be provided. There is, in fact, one claim that operators can be derived in the course of a derivation, rather than being solely selected from the lexicon. In a discussion of predicate clefts in Yoruba and Vata,<sup>11</sup> Dekydtspotter (1995) argues that if a VP is voided of lexical material in the course of the syntactic derivation, it can become an operator. Typical predicate clefts are shown in (21) and (22).

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<sup>10</sup> The fact that English *so* appears to represent a predicate, as in (i-iii), is particularly revealing in the light of the discussion of clefted predicates below.

- i. He is a linguist, and so is his mother.  
ii. She is in Belfast this week, and so is her husband.  
iii. She is clever, and so is her aunt.

The parallel existence, pointed out by Ross (1972), of *so* as a pro-VP could be taken to indicate that it represents the same constituent in both cases. This is not without problems, however, since, as Section 3.5 will show, complete identification of *so* with the predicate examined in this chapter would predict, contrary to fact, that (iv) and (v) should be ungrammatical.

- iv. She enjoyed the meal and so did I.  
v. She saw the meteors, and so did I.

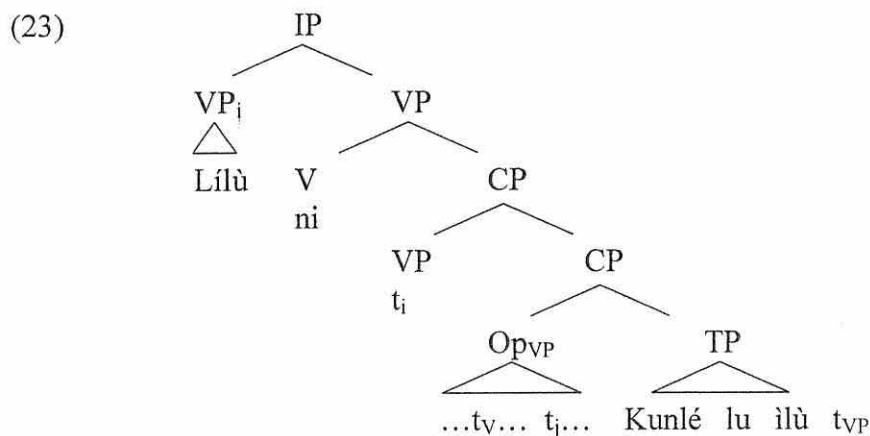
See Anderson (1967) and Ross (1972) for further discussion.

<sup>11</sup> There is a terminological problem here. It is not clear that the term "predicate cleft" can be identified with the clefting of predicates in the Hiberno-English sense. It is clear that the complement of the verb is not preposed together with the verb, unlike, for example (13)c. Neither is it clear from Dekydtspotter's discussion that data such as (21) and (22) have the same pragmatic and discourse features that clefts in the more usual sense of the term do.

- (21)           Lílù     ni Kunlé lu ilù  
               beating be Kunle beat drum  
               *Kunle BEAT the drum*                   (Yoruba; Dekydtspotter 1995, p2)

- (22)           ngOnU     n       ka           bI   ngOnu a?  
               sleep        you     FUT-ASP now sleep Q  
               *Are you going to SLEEP now?*       (Vata; Dekydtspotter 1995, p63)

These languages show overt movement out of VP not only of the subject, but also of the verb and its complement, with the result that by Spell-out VP is empty of lexical material. The tree in (23) illustrates the movements involved: TP contains the subject, verb and object, all of which have moved out of VP. Since VP is now empty, it becomes a operator and moves to Spec/CP, from where it becomes identified with a VP which is base-generated in Spec/IP. Verb movement out of VP in Yoruba is shown in (24), where the verb precedes the adverb; object movement is shown in (25), where the verb and the object both precede the adverb.



- (24)           \* Wón gidigidi dupe l'ówó mi.  
               they really thanked at hand my  
               Wón dupe gidigidi l'ówó mi.  
               they thanked really at hand my  
               *They really thanked me.*

- (25)        \* Ó lu    tinútínú ilù  
               he beat eagerly the drum  
               Ó lu    ilù            tinútínú  
               he beat the drum eagerly  
               *He beat the drum eagerly.*

There are a number of objections that could be raised against this analysis, not least that it crucially depends on Move not consisting of a combination of Copy and Delete, contra Chomsky (1995). In any case, should this be a valid way of constructing an VP-operator, it is completely dependent on the verb and all its arguments vacating VP by Spell-out. The facts with respect to Hiberno-English verb movement mirror exactly those of the standard language: at Spell-out, only the subject has left VP, as demonstrated by the position of the verb and object relative to the adverb in (26).

- (26)    a.        \* They burn often [<sub>VP</sub> turf ] (HiE)  
               b.        They often [<sub>VP</sub> burn turf ] (HiE)

In the absence of a plausible operator, it seems that a movement analysis is indicated for VP-clefts in Hiberno-English as well. But there now arises a question: what precisely is the element which moves in these constructions. For there is evidence, which will be presented in the following section, which indicates that matters are more complicated than they seem.

### 3.5    The Agent/Experiencer distinction and the structure of VP

The discussion of VP-clefts up to this point has perhaps been a little disingenuous, since it is not in fact the case that Hiberno-English permits all VPs to appear in this construction. There is an unexpected asymmetry which arises here. It is possible to construct minimal pairs such as those in (27), where the first member is grammatical but the second is not.

- (27) a. It was [VP drinking his pint ] he was.  
 b. \* It was [VP enjoying his pint] he was.  
 c. It's [VP sending letters to the applicants ] we are.  
 d. \* It's [VP sending up clouds of gas ] the volcano is.  
 e. It was [VP watching the match ] he was.  
 f. \* It was [VP seeing the match ] he was.  
 g. It was [VP listening to Oasis ] he was.  
 h. \* It was [VP hearing Oasis ] he was.

This is a surprising fact. While it might seem tempting to regard this as a semantic phenomenon, it will be demonstrated here that there is a purely syntactic basis to the contrasts in (27). Furthermore, it will emerge that recognising the syntactic motivation of the contrast is a major step towards a unified analysis of Hiberno-English cleft constructions.<sup>12</sup>

The distinction between the grammatical and ungrammatical members of the pairs in (27) is simply stated: if a verb has an Agent subject, then its VP can be grammatically clefted; if not, it cannot. Many speakers of dialects of British English find a similar asymmetry in pseudo-clefts such as the following:

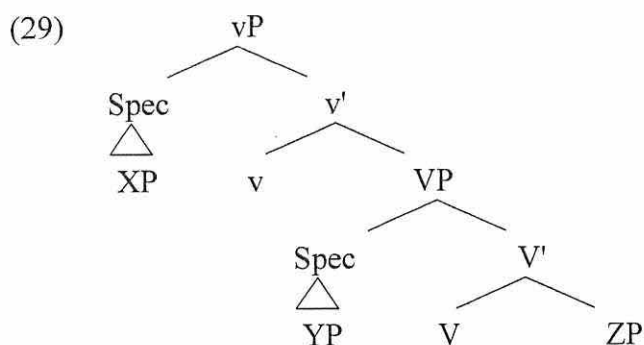
- (28) a. What he did was [VP drink his pint ].  
 b. \* What he did was [VP enjoy his pint ].  
 c. What we're doing is [VP sending letters to the applicants ]  
 d. \* What the volcano is doing is [VP sending up clouds of gas ].  
 e. What he did was [VP watch the match ].  
 f. \* What he did was [VP see the match ].  
 g. What he did was [VP listen to Oasis ].  
 h. \* What he did was [VP hear Oasis ].

---

<sup>12</sup> The distinction in (27) elicited the best spontaneous native speaker judgement that I have ever encountered. One of my informants, after I had asked her for judgements on these contrasts, said "Hmmm - 'It's loving her he was' - that can only mean in a physical sense, not in an emotional one."

If this restriction on Hiberno-English VP-clefts is syntactic rather than semantic in nature, then it must derive from a structural difference between the VPs of the two different classes of verbs. The question that then arises is whether it is possible to identify the difference in question.

For many years, claims have been made in the literature that the entity formerly known as "VP" is internally complex. The evidence for this comes from a number of different directions. First, there is the work of Larson (1988), which sets out to capture the double-object construction in a strictly binary branching syntax. The problem is as follows: if all branching is binary, a verb should have at most one complement, since the V' node which dominates V and complement can have only two branches. Set against this the fact that many verbs, both in English and in other languages, require two complements and the result is a paradox. Ternary branching will accommodate two internal arguments, but will run counter to binary branching (see Kayne 1984). Larson's solution to the paradox is to propose a more complex structure, where VP is "layered"; both of the internal arguments are contained in an inner VP, the Goal argument in the specifier position, the theme argument as the complement of this lower V. This VP is contained within an outer shell which is also categorially verbal; this outer shell projects the Agent subject in its specifier position, in accordance with the VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis of Koopman and Sportiche (1991) and Kitagawa (1986); the complement of the head of this verbal projection is the inner VP, thus yielding the structure shown in (29).

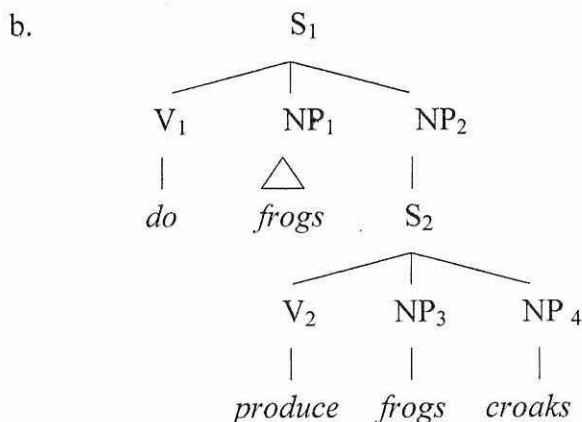


The higher verbal head, v, although of verbal character, is underspecified for meaning. By a process of incorporation (see Baker 1988), the lower verb moves to the higher, and the linear order Agent-Verb-Goal-Theme is derived.

Hale and Keyser (1993) implement the idea of a VP-shell in a slightly different fashion. They observe that a large number of verbs alternate with homophonous nouns, such as *shelve/shelf*, *saddle/saddle*, etc., and suggest that the former are derived from the latter; although they argue that this process does not take place in the syntax proper, it obeys syntactic principles. In a structure resembling a VP-shell, but with a nominal element as the lower head, the lower head (*shelf*, *saddle* and so on) incorporates to the light verb in the higher projection. The subject of the resultant verb is the specifier of the light verb. Chomsky (1995, p331) adopts and generalises the notion of a light verb.

In fact, the notion that Agentive verbs have a rather elaborate structure associated with them is not really new. In a work which is little cited in the more recent VP-shell literature, Ross (1972) proposes the following deep-structure biclausal configuration for Agentive verbs, such as *produce* in (30)a. The structure in (30)b is the input to the obligatory transformation in (31), which he, with deliberate silliness, dubs "Do-Gobbling". The effect of this transformation is to raise the lower verb to replace Agentive *do*. Equi-NP Deletion then deletes the lower subject under identity, and the output is (30)a.

(30) a. Frogs produce croaks.



(Ross 1972, p70, his (1) and (2))

(31) *Do-Gobbling*: X - [s do - NP - [s V - Y ] ] - Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	OBL →
1	4	3	0	5	6	

(Ross 1972, p70, his (3))

This proposal differs from either Larson (1988) or Hale and Keyser (1993) in that it advocates a biclausal structure. However, this difference can be seen as an artefact of the Standard Theory framework in which Ross's analysis is set. In the absence of the notion of a VP-internal subject, the only way in which two subject positions can appear is to have two Ss, so that each can have a subject as its daughter; similarly, in order to accommodate two verbs, two S nodes are required. In its essence, this proposal is identical to that of a VP-shell, and makes the important observation that the higher verb, the light verb in anachronistic terms, is Agentive *do*.<sup>13</sup>

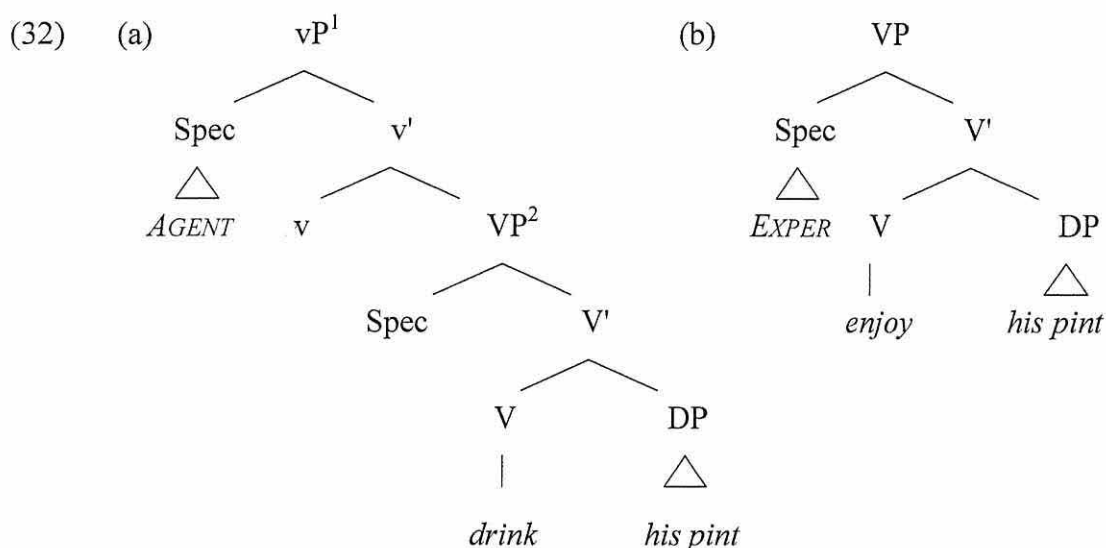
For these reasons, I will adopt here the insight that vP shells are an integral part of the syntax of Agentivity. The head of vP represents the Agentive *do* in English. Furthermore, I will assume that non-Agentive verbs lack this layer. This is not an unmotivated step, since Belletti and Rizzi (1988) propose that the structure of the VP of a psych-verb is different to that of an Agentive verb. The implication here is that the structure of the Agentive verb phrases in (28) is different to that of the Experiencer verbs; recall that only the former can form grammatical VP-clefts. This permits us to address the question of what precisely is being clefted in VP-clefts. In order to capture the distinction between the grammatical Agent clefts in (28) and their ungrammatical Experiencer counterparts in the syntax, a structural difference must obtain between the two. Assuming, as is required by Minimalist considerations and implicit in previous frameworks (see Chomsky (1986b) and Emonds (1976)), that the computational system can operate only on heads or maximal projections, the null hypothesis is that there is a maximal projection in the Agent examples which is susceptible to movement which is not present in Experiencer contexts.

When the possibility is admitted that Agent verbs appear in a vP-shell and Experiencer verbs do not, an explanation of the contrast in (27) becomes possible. Consider the two structures in (32), the verb phrases of Agentive *drink his pint* and Experiencer *enjoy his pint* respectively. There exists a maximal projection, VP<sup>2</sup>, in (32)a which contains the verb and its complement, but not the subject, while no such constituent appears in (32)b.

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<sup>13</sup> I am grateful to Bob Borsley for pointing out the relevance of Ross (1972), and for valuable discussion of the differences between the older and the newer views of clause-structure here.





The conclusion here is that VP-clefts in Hiberno-English involve the lower VP in the Agentive shell; the highest verbal projection cannot be clefted. This has two separate implications; first, that the Agent/Experiencer asymmetry will be observed, as is the case; second, that there is no subject in the clefted constituent in a VP-cleft.

The second of these implication affords us the opportunity to test the validity of the hypothesis. VP-clefting is not the only instance of a verbal constituent appearing in a left-peripheral position. In particular, Huang (1993) discusses a topicalisation process which he calls VP-Fronting, examples of which are given in (33).

- (33) a. I thought he was going to go home, and [go home] he did.  
 b. They thought he would vote according to his conscience,  
 and [vote according to his conscience ] he did.

As the data here indicate, VP-Fronting is different in interpretation to VP-clefting, in that it fronts old information; furthermore, it is found in Standard English and is not restricted to Hiberno-English. Huang notes, following Barss (1986), that when a wh-phrase is moved, it shows full reconstruction effects, in the sense discussed in Chapter One. In other words, an anaphor contained within the moved wh-phrase can be construed, not only with the antecedent that most closely c-commands its trace, but also with any other potential antecedent which intervenes between the trace and the moved wh-phrase in Spec/CP.

- (34) a. Which pictures of himself<sub>i/j</sub> did John<sub>i</sub> think Bill<sub>j</sub> saw *t* ?  
 (Adapted from Huang 1993, p103, his (3b))  
 b. Which friends of each other<sub>i/j</sub> did they<sub>i</sub> say that we<sub>j</sub> should talk to *t*?  
 (Adapted from Huang 1993, p104, his (4b))

However, when a VP is fronted as in (33), its reconstruction possibilities are more restricted. In particular, an anaphor contained in the fronted VP can only be construed with the antecedent which most closely c-commands its trace.

- (35) a. Criticise himself\*<sub>i/j</sub>, John<sub>i</sub> thought Bill<sub>j</sub> would not *t*.  
 (Adapted from Huang 1993, p107, his (16b))  
 b. Talk to friends of each other\*<sub>i/j</sub>, they<sub>i</sub> said we<sub>j</sub> should not *t*.  
 (Adapted from Huang 1993, p107, his (17b))

Huang's explanation of this effect appeals to the VP-internal subject hypothesis. If the constituent which is fronted in (35) contains at least the highest vP shell, then it contains the trace of the subject which has moved out to Spec/IP. Since that trace is contained within the fronted constituent which also contains the anaphor, which it c-commands, it acts as the only possible antecedent. In fact, Huang argues that the fronted constituent is in fact AgroP, which means not only that the trace of the subject within VP is carried along, but that the fronted element is considerably larger than that which may be moving in VP-clefting. This then provides us with a number of tests which can determine the nature of the constituent that does move in Hiberno-English.

If Huang is correct in claiming that VP-Fronting involves a constituent larger than the lowest layer of VP, then it is predicted that there should be no Agent/Experiencer asymmetry detectable when the two are fronted. This is borne out, as (36) indicates. In addition, the grammaticality of (36)b indicates that there is nothing in the Experiencer sentence that rules out fronting in the more general case.

- (36) a. He said that he would drink his pint, and [drink his pint] he (damn well) did.  
 b. He said that he would enjoy his pint, and [enjoy his pint] he (damn well) did.

The second test uses anaphor construal just as Huang (1993) does. The question that arises is whether, when an Agentive VP is clefted, it shows full, ambiguous reconstruction effects. If it does, then that can be taken as evidence that there is no subject trace present in the clefted constituent to protect the anaphor from construal with any other antecedent. If it does not, then, following Huang, the conclusion can be drawn that the trace of the subject is present in the clefted constituent, with the implication that clefting must affect at least vP. The data are as follows:

- (37) a. It was talking to himself<sub>i/j</sub> John<sub>i</sub> thought Bill<sub>j</sub> was *t*.  
 b. It was talking to each other<sub>i/j</sub> we<sub>i</sub> thought they<sub>j</sub> were *t*.

The construal facts are clear. The anaphors in (37) can be construed with either subject, indicating that no subject trace is present in the clefted constituent, in keeping with the hypothesis that the clefting operation involves the lower VP. Further to this, it is possible to construct data which test the reconstruction possibilities of a clefted Experiencer VP. This is admittedly a weaker test, since it involves determining the binding facts of a sentence which is ungrammatical.

- (38) a. \* It was admiring himself<sub>\*i/j</sub> John<sub>i</sub> thought Bill<sub>j</sub> was *t*.  
 b. \* It was enjoying each other<sub>\*i/j</sub>'s company we<sub>i</sub> thought they<sub>j</sub> were *t*.

The binding facts in (38) also seem clear; only the lowest construal is possible, lending support to the conclusion that the sole VP in the Experiencer context is clefted here, together with the trace of the subject.

A final test to determine the extent of the clefted constituent can be devised, relying this time on the familiar fact that when the subject moves from its base position to Spec/IP, its quantifier can be stranded; this is one of the core motivations of the VP-internal subject hypothesis.

- (39) a. [All the children]<sub>i</sub> have *t<sub>i</sub>* watched the film.  
 b. [The children]<sub>i</sub> have [all *t<sub>i</sub>*] watched the film.  
 c. [Both the women]<sub>i</sub> are *t<sub>i</sub>* watching it now.  
 d. [The women]<sub>i</sub> are [both *t<sub>i</sub>*] watching it now.

Since the quantifier in (39)b and (39)d is stranded in Spec/vP, it is in a position higher than the lower VP layer. It is then a question whether it is possible for the stranded quantifier to cleft with the VP, or whether it must remain lower. If the former is the case, then the clefting operation has moved the highest, vP, layer; if the latter, then only the lower VP has been moved.

- (40) a. \* It was [all watching the film] that the children were.  
 b. It was [watching the film] that the children were all.  
 c. \* It was [both watching the film] that the women were.  
 d. It was [watching the film] that the women were both.

Again, the results are quite clear. (40)a simply receives no interpretation; it is possible to assign one to (40)c, but it is not the intended one: the sentence sounds incomplete, a truncated version of *It was both watching the film and eating popcorn the women were*. Admittedly, (40)b and (40)d are a little awkward, but it is likely that this is due to the prosody of the quantifier in clause-final position; see McCloskey (1997) for evidence that a similar prosodic effect is found in West Ulster English quantifier-float under wh-movement.

The facts presented here are of some importance, since they provide direct movement evidence for the reality of the vP/VP distinction, and for the mapping of different  $\theta$ -roles onto subject positions. The conclusion that can be drawn is that the lower VP is separable from the higher, and that the lower VP is not in fact involved in the assignment of Agent to the subject; instead, such assignment is the purview of the light verb, thus lending support to the notion that such assignment must be strictly local.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> An interesting theoretical point arises from this analysis of VP-clefts. Chomsky (2001, p14) appears to rule out extraction of the complement of a functional head, where the projection of that head is a phase; the example he suggests is extraction of NP from within DP (pace Bianchi (1995)). The discussion above has argued that this is exactly what VP-clefting does, in extracting the complement of v, whose projection is not only a phase but a strong phase. In this way, Hiberno-English may supply exactly the experiment that Chomsky (n25) advocates. I leave this open for further research.

### 3.6 The clefting of predicates

It would be easy, but ill-advised, to suggest that Hiberno-English differs from the standard dialect in having a positive value for a parameter [ $\pm$  Cleft VP] - ill-advised for two reasons. The first is that parameters are more abstract than that, and involve abstract features of functional heads; the second is that such a statement would be overly construction-specific in terms of the grammar of the dialect. Parametric differences between languages or dialects are not reflected solely in a single construction type, since the grammar is not configured in terms of construction-type. In examining the dialect specific cleft constructions found in Hiberno-English, one can either enumerate them, as I have done so far here, or one can attempt to unify them as much as possible. If unification is possible, then it is mandatory, since to do otherwise is to give an inaccurate account of the grammar.

It was noted in Section 3.3 above that Hiberno-English has two dialect-specific types of cleft, those which involve predicates such as those in (41), and VP-clefts such as those in (42).<sup>15</sup>

- (41)
- a. It is angry that he was.
  - b. It's right weel you look.
  - c. It's proud and pleased I am to see you home again.
  - g. It's an angel you are to forgive me.
  - h. Is it bitten you are?

---

<sup>15</sup> Some speakers of other dialects of English report that data similar as (41) are close to acceptable if they receive a strong contrastive interpretation such as (i):

i. It's a *syntactician* she is, not a *phonologist*.

Kiss (1998) makes a similar point, and attributes the ungrammaticality of clefted predicates to semantic reason similar to those referred to in Section 2.6 of Chapter Two. While this may be the case for speakers of other dialects, it cannot be the full story for Hiberno-English, since in this dialect clefted predicates such as (41) are fully grammatical in the absence of contrastive focus; such an interpretation does not result in an attenuation of ungrammatical status (see also note 7 of Chapter 1, note 2 of Chapter and the discussion surrounding (131)-(133) of Chapter 2. It is worth pointing out that speakers of other dialects who report this effect do not have similar intuitions about VP-clefts, which remain for them irremediably ungrammatical; if the central claim of this chapter is correct, that clefted predicates and clefted VPs are essentially the same thing, contrastive focus is not a mitigating factor in Hiberno-English.

- (42) a. Is it reading you are?  
 b. It is looking for more land a lot of them are. (Filppula 1986)  
 c. It won't be drinking milk that we'll be tomorrow night.  
 d. It's going home they are.

To state that these two types of clefts are unrelated is to admit that one construction-type shows two distinct unusual patterns which have nothing with each other, an unlikely if not logically impossible situation. But this is to miss an striking fact that emerges from the discussion of VP-clefts in the previous section. It was determined there that the constituent which is clefted in (42) is the lower VP; in other words, a constituent which contains the verb and its complements, but excludes the subject. In short, this VP is a predicate.

A path to unification of the two types of anomalous clefts in Hiberno-English is then potentially available. But in order to motivate this step, further examination of data such as that in (41) is required. The first thing to establish is that the process is not categorially restricted; nominal, adjectival and prepositional predicates should all be equally possible in clefts. This condition is met in Hiberno-English, as (43) - (45) show.

- (43) a. It's a doctor that he is.  
 b. It's biscuits they are.
- (44) a. It's clever he is.  
 b. It's tired that you're looking.
- (45) a. It was in the garden that he was.  
 b. It's in Paris we'll be next week.

Next, it needs to be shown that the reconstruction possibilities of clefted predicates are comparable to those of clefted VPs. If this is not the case, then there is no symmetry between the two types of cleft.

- (46) a. It was [business partners of each other<sub>i/j</sub>] that we<sub>i</sub> thought they<sub>j</sub> were.  
 b. It was [photographs of himself<sub>i</sub>] that John<sub>i</sub> thought Bill<sub>j</sub> said they were.
- (47) a. It was [proud of each other<sub>i/j</sub>] that we<sub>i</sub> knew they<sub>j</sub> were.  
 b. It was [impatient with himself<sub>i/j</sub>] that John<sub>j</sub> thought Bill<sub>j</sub> was.
- (48) a. It was [at loggerheads with each other<sub>i/j</sub>] that we<sub>i</sub> thought that they<sub>j</sub> were.  
 b. It was [in total agreement with himself<sub>i/j</sub>] that John<sub>i</sub> thought Bill<sub>j</sub> was.

(46) - (48) show that full reconstruction ambiguities hold when an anaphor contained in nominal, adjectival and prepositional predicates are clefted. Following the logic in Huang (1993), this indicates that there is no subject trace inside the clefted constituent, and implies that the clefted predicates here should be regarded as exemplifying the same process as that observed in VP-clefting.

Recall that VP-Fronting as Huang describes it gives rise to no ambiguity in reconstruction. In (35), repeated here as (49), the anaphor may only be construed with the subject which most closely c-commands the trace of the displaced constituent.

- (49) a. Criticise himself<sub>\*i/j</sub>, John<sub>i</sub> thought Bill<sub>j</sub> would not *t*.  
 (Adapted from Huang 1993, p107, his (16b))  
 b. Talk to friends of each other<sub>\*i/j</sub>, they<sub>i</sub> said we<sub>j</sub> should not *t*.  
 (Adapted from Huang 1993, p107, his (17b))

The topicalisation process which gives rise to (49) in the standard dialect also affects predicative elements, so that data such as the following are possible.

- (50) a. A victim of himself<sub>\*i/j</sub>, John<sub>i</sub> thinks Bill<sub>j</sub> will never be.  
 b. A victim of himself, I think Bill will never be.  
 c. \* A victim of myself, I think Bill will never be.  
 (Huang 1993, p109, his (23))

The pattern of judgements in (50) confirms that the process which fronts constituents in this construction-type is materially different from that found in VP- and predicate-clefting in Hiberno-English. In fact, the logic of Huang's argumentation indicates that (50) also involves a larger constituent, one which includes the trace of the subject. The contrast between the Hiberno-English data in (46) - (48) on the one hand and (50) on the other confirms that a different type of constituent is implicated in each case.

Having established that the constituent which moves in predicate clefts is rather minimal, it now remains to examine exactly what structure is involved. Before attempting this, however, it should be noted that an analysis which assigns different structures to predication in Hiberno-English and in Standard English is clearly undesirable. If anything should be consistent cross-linguistically, predication should be.

One view of the structure of predication is that it is configured in a small clause (SC), as advocated by Williams (1975), Chomsky (1981), Stowell (1981) and others. A small clause is a constituent which is clause-like in that it contains a subject and a predicate, but which contains no inflectional material.

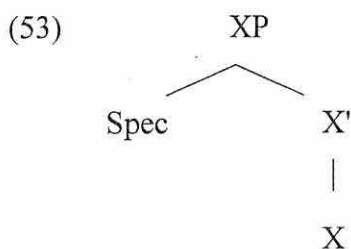


Clauses of the structure in (51) are restricted in their distribution, since they can bear no Tense specification. Proposing a structure such as this allows an account of the data in (52), on the assumption that raising of the subject of the small clause is forced for reasons of Case in (52)c, while Exceptional Case Marking permits it to remain *in situ* in (52)a and (52)b.

- (52)
- a. I consider [Ellie a very good cook]
  - b. I found [Ellie very friendly]
  - c. Ellie<sub>i</sub> seems [t<sub>i</sub> charming ]
  - d. [Ellie in Sligo]? You've got to be joking.

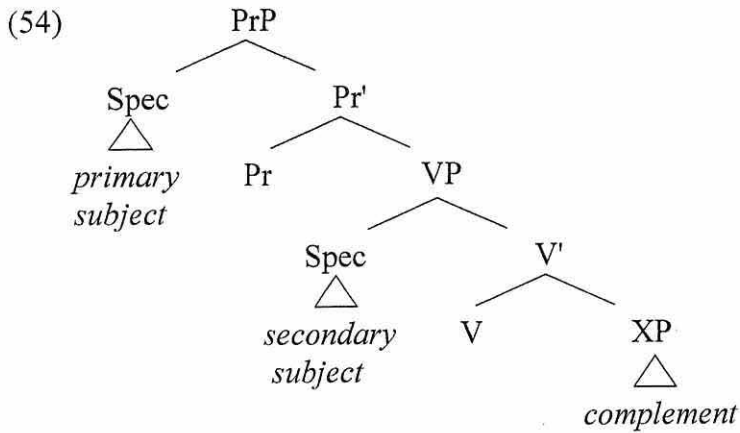


The SC proposal is not without problems, however, since the constituent in (51) is anomalous. It is exocentric, in that it is a phrasal-level constituent with no head of its own. This is problematical for a number of reasons; if there is a separate X'-theoretical phrase-structure component to the grammar, then it cannot be involved in the construction of an SC, and in a Minimalist framework which denies the existence of such a component, relying instead on primitive properties of Merge to build phrases, (51) is not a possible output. When Merge combines two elements, one of them projects and the categorial label of the resultant larger constituent derives from one of the Merged elements. The label of (51) derives from neither of its daughters. In fact, the entire motivation behind proposing an SC would be voided if the label of either daughter projected: if the label of the subject projected, then the larger constituent would have the distribution of a DP, contrary to fact, and if the label of the righthand element projected, the intuition that the bracketed constituents in (52) are similar would be lost.<sup>16</sup> This intuition would also disappear if an X'-structure were to be proposed for small clauses which took them to be a projection of the category of the head of the righthand member, although in placing the subject of predication in a specifier position, the resulting structure would be less anomalous.



A proposal which avoids these problems is found in Bowers (1993), which takes the insight in Larson (1988) that VP is structurally complex and generalises it to all cases of predication. He proposes that the predicative relation should be represented in an endocentric constituent which conforms to the familiar X'-structure, the Pr(edicate)P shown in (54).

<sup>16</sup> But see Moro (1997) for a recent defence of the notion of small clause predication in nominal predicates.



(Adapted from Bowers (1993, p601, his (15))

The notions of primary subject and secondary subject correspond to external argument and direct object respectively. Evidence for the existence of a PrP in clause structure is drawn from an examination of coordination data, including a solution for the long-standing puzzle in (55).

(55) He is [a marathoner ] and [proud of it].

Given that coordination can only link constituents of identical categorial nature - DP and DP, AP and AP, CP and CP and so on - (55) is problematical in that it appear to coordinate an NP predicate and an AP predicate. Bowers points out that if both of the bracketed constituents in (55) are in fact PrPs, then the coordination is after all of like categories. Furthermore, there is direct evidence that English has a lexical item which functions as the head of PrP: the *as* in (56), an observation originally due to Emonds (1985).

(56) They regard John as crazy and as a fool.

(Bowers 1993, p605, his (25a))

This is an extremely attractive proposal for the structure of predication, but there are a number of ways in which it proves inadequate. First of all, the PrP in (54) is, in the sense of Chomsky (1986a), a complete functional complex, (CFC), in that it contains all the arguments, including the subject. In this sense, it can be equated with vP. Since the work of Rothstein (1983), it has been recognised that syntactic

predication requires an open place in the predicate to be filled in the subject. It is this which, for example in Higginbotham (1987), motivates an NP analysis for nominal predication, rather than a DP analysis. In a DP, the D closes off the open place in NP, with the result that DPs cannot be predicates, since there is no position for the subject to be identified with. It is then doubtful whether the constituent labelled as PrP by Bowers (1993) is structurally capable as functioning as a predicate at all, since it itself includes the (primary) subject as its specifier.

In fact, the reconstruction evidence discussed earlier calls into question whether the constituent which is involved in clefting a predicate, of any category, can be identified with PrP. From (54) it is clear that, if PrP is clefted, it will include the trace of the (primary) subject, with the result that clefted predicates should not, contrary to fact, be ambiguous in reconstruction. In addition to this, the formal identity of PrP with the highest verbal shell wrongly implies that there should be no Agent/Experiencer asymmetry in VP-clefting. And recall from the discussion surrounding (40) that there is clear evidence from quantifier-stranding in VP-clefting that the position identified with the trace of the subject within vP is outside the constituent which clefts.

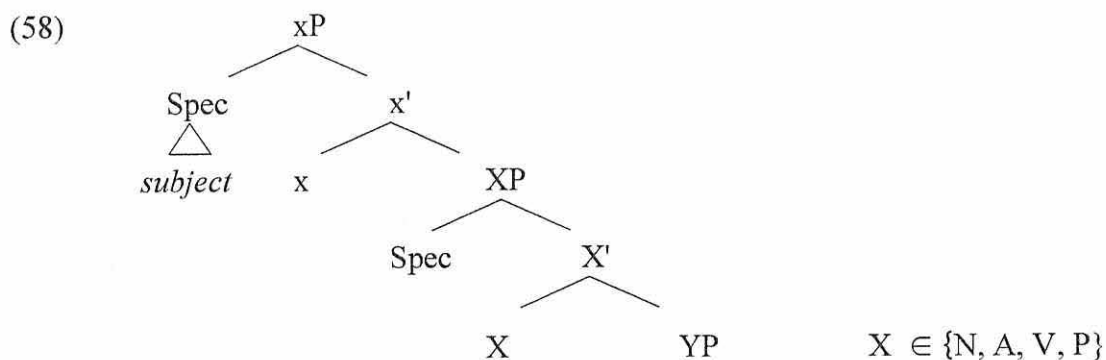
The clear implication of the Hiberno-English data is that there must be a predication constituent which is smaller than the PrP proposed by Bowers (1993). Additional evidence for this conclusion comes from an examination of data such as (57). For speakers of Hiberno-English, both sentences are grammatical; for speakers of Standard English, only the first is possible. Sense can be made of this contrast if the cleft in (57)a, grammatical in Standard English, clefts a larger constituent than the bare predicate; (57)b will be unacceptable in the standard dialect but acceptable in Hiberno-English if only the predicate is involved there. The appearance of *as* in the clefted constituent in (57)a provides evidence that it is not contained within the constituent which is displaced in the Hiberno-English cleft and as such cannot be regarded a part of the predicate.

- (57) a. It was as manager that he seemed happiest.  
 b. It was manager that he seemed happiest as. (\* in StE)

The evidence presented here argues strongly in favour of the existence of a maximal projection which does not include the subject of predication. While it is true

that a small clause with the structure in (51) would provide such a constituent, in the form of the XP which is the rightmost member of the SC, to adopt such a structure for predication would miss an important generalisation. There is no SC present in the Agentive structures discussed in the previous section; on the contrary, the binary branching shell structure of VP captures the relevant distinction rather neatly. To adopt an SC solution to the question of Hiberno-English predicate clefts would then imply that the co-occurrence of VP- and predicate clefts is purely accidental.

In order to preserve the correlation between the two, a compromise is possible between the facts here and Bower's (1993) postulation of PrP. His insight is to suggest that predication is not configured in a completely different manner to normal clause structure. The essential problem with his analysis is to suggest that the functional projection which contains the (primary) subject is in fact the predicate. If this constituent is equated with vP, as was suggested earlier, then the predication can be regarded as involving the following structure.



What the structure in (58) indicates is that, just as VP is dominated by vP, the projection of a light verb, nominal, adjectival and prepositional predicates are dominated by a light noun, adjective and preposition, respectively. (58) then provides a coherent account of both predicate- and VP-clefting in Hiberno-English; both are instantiations of the same process, one which clefts XP in (58).

To conclude this chapter, with respect to the inter-dialectal difference which distinguishes Hiberno-English and Standard English with respect to cleft constructions, it was never to be expected that it would subsist in a structural difference between the two dialects. Such a suggestion would have the extremely undesirable consequence of proposing that two dialects configured so basic a process as predication differently. The structure in (58) allows us to capture the locus of

variation between the two dialects in a manner entirely consistent with the Minimalist assumption that differences between languages result from abstract formal features. Since Hiberno-English cleft constructions have all the interpretative properties found in Standard English clefts, as shown in Section 3.4 above, it is appropriate to assign them the same analysis. In Chapter Two, it was demonstrated that a movement analysis is indicated, and that movement of a cleft constituent occurs in order to check a Focus feature. In short, the difference between Hiberno-English and Standard English lies in the fact that a Focus feature can be borne by XP in (58) in the former dialect, but not in the latter,

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CLEFTS AND PREDICATION IN IRISH

#### 4.1 Introduction

So far, this dissertation has focussed on English data, either from the standard dialect or on non-standard varieties. This chapter is concerned, in contrast, with Modern Irish, a q-Celtic language. It will be demonstrated that a Focus account is appropriate for Irish clefts as well, and that the process of VP-clefting is also found there. However, a stronger claim will be put forward and defended: namely that predicates in Irish routinely move to a Focus position, and that this assumption permits an account of a number of facts about predicative constructions that remain otherwise mysterious. The possible influence of Irish, as the substrate language, on Hiberno-English will be examined.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: first, a general overview of the clause structure of Irish in non-copular clauses is given, to be followed in Section 4.3 by an examination of the cleft construction. Section 4.4 widens the discussion to address the rather distinctive syntax of copular construction and the following section proposes and defends an analysis of copular constructions as clefts. The chapter closes with a consideration of the wider implications of the proposal made here.

#### 4.2. Irish syntax: an overview

Irish is, in tensed clauses, with one exception which will be crucial here, a VSO language. We see none of the alternation between SVO and VSO order which is seen, for example, in Arabic, and which is characterised by Greenberg's sixth generalisation (see Greenberg (1966)). In finite embedded contexts the order is also VSO. The standard analysis of this word order is that both in matrix and embedded contexts, the verb moves out of VP to a position to the left of the subject (see McCloskey (1983), (1996a), (1996b) and Bobaljik and Carnie (1992)). However, VSO is not the only possible order of constituents. As Ó Siadhail (1991) shows, in non-finite clauses the

order of these constituents varies with dialect: in Southern (Munster) dialects the order is SVO, in Northern (Connacht and Ulster), SOV.

- (1) a. Thóg Seán an teach.  
build-past Seán the house-acc.  
*Seán built the house.*
- b. Ba mhaith liom Seán a thógáil an tí.  
Cop.cond. good with-me Seán to build-VN the house-gen.  
*I would like Seán to build the house*
- c. Ba mhaith liom Seán an teach a thógáil.  
Cop.cond. good with-me Seán the house-acc. to build-VN  
*I would like Seán to build the house*
- d. \* Thóg Seán an tí.  
build-past Seán the house-gen.  
*Seán built the house.*

Since the subject appears to the left of the object in the non-finite clauses in (1)b and (1)c, VSO order will arise simply by V-movement past the subject. However, evidence that at least the subject must move out of VP before Spell-out is found in McCloskey (1996b), where it is shown that certain VP-adjoined adverbs follow the subject in contexts such as (2):

- (2) a. Deireann siad i gcónaí paidir roimh am luí.  
say-pres. they always prayer before time lie  
*They always say a prayer before bedtime.*
- b. Chuala Róise go minic roimhe an t-amhrán sin.  
hear-past Róise often before-it the song that  
*Róise has often heard that song before.*

(McCloskey 1996b, p269, his (78) and (79))

Assuming that adverbs such as *i gcónaí* (“always”) and *go minic* (“often”) occupy a position similar to that of French *toujours* and English *often*, then the subject in (2) must have moved out of VP to some higher functional projection.

- (55) a. The coal, I bought.  
 b. \* Every book, I bought.  
 c. \* Nothing, I bought.  
 d. Every book with a RED cover, I bought.  
 e. \* Mary<sub>i</sub>, her<sub>i</sub> little lamb followed down the road.

#### 4.6 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the hypothesis that the clefting of predicates is not an isolated feature of Hiberno-English, but that it is also found in Irish, where it appears in two guises: first, in the clefting of predicates for focal effect, and secondly, in licensing the predication relation itself in copular clauses, a claim that receives additional support from an examination of Welsh. The reconstruction facts in both languages lead to the conclusion that the predicate in both moves to an A'-position with all the properties associated with that targeted by cleft displacement.

While the mechanisms that allow grammatical features of a substrate language to appear in a dialect of the superstrate are, now at least, poorly understood, it is possible to hypothesise about the conditions that could lead to such transfer. That such transfer has occurred is most strongly indicated both by Hiberno-English and Welsh English, which both evince the predicate-clefting which is ungrammatical in Standard English. Since assignment of the Focus feature to predicates has stubbornly persisted from these Celtic languages to their daughter Celtic Englishes, it is then probable that only a single feature is involved, since one is more likely to have survived than a conspiracy of several. For how long that feature has survived must at present be conjecture, but it is at least possible that it is many centuries.



Although it moves out of VP, the verb does not move to C. The first piece of evidence to show this is the fact that in tensed embedded clauses, C is always filled, by one of a variety of elements.

- (3) a. Deir sé **go** dtógfaidh sé an peann.  
 say-pres. he comp take-fut. he the pen  
*He says that he will take the pen.*
- b. **An** dtuigeann tú?  
 interr. understand-pres. you  
*Do you understand?*
- c. **An** bhfuil fhios agat **an** dtuigeann sé.  
 interr-pres be-pres knowledge at-2sg comp-interr understand-pres he  
*Do you know if he understands?*

In other words, even in those circumstances, such as question formation, where English allows I-to-C movement and where other languages have V-to-I-to-C, the verb remains distinct from and lower than the complementiser, and VSO order still obtains. Further evidence to the effect that V-movement does not target C is to be found in McCloskey (1996a), where the claim that the verb must remain in IP is argued at length on the basis of adjunction facts.

The particles which are shown in (3) are members of a much wider set of C-elements. These are given in (4); the data in (5) and (6) (adapted from The Christian Brothers (1993, p131-2)) exemplify their use.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The data in (6) indicate that at least at Spell-out, negation in Irish is in CP. See Duffield (1995) who claims that negation raises to C, and Cottell (1995) which argues that it is generated there.

(4) AFFIRMATIVE

<i>Non-past</i>	<i>Past</i>	
go	gur	Default complementiser
a	a	Direct relative particle (with gaps) (lenites following consonant)
a	ar	Indirect relative particle (with resumptive pronouns) (nasalises following consonant)
an	ar	Interrogative particle
cá	cár	Interrogative of place
sula	sular	Subordinator of time/purpose

NEGATIVE

nach	nár	Negative complementiser
mura	murar	Conditional negative subordinator

- (5) a. i. Deir sé go dtógfaidh sé an peann.  
say-pres. he comp take-fut. he the pen  
*He says that he will take the pen.*
- ii. Deir sé gur thóg sé an peann  
say-pres. he comp-past take-past he the pen  
*He said that he took the pen.*
- b. i. An dtuigeann tú?  
interr. understand-pres. you  
*Do you understand?*
- ii. Ar éirigh sé?  
interr.-past rise-past he  
*Did he rise?*
- c. i. Cá n-imíonn sé gach lá?  
where go-pres. he every day  
*Where does he go every day?*
- ii. Cár imigh tú inné?  
where-past go-past you yesterday  
*Where did you go yesterday?*

d. i. Rith        leat        sula    bhfeicfear        tú.  
 run-imper. with-you before see-fut-impersonal you  
*Run along with you before you are seen.*

ii. D'éag    sé sular        tháinig    an sagart.  
 die-past he before-past come-past the priest.  
*He died before the priest arrived.*

(6) a. i. Sílim            nach        dtuigeann        Bríd    an Gaeilge.  
 think-pres-1sg. comp-neg. understand-pres Bridget the Irish  
*I think that Bridget does not understand Irish.*

ii. Sílim            nár            thuig            Bríd    an Gaeilge.  
 think-pres-1sg. comp-neg.-past understand-past Bridget the Irish.  
*I think that Bridget did not understand Irish.*

b. i. Mura bhfanfaidh sé, go    bhfóire        Día air.  
 if-neg wait-fut. he comp protect-subjunc God on-him  
*If he will not wait, may God protect him.*

ii. Murar shiúil sé, caithfidh gur        rith        sé.  
 if-neg-past walk-past he must comp-past run-past he  
*If he did not walk, he must have run.*

Omitted from the examples in (5) are the two relative particles, since they deserve special mention. As can be seen in (4), they are distinguished by the lenition effect that they have on a following consonant, and the indirect particle is also differentiated by showing a past tense form, unlike its direct counterpart.<sup>2</sup> Direct relative particles are found in A'-movement contexts where the A'-dependency terminates in a gap, as shown in (7). As McCloskey (1979) shows, in such an unbounded dependency, *aL* appears in each C transitted by wh-movement; this constitutes strong morphological evidence for successive-cyclic wh-movement.

<sup>2</sup> The convention that has been adopted since McCloskey (1979) is to represent direct, leniting *a* as *aL* and indirect, nasalising *a* as *aN*. The uppercase *N* and *L* are merely shorthand for the mutation effect. The two do not themselves differ in pronunciation.

- (7) a. an t-éan a chionn an garsún  
 the bird comp-L see the boy  
*the boy that sees the bird/the bird that sees the bird*  
 (Compare: *Cíonn an garsún an t-éan/Cíonn an t-éan an garsún.*)  
 (Adapted from Dillon and Ó Cróinín 1961, p147)
- b. an rud a shíl mé a dhéanfainn  
 the thing comp-L think-past I comp-L do-cond  
*the thing that I thought that I'd do*  
 (Adapted from McCloskey 1990, p217, his (48))

The indirect relative particle, on the other hand, nasalises a following consonant, and its distribution is rather different. It too appears in A'-contexts, but its appearance in the CP immediately beneath the head of the dependency signals the presence of a resumptive pronoun at the foot of the A'-chain. Whereas all CPs transitted by movement feature *aL*, the typical distribution of *aN* is that it appears at the highest CP, other CPs containing the default complementiser *go*.<sup>3</sup>

- (8) an rud ar dhúirt sé go gcoinneodh sé ceilte í  
 the thing comp-N say-past he that keep-cond he hidden it  
*the thing that he said that he would keep (it) hidden*  
 (Adapted from McCloskey 1990, p218, his (49a))

Thus Irish has the means to overtly distinguish different types of A'-dependency.<sup>4</sup>

Resumptive pronouns in Irish appear in all the construction-types identified by Chomsky (1977) as involving A'-movement (with one important exception, as we will see below); they are found in restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses, constituent questions, comparative, equative and purpose clauses, infinitival relatives and tough-movement constructions. They can take a number of forms, as discrete

<sup>3</sup> McCloskey (1979, 1990, to appear) also discusses some extremely marked alternatives to this pattern.

<sup>4</sup> I will assume, with McCloskey (1979, 1990) that the two relative particles occupy similar positions in the structure. This is not an uncontested fact; Duffield (1995) argues that while *aN* is in C, *aL* is generated in T. The structural positions of these elements is in fact largely irrelevant to the analysis of clefts in this chapter.

pronouns ((9)a-b), as agreement on inflected prepositions ((9)c-f), or as possessive pronouns ((9)g).<sup>5</sup>

- (9) a. daoine nár shroich an tsibhialtacht fós iad  
 people comp-neg-past reach-past the civilisation yet them  
*people whom civilisation has not yet reached*
- b. Tháinig an saighdiúir eile, nach bhfaca mé roimhe é,  
 come-past the soldier other comp-neg saw I before him  
 aníos chugainn.  
 up to-1-pl  
*The other soldier, whom I hadn't seem before, came up to us.*
- c. D'inis siad cén turas a raibh siad air.  
 tell-past they what journey comp be-past they on-3-sg-masc  
*They told what journey they were on.*
- d. Tháinig níos mó daoine ná a raibh súil leo.  
 come-past more people than comp be-past expectation with-3-pl  
*More people came than were expected.*
- e. Bhí Risteard doiligh cur suas leis.  
 be-past Richard difficult put-[-fin] up with-3-sg-masc  
*Richard was difficult to put up with.*
- f. Bhí mórán aige le smaoineamh air.  
 be-past a lot at-3-sg-masc to think-[-fin] on-3-sg-masc  
*He had a lot to think about.*
- g. an ghirseach a bhfuil a máthair breoite  
 the girl comp be-pres her mother sick  
*the girl whose mother is sick*

(Adapted from McCloskey 1990, p238-9,  
 his (96a), (97a), (98a), (100a), (101a), (103a))

<sup>5</sup> Many of the following facts will be familiar from the brief discussion of Irish resumptives in Chapter 2, Section 2.5; since they have a direct bearing on what follows, they are revisited at greater length here.

Resumptives in Irish are in free variation with gaps, with one important proviso. As we saw with Ghanaian English, where the dependency violates locality, the resumptive is the only grammatical option, as demonstrated in (10) and (11).<sup>6</sup>

- (10) a. \* bean nach bhfuil fhios agam  
 woman comp-neg-nonpast be-pres knowledge at-1-sg  
 an phósfadh duine ar bith  
 comp-interr-nonpast marry-cond. person any  
*a woman that I don't know whether anyone would marry*
- b. bean nach bhfuil fhios agam  
 woman comp-neg be-pres knowledge at-1-sg  
 an bpósfadh duine ar bith í  
 comp-interr-nonpast marry-cond. person any her  
*a woman that I don't know whether anyone would marry (her)*
- c. \* fear nach bhfuil fhios agam  
 man comp-neg-nonpast be-pres knowledge at-1-sg  
 cén cineál mná a phósfadh  
 which kind woman-gen marry-cond.  
*a man that I don't know what kind of woman would marry*
- d. fear nach bhfuil fhios agam cén cineál  
 man comp-neg-nonpast be-pres knowledge at-1-sg which kind  
 mná a bpósfadh é  
 woman-gen comp marry-cond. him  
*a man that I don't know what kind of woman would marry (him)*

(Adapted from McCloskey 1979, pp32-3,  
 his (86, (87), (90), (91))

<sup>6</sup> The fact that in Irish and Ghanaian English the gap is in free variation with the resumptive is a potential problem for a last resort analysis such as that advocated by Shlonsky (1992), since the last resort strategy should only be invoked when the non-resumptive strategy is impossible.

- (11) a. Sin teanga a mbeadh meas agam  
 that-is language comp be-cond respect at-1-sg  
 ar duine ar bith a tá ábalta í a labhairt.  
 on person any comp be-pres able her to speak  
*That is a language that I would respect anyone who could speak (it).*
- b. Sin madadh nach bhfaca mé ariamh asal a bheadh  
 that-is dog comp-neg see-past I ever donkey comp be-cond  
 chomh mór leis.  
 as big with-3.sg.masc  
*That is a dog that I never saw a donkey that was as big as (it).*
- c. amharc ailleachta ... nach bhfaca mé mórán riamh  
 sight beauty-gen comp-neg see-past I much ever  
 a bhéarfadh bua air  
 comp take-cond victory on-3.sg.masc  
*a sight of beauty that I have never seen much that would surpass it*  
 (Adapted from McCloskey 1979, p34, his (95), (96), (98))

It was noted earlier with respect to Ghanaian English that a straightforward account of the alternation between gap and pronoun follows from the existence in the grammar of both Merge and Move. On this assumption the presence of a gap or of a resumptive can be regarded as a diagnostic of one procedure over the other.

#### 4.3 Cleft constructions in Irish

The structure of a cleft in Irish is given schematically in (12). Examples are given in (13), taken from Stenson (1981, p99). In each case, a constituent corresponding to a gap in the remnant clause is fronted to a position after the copular particle *is*. The fact that the clefted constituent has moved out of IP is indicated by the fact that in each case it precedes *aL*. Since this particle is a complementiser, a constituent to its left must have left IP.

(12) copula - XP - comp - IP

- (13) a. Is [DP airgead ] a tá ag teastáil uaim.  
cop-pres money comp be at lack-VN from-1-sg  
*It's money that I lack.*
- b. Is [DP mise ] a cheannóidh na deochannaí.  
cop-pres me-emph. comp buy-fut. the drinks  
*It's me that's buying the drinks.*
- c. Is í [DP mo dheirfiúr ] a chonaíonn i Sasana.  
cop-pres aug my sister comp live in England.  
*It's my sister that lives in England.*
- d. Is [PP ar an mbóthar ] a bhuailfidh mé leat.  
cop-pres on the road comp meet-fut I with-2sg  
*It's on the road that I'll meet you.*

(Adapted from Stenson 1981, p99, her (17a,b,c,d))

The element glossed as "aug" in (13) is known in traditional grammars as the pronominal augment. It takes the form of a pronoun, and appears when a non-pronominal definite DP is clefted. It is tempting to assume that it is an syntactic agreement-marker, but this will not explain the augment shows not syntactic, but semantic agreement. In common with many languages where sex and gender do not coincide, there are a number of nouns which are grammatically masculine but semantically feminine, or *vice versa*. For example, *cailín*, which means "girl", is masculine, and *stail*, "stallion" is feminine. If the augment were a marker of syntactic agreement, it would be expected to show agreement with gender rather than sex, but this is not the case.

- (14) a. Is í an cailín a chonaic mé.  
cop-pres aug-fem the girl-masc comp see-past 1sg-nom  
*It's the girl that I saw.*
- b. Is é an stail a chonaic mé.  
cop-pres aug-masc the stallion comp see-past 1sg-nom  
*It's the stallion that I saw.*



For this reason, and because of its distribution with definite NPs, I will regard it as a specificity marker rather than a reflex of syntactic agreement.<sup>7</sup>

A greater range of elements can be clefted in Irish than in Standard English; having examined Hiberno-English clefts in the last chapter, it comes as no surprise that data such as (15)b and (15)c are grammatical.

- (15) a. Is [ADVP inné] a tháinig siad.  
 cop-pres yesterday comp come-past they  
*It's yesterday that they came.*
- b. Is [VP ag déanamh a chuid ceachtannaí] a tá Tadhg.  
 cop-pres prog do-VN his portion lessons comp be Tadhg.  
*It's doing his lessons that Tadhg is.*
- c. Níl sé tinn; is [AP caochta] a tá sé.  
 neg-be-pres he sick; cop-pres drunk comp be-pres he  
*He's not sick; it's drunk he is.*

(Adapted from Stenson 1981, p99, her (17e,g,h))

The data in (13) and (15) all involve the direct relative particle, *aL*. This is to be expected, since each of these clefts involves a gap. It would then be expected that alongside these data, there should exist a corresponding set of clefts which feature a resumptive pronoun and the indirect relative particle. This is not the case. As McCloskey (1979) points out, it is not possible to have a resumptive pronoun in a

<sup>7</sup> Since the main thrust of this chapter is the clefting of predicates, I set aside here the identificational use of the copula, such as that in (i):

- i. Is é Seán an dochtúir  
 cop aug Seán the doctor  
*Seán is the doctor.*

An account of such clauses would make mandatory a full treatment of the pronominal augment, since it is obligatory there. The fact that both terms of identificational clauses are arguments makes the determination of their base order no easy task, but it is at least possible that movement is involved there too. Doherty (1996) gives the following example from a written source, in which the first of the two DPs is quantified:

- ii. Ba é gach duine ...lena raibh sé ag caint an crann fige  
 cop-past aug every person with-that be-past 3sg-nom prog talk the tree fig  
*Everyone he was talking to was the fig tree.* (Doherty 1996, p35, his (79))

From this it seems that the first of the DPs cannot be moved by the same process which is described in the text; however, David Adger (p.c.) has informed me that this order is dispreferred in Scots Gaelic, and native speakers of Irish are unsure about its grammaticality.

cleft construction.<sup>8</sup> This is illustrated in (16): while the relative clauses in (16)a and (16)b are both well-formed, (16)c is the only grammatical cleft. (16)d, with a resumptive, is ungrammatical, although it contains exactly the same string as (16)b.<sup>9</sup>

- (16) a. an fear a chonaic mé i mBaile Átha Cliath inné.  
the man comp see-past I in Dublin yesterday
- b. an fear a bhfaca mé i mBaile Átha Cliath inné é  
the man comp see-past I in Dublin yesterday him  
*the man that I met (him) in Dublin yesterday*
- c. Is é an fear a chonaic mé i mBaile Átha Cliath inné  
cop-pres aug. the man comp see-past I in Dublin yesterday
- d. \* Is é an fear a bhfaca mé i mBaile Átha Cliath  
cop-pres aug. the man comp see-past I in Dublin  
inné é.  
yesterday him  
*It is the man that I met (\*him) in Dublin yesterday.*

Furthermore, a resumptive cannot appear in a cleft construction even as a last-resort strategy to rescue a locality violation.

<sup>8</sup> McCloskey (1979) makes the statement discussed in the text; in McCloskey (1990), it is claimed that resumptive pronouns in cleft constructions are in fact grammatical, and the following examples from written sources are given:

- i. Is tú a bhfuil an deallramh maith ort *pro*  
cop-pres you comp is the appearance good on-2sg  
*It's you that looks well.*
- ii. Tig beag caol a mhaireamar ann *pro*  
house little narrow comp live-past-1pl in-3sg-masc  
*It was a little narrow house that we lived in.*
- iii. Siobhán a bhfuil buaite aici *pro*  
Siobhán comp is won by-3sg-fem  
*It is Siobhán that has been won by her.*  
(Lit.: *It is Siobhán that has been won by her.*) (McCloskey 1990, p239, his (99))

I have, however, been unable to find a native speaker who accepts these, and traditional grammars rule them out (see also Mac Cana 1985). For these reasons I will assume that the generalisation in the text is correct.

<sup>9</sup> The alternation between *chonaic* and *bhfaca* in (16) reflects the difference between the two relative strategies. While the indirect relative particle *aN* typically shows an alternation for past/non-past (see (4) and (5) above), there are six verbs with which this alternation fails to appear (*abair* "say", *faigh* "get", *feic* "see", *teigh* "go", *dean* "make" and *bí* "be"). These have suppletive past tense forms which themselves distinguish direct and indirect relatives.

- (17) a. \* Is é Seán a bhfuil a mhathair tinn.  
 cop-pres. aug. Seán be-pres his mother sick  
*It's Sean whose mother is sick.*
- b. \* Is í Siobhán a fuair mé amach cé a bhí  
 cop-pres aug. Siobhán comp find-past I out who comp be-past  
 ag labhairt lei.  
 at speak to-3-sg-fem  
*It is Siobhán that I found out who was speaking to (her).*

Like the resumptive data from Ghanaian English in Chapter Two, these data have considerable consequences for the derivation of cleft constructions in Irish. Yet again, it appears that Move is the operation which forms clefts, even when an alternative way of forming A'-dependencies exists in the language. In fact, the other properties of Focus constructions which were enumerated in Chapter Two are also found in Irish. That is to say, only one constituent may be clefted, so uniqueness holds. Neither is it possible to combine wh-move out of a cleft. As for clefting quantifiers, the clefts in (18) are as bad as their English counterparts, although identical strings are quite grammatical as relative clauses in (18)c and (18)d. On the other hand, native speakers do not detect a weak crossover violation in (19).

- (18) a. \* Ba gach duine a cheannaigh an leabhar  
 cop-past every person comp buy-past the book  
 \* *It was everyone that bought the book*
- b. \* Is gach leabhar a cheannaigh Seán.  
 cop-pres every book comp buy-past Seán  
 \* *It's every book that Seán bought*
- c. gach duine a cheannaigh an leabhar  
 everyone comp buy-past the book  
*everyone who bought the book*
- d. gach leabhar a cheannaigh Seán  
 every book comp bought Seán  
*every book that Seán bought*

- (19) Is        é    Seán<sub>i</sub> a        chonaic a<sub>i</sub> mhathair  
           cop-pres aug Seán comp saw        his mother  
           *It was Seán that his mother saw*

There are a number of possible reasons for the absence of the WCO effect. First, it may be truly absent. On the other hand, WCO judgements in English are notoriously hazy, perhaps because there is a readily available grammatical parse with disjoint indexing. This is true of Irish as well, and a further factor may intervene here as well. Since Irish is a VSO language, (19) is also string-ambiguous between a reading where Sean's mother saw him, and one where Seán saw his mother. Since there are two different possibilities for the indexing here, data like this are multiply ambiguous. Since the balance of the evidence is that Irish clefts pattern like the Focus constructions in Chapter Two, there is grounds for assuming a common analysis.

Having established that a movement analysis is plausible for Irish too, the next issue concerns the clefts in (15). The translations of (15)a and (15)b closely resemble the Hiberno-English clefts in Chapter Three, but close resemblance in translation is not grounds for assuming that the analysis can be carried over. Discussion of the predicative example in (15)c will be postponed for the moment; let us focus instead on the verbal cleft in (15)b, repeated below as (20).

The verb in the clefted constituent of (20) is clearly Agentive; the constituent which is clefted includes not only V but also its complement. The similarity to Hiberno-English VP clefting is obvious. But a problem arises here. The contrast that was found with psych-verbs such as *enjoy*, *admire* and so on does not exist in Irish (or in Celtic more generally). This is not because there is no contrast, but because the language simply lacks this type of verb. (21) shows the type of periphrastic constructions that the language uses instead.

- (20) Is        [vp ag déanamh a chuid ceachtannaí ] a        tá Tadhg.  
           cop-pres prog do-VN his portion lessons        comp be Tadhg.  
           *It's doing his lessons that Tadhg is.*

(21)	ADMIRE	Tá meas agam ar X be respect at-me on X Breathnaím le haoibhneas ar X look-1sg-pres with delight on X
	BE ANGRY AT	Tá fearg ar X be anger on X (tagann fearg ar X = to become angry) comes anger on X
	APPRECIATE	tuigim X go maith understand-1sg-pres X well faighim blas ar X get-1sg-pres taste on X measaim X go cóir judge/consider-1sg-pres X proper/decent
	DESPISE	Is beag orm X cop small on-me X tá droch-mheas agam ar X be bad-respect at-me on X caithim drochmheas ar X expend-1sg-pres disrespect on X
	DETEST	is fuath liom X cop hatred with-me X tá an dearg-ghráin agam ar X be the red-hatred at-me on X
	ENJOY	bainim só/taithneamh/aoibhneas as X take-1sg-pres enjoyment/liking/delight from X
	FEAR	tá eagla/faitíos/scanradh orm roimh X be fear/apprehension/fright on-me before X

LIKE	taithníonn	X	liom	
	please-3sg-pres	X	with-me	
	is maith	liom	X	
	cop good	with-me	X	
	tá cion	agam	ar X	
	be affection	at-me	on X	
LOVE	tugaim cion	do X		
	give-1sg-pres	affection to	X	
	tá cion	agam	ar X	
	be affection	at-me	on X	
	tá mé ceanúil	ar X		
	be I affectionate	on X		(of a person)
	Is breá	liom	X	
	cop fine	with-me	X	(of a place)
RESENT	Is olc	liom	X;	
	cop evil	with-me	X	
	cuireann	X	colg/olc orm	
	put-3sg-pres	X	swordpoint/evil on me	
RESPECT	Tá meas	agam	ar X	
	be respect	at-me	on X	
	tá urraim/ómós	agam	do X	
	be esteem/reverence	at-me	to X	

However, the absence of this class of verbs does not mean that it is impossible to test whether or not there is an Agentivity effect in VP clefts in Irish. Recall from Chapter Three that this effect also showed up in contexts such as (22).

- (22) a. It was [<sub>VP</sub> watching the match ] he was.  
 b. \* It was [<sub>VP</sub> seeing the match ] he was.  
 c. It was [<sub>VP</sub> listening to Oasis ] he was.  
 d. \* It was [<sub>VP</sub> hearing Oasis ] he was.

In the same way, it is possible to test whether there is a difference between VP headed by *éist le* ("listen to") and *clois* ("hear"); the former has a Agent subject while the latter does not.

- (23) a. Is ag éisteacht leis an ceol atá na leanaí.  
 cop-pres prog. listen-VN to the music comp.be-pres the children  
*It's listening to the music that the children are.*  
 b. \* Is ag cloisteáil an ceol atá na leanaí.  
 cop-pres prog. hear-VN the music comp.be-pres the children  
 \* *It's hearing the music that the children are.*

(23) indicates that the same contrast holds in Irish as in Hiberno-English. This fact indicates that both languages cleft the same VP constituent.<sup>10</sup> In short, both Irish and Hiberno-English cleft verbal predicates.

As for non-verbal predicates, we have already seen that the adjectival complement of *bí* ("be") can be clefted. This then indicates that it is possible to cleft an adjectival predicate in Irish.

- (24) Níl sé tinn; is [<sub>AP</sub> caochta ] a tá sé.  
 neg-be-pres he sick; cop-pres drunk comp be-pres he  
*He's not sick; it's drunk he is.*

<sup>10</sup> Since the constituent which clefts in Irish VP-clefts includes the progressive particle *ag*, it might be argued that the constituent which clefts is an aspectual one. Indeed, Hiberno-English VP-clefts are also progressive. But it cannot be the case that the distinguishing factor between the two classes of verbs is aspectual, since both in Hiberno-English and in Irish the non-Agentive verbs can also form progressives (*They are hearing music/tá siad ag cloisteáil ceol*). But see Guilfoyle (1995) for a proposal that Irish has an aspectual phrase internal to VP.

However, it is possible to make a much stronger claim for Irish than this. In the following section, I will argue that the A'-movement of predicates is a much more pervasive process than it might seem.

#### 4.4 Predicative constructions in Irish

Irish has two mutually exclusive ways of expressing predication. The first is by using *bí*, known traditionally as the substantive verb. Unsurprisingly from a cross-linguistic perspective, the paradigms of this verb are highly suppletive. Its syntax resembles that of other Irish verbs in that it precedes the subject in tensed clauses (as shown in (26)a, b, c, d, e), shows the usual range of tense, mood, agreement and non-finiteness as other verbs (3(26)a, b, c, f) and remains separate from C-material ((26)e). It is used as an auxiliary with the verbal noun (which is preceded by the progressive marker *ag*) in ((26)b), and with the past participle in ((26)c), and, most importantly here, is used to express mainly stage-level predication in the sense of Carlson (1977) (see The Christian Brothers (1993), Doherty (1996) and Stenson (1981)). These properties are summarised in (25).

(25) *The substantive verb Bí:*

- a. appears with VSX order;
- b. shows the same range of tense, mood and agreement as other verbs;
- c. remains discrete from C-material (complementisers, question-markers, negation);
- d. is used with the verbal noun as an auxiliary;
- e. is used to express stage-level predication.

- (26) a. Beidh Seán ina dhochtúir an bhliain seo chugainn.  
           be-fut Seán in-his doctor next year  
           *Seán will be a doctor next year.*
- b. Tá Seán ag dúnadh an dorais.  
       be-pres Seán prog. close-VN the door  
       *Seán is closing the door.*



- c. Bhí an doras dúnta.  
be-past the door closed  
*The door was closed.*
- d. Ní raibh sí ag caint.  
Neg be-past she prog speak-VN  
*She wasn't speaking.*
- e. Ceapann Seán go bhfuil Máire ag scríobh.  
think-pres Seán comp be-pres Máire prog write-VN  
*Seán thinks that Máire is writing.*
- f. Ba mhaith liom Seán a bheith ina dhochtúir.  
Cop-past good with-me Seán to be in-his doctor.  
*I would like Seán to be a doctor.*

In expressing stage-level predication, *bí* resembles *estar* in Spanish.<sup>11</sup> I take these properties to indicate that *bí* is a verb, and that the same processes derive verb-initial order here as in (1).

The other way of expressing predication is by means of what is described by traditional grammarians as the copula, a practice which I will follow here. Its properties diverge rather sharply from those of *bí*. In predication copular clauses the predicate must precede the subject as shown in (28), which appears to have accusative rather than nominative case ((28)b). The copular particle never shows agreement either with the subject or the predicate. Its tense properties are defective, in that it has only present and past tense forms, *is* as in (28)a and *ba* as in (28)b (although the past

<sup>11</sup> Milsark (1977) and Diesing (1992) show that there is a stage/individual level distinction at work in the English existential construction. Expletive-replacement is obligatory with individual level predicates like *altruistic*, but optional with stage-level predicates such as *available*:

- i. There are firemen available.
- ii. \* There are firemen altruistic.
- iii. Firemen are available.
- iv. Firemen are altruistic.

Diesing (1992) argues from this asymmetry that the two different types of predicates generate their subjects in different positions: in Spec/IP for individual-level and in Spec/VP for stage-level. Since verbs in Irish precede subjects and do not move to C, the subject of an Irish tensed clause cannot appear in the specifier of the highest inflectional projection; thus it appears that Diesing's proposal does not carry over to Irish, although it does follow from the structure for copular clauses advocated by Doherty (1996). Additional evidence to the effect that there is no direct mapping from predicate-type to phrase-structural subject position comes from the fact that some individual-level predicates, such as *cliste* 'clever', appear with the substantive verb rather than the copula:

- v. Tá sí cliste.
- vi. \* Is cliste í.

may be interpreted as a conditional). In interrogative, negative or embedded contexts, it forms a complex unit with C-features such as complementisers and negative and interrogative markers as indicated in ((28)c, d, e). It has no non-finite form. The predicates which appear with it are exclusively individual-level, mainly (and productively) nominal, although a lexically restricted number of prepositional and adjectival predicates also appear (see The Christian Brothers (1993), Doherty (1996) and Stenson (1981).<sup>12</sup> But while it is not difficult to construct clefts with a stage-level reading such as (28)g, only the copula is used in forming clefts, to the complete exclusion of *bí*.

(27) *The copula IS/BA:*

- a. shows obligatory predicate-subject order in predicational copular clauses;
- b. has an “accusative” subject;
- c. shows no agreement;
- d. exhibits defective tense-marking (*is* = present;  
*ba* = past/conditional);
- e. coalesces completely with C-material (complementisers, question-markers, negation, etc);
- f. has no non-finite form
- g. is used to express individual-level predication;
- h. is used in forming clefts (to the complete exclusion of *bí*).

- (28) a. Is            dochtúir Seán.  
              cop-pres   doctor   Seán  
              *Seán is a doctor.*
- b. Ba            dhochtúir é  
              cop-past   doctor   him  
              *Seán was a doctor.*

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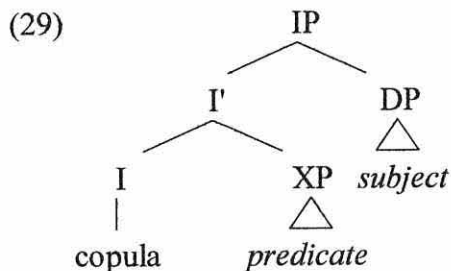
<sup>12</sup>As Doherty (1996) notes, a small number of individual-level predicate, among them *cliste* (“clever”) appear with the substantive verb rather than with the copula. This can be taken to result from a trend which, as Ó Siadhail (1983) implies, has been going on since the Old Irish period whereby the substantive verb is gaining over the copula.

- c.      Dúirt      Seán gur                      dhochtúir Máire.  
          say-past   Seán comp.-cop.-past   doctor      Máire  
          *Seán said that Máire was a doctor.*
- d.      Ní                      dhochtúir Seán.  
          neg.- cop.-pres   doctor      Seán  
          *Seán is not a doctor.*
- e.      An                      dochtúir Seán?  
          interr.-cop.-pres   doctor      Seán  
          *Is Seán a doctor?*
- f.      Dúirt      Máire nach                      dhochtúir Seán.  
          say-past   Máire comp.-neg.-cop.-past   doctor      Seán  
          *Máire said that Seán was not a doctor.*
- g.      Is              airgead a      tá              ag      teastáil uaim      anois.  
          cop-pres money comp be-pres prog   lack      from-1sg   now  
          *It's money that I lack now.*
- h.      \* Tá              sé airgead a      tá              ag      teastáil uaim      anois.  
          be-pres it   money comp be-pres   prog lack      from1sg now  
          *It's money that I lack now.*

The contrast between these properties and those of *bí* in (25) follow if, as suggested by Ahlqvist (1972) and Chung and McCloskey (1987), the copula is not a verb. If there is no verb present in the data in (28), then there is no reason to expect the normal licensing procedures to occur in the clause, since the lack of verb-movement will not extend the domain of V.

#### 4.4.1 Previous analyses

The first attempt to account for the anomalous syntax of Irish copular constructions is Doherty (1996). Here it is proposed that the order predicate-subject is base-generated; the copular particle is an inflectional head which takes the predicate as its complement and projects the subject in a right specifier, in the structure shown in (29):



(Adapted from Doherty 1996, p14, his (29))

The evidence which Doherty gives in favour of the rightwards projection of the specifier in (29) is given in (30). However, on closer examination, neither of these pieces of data actually constitutes evidence at all. Although he takes the configuration in (30)a to be base-generated, with the possessor projected rightwards, this is in fact a construct state nominal, a construction well-known from Semitic. The derivation of these nominals by movement is well-attested - see for example Guilfoyle (1988), Ritter (1988) and Duffield (1996).<sup>13</sup> If the grammar allows reconstruction in the sense of Barss (1986) and Huang (1993), then (30)b is no longer evidence that the subject must be base-generated on the right of the predicate.

- (30) a. teach Sheáin  
house Seán-gen  
*Seán's house*
- b. Is cosúil lena chéile iad.  
cop-pres like with each other them  
*They are like each other.*

(Doherty 1996, p14, his (30) and (31))

<sup>13</sup> The standard analysis of Semitic construct-state nominals is that they are derived by N-to-D movement (Ritter 1988). As Duffield (1996) shows, there is some structural difference between Irish and Semitic CSNs, since the former, but not the latter, can have an adjective intervening between the initial noun and D, from which position it takes scope over the noun to its left.

- i. guth láidir an tsagairt  
voice powerful the priest-gen  
*the priest's powerful voice*
- ii. guth an tsagairt láidir  
voice the priest-gen powerful  
*the powerful priest's voice*

Semitic CSNs may only have the order N-D-N-A, which leads to ambiguities like (iii)

- iii. hu ir-ragel il-kbir  
brother-masc-sg det-man det-big  
*the man's big brother/the big man's brother*

(Duffield 1996, pp318-9, his (8a, 9a, 10b))

Furthermore, positing a rightward specifier is at odds with other projections in the language: lexical projections such as VP have leftward specifiers, a fact shown by the existence of SVO order in non-finite clauses in Munster dialects, and wh-movement targeting functional Spec/CP always operates leftwards. Assuming, as do Bobaljik and Carnie (1996) and McCloskey (1996b), that subjects in finite non-copular clauses occupy the specifier of a functional projection dominating VP, then the observed VSO order indicates that this projection is also specifier-left. If, on the other hand, the predicate-subject order is derived rather than base-generated, then there is no need to propose a right specifier at all.

By stipulating that non-verbal predicates bear Tense features, Carnie (1995) derives predicate-subject order by head-movement of the predicate to the higher of two Tense projections in the clause. Since the predicate moves through a set of functional projections which are normally taken to be broadly L-related, then this is presumably A-movement.

- (31) [CP [TP<sub>1</sub> [T<sub>1</sub> pred<sub>i</sub> ] [Agr-sP subj<sub>j</sub> [Agr-s t<sub>i</sub> ] [TP<sub>2</sub> [T<sub>2</sub> t<sub>i</sub> ] [Agr-oP [ Agr-o t<sub>i</sub> ]  
[D]<sub>P</sub> t<sub>j</sub> [N(D)<sub>i</sub> t<sub>i</sub> ]]]]]]]

(Carnie 1995, p154)

- (32) a. Is [námhaid do Dhia] é.  
cop-pres enemy to God he  
*He is an enemy of God.*
- b. Is [duine a bhfuil meas agam air ] Seán.  
cop-pres person comp be-PRES respect at-me on-him Seán  
'Seán is a person I respect.'

(Doherty 1997, p86, his (11a,b))

A problem for Carnie's head-movement analysis, as Doherty (1997) points out, is that predicates can be internally complex. The solution adopted by Carnie is to suggest that iterated incorporation of all the heads within it derives a complex head, which is then subject to head-movement. There is direct evidence against this, however. The null hypothesis is that head-movement within an internally complex predicate would behave as other instances of X<sup>0</sup>-movement in the language do - in other words, leftwards and to the left side of the target. For example, verbs move leftwards out of

VP, inflection is at the right edge of words, and so on. Iterated head-movement would yield the opposite order of constituents to what is observed. To take one case, the complex predicate in (32)b would be predicted to undergo the process in (33), reversing the order of all the heads in the predicate and in essence turning it inside out. The word order of complex predicates should be exactly the reverse of that found when a numeration containing the same heads functions as an argument, contrary to fact, as (34) shows.<sup>14</sup> And further, Doherty (1997) points out that as far as morphology and prosody are concerned, internally complex predicates have the same properties as other arguments in the language.

- (33) a. [ duine a bhfuil meas agam air]  
 b. [ duine a bhfuil meas air-agam]  
 c. [ duine a bhfuil air-agam-meas]  
 d. [ duine a air-agam-meas-bhfuil]  
 e. [ duine air-agam-meas-bhfuil-a]  
 f. [<sub>N</sub><sup>0</sup> air-agam-meas-bhfuil-a-duine]

- (34) Bhí mé ag caint le duine a  
 be-past 1sg-nom prog speak-VN with person comp  
 bhfuil meas agam air.  
 be-pres respect at-1sg on-3sg-masc  
*I was speaking to someone I respect.*

Furthermore, Doherty (1997) points out that as far as morphology and prosody are concerned, internally complex predicates are indistinguishable from other phrases in the language.

In his most recent treatment of the construction, Doherty (1997) also claims that the checking of Tense features internal to IP is the distinguishing factor in these clauses. In this analysis, the predicate in copular clauses moves to Spec/TP in order to

<sup>14</sup> One of the major claims of Carnie (1995) is that heads and maximal projections are essentially non-distinct, but acquire one or the other status depending on their environment, so that an  $X^0$  category in a specifier position is functionally an  $X^{\max}$ , and an  $X^{\max}$  adjoined to a head is functionally  $X^0$ . This conception of grammar derives from a particular reading of Chomsky (1995), which permits elements which do not project to be at once minimal and maximal: the core case is that of clitics. This seems rather far from the internally complex predicates discussed in the text.

check Tense. He draws support for this claim from an examination of absolutive small clauses in Irish, which also exhibit predicate-subject order.

- (35) a. Bhí sé ag caoineadh [ ar a leaba dó aréir ].  
 be-past he prog cry-VN on his bed to-3sg-masc last night  
*He was crying while in bed last night.*
- b. Bhí Siubhán léi féin ... [ ag gabháil isteach dó ].  
 be-past Siubhán with herself prog go-VN in to-3sg-masc  
*Siubhan was by herself ... when he went in.*

(Doherty 1997, p90, his (22a,c))

Doherty argues that predicate movement is forced in (35) by the requirement that the predicate be in the domain of Tense. Since the small clauses in question are adjuncts, this requirement can only be met if the predicate moves to adjoin to the outside of the small clause, the maximal projection of which then no longer counts as a barrier for government by T. A problem for this analysis, however, is that the absolutive small clauses in (35) receive an unambiguous stage-level interpretation, unlike copular constructions. Furthermore, as will be shown below, these small clauses are anomalous in that not all small clauses in the language are predicate-initial. Thus it is not clear that this analysis succeeds in unifying the movement of the predicates of copular clauses and of absolutive clauses such as those in (35).

#### 4.4.2 The A'-movement of predicates

In what follows, I will assume that the subject and predicate originate within a single constituent, following Stowell (1981) and Moro (1997). Nothing what follows will depend on this constituent being a small clause (and see the discussion of small clauses in the previous chapter), but it is clear that constituents which closely resemble those which have traditionally been called small clauses exist in Irish, in greater profusion than in (Standard) English. There is, however, an unexplained gap in the paradigm of Irish small clauses, as Chung and McCloskey (1987) demonstrate:

- (36) a.      Bhuail mé leis agus [<sub>PP</sub> é ar an bhealach 'na bhaile]  
                  strike-past I with-3sg-masc and him on the way home  
                  *I met him as he was on the way home.*
- b.      Tháinig sé isteach agus [<sub>AP</sub> é iontach sásta leis féin].  
                  come-past he in and him very satisfied with-3sg-masc  
                  *He came in, very satisfied with himself.*
- c.      Bhreathnaigh mé uirthi agus  
                  look-past I on-3sg-fem and  
                  [<sub>VP</sub> í ag imeacht uaim ].  
                  her prog leave-VN from me  
                  *I watched her as she was leaving me.*

(Adapted from Chung and McCloskey 1987,  
 p175-6. their (2a), (3a), (4a))

As the data in (36) indicate, prepositional, adjectival and verbal small clauses are well-formed in Irish. On the other hand, nominal small clauses are ungrammatical, as indicated in (37). (38)a, however, is grammatical; it contains the prepositional element *i* which appears with the substantive verb in (38)b. Both examples in (38) share stage-level interpretation.

- (37) a.      \* agus [ é dlíodóir]  
                  and him lawyer  
                  *while he was a lawyer*
- b.      \* Chonaic mé [ Ciarán léachtóir].  
                  saw I Ciarán lecturer  
                  *I saw Ciarán as a lecturer.*

(Adapted from Chung and McCloskey 1987,  
 p179-80, their (15a) and ((17b))



- (38) a. agus é ina dhlíodóir  
and him in-his lawyer  
*while he was a lawyer*
- b. Tá sé ina dhlíodóir.  
be he in-his lawyer  
*He is a lawyer.*

(Adapted from Chung and McCloskey 1987,  
p179-80, fn.4, their (iii) and (i))

Both of the examples in (38) exhibit stage-level interpretation, and both obligatorily contain *i*. Assuming, following Kratzer (1995), that stage-level interpretation requires a abstract Davidsonian spatio-temporal argument to appear in the structure, the obligatory appearance of *i* in these data can be explained if this element introduces such an operator. Since copular constructions bear an individual-level interpretation, they require no such locative element, and the absence of *i* in (28) is predicted. This is precisely the analysis suggested for extremely similar facts in Welsh by Rouveret (1996).

- (39) a. Mae ci mawr yn yr ardd.  
cop dog big in the garden  
*A big dog is in the garden.*
- b. Mae Siôn yn ddedwydd.  
cop Siôn part. happy  
*Siôn is happy.*

(Rouveret 1996, p128, his (14b) and (16a))

The absence of this element in copular constructions can be taken to result from their lack of spatio-temporal interpretation, but this does not explain predicate-subject order. What is clear from the data, however, is that Irish, which projects subjects leftward, allows subject-predicate order without difficulty in verbal constructions and in all small clauses with the exception of nominal ones. This distribution suggests that some factor requires bare nominal predicates to move leftwards. Two questions then arise: what is the target of the movement, and what is the factor driving it?

Both Carnie (1995) and Doherty (1997) suggest that nominal predicates move to TP - to T° for the former, to Spec/TP for the latter. The difficulty with this is

that TP is generally accepted to be an A-position - one implicated in the licensing of arguments. This essentially claims that nominal predicates in Irish are arguments. This implication is open to criticism on a number of points. First, as Higginbotham (1987) points out, the absence of D in predicates is not accidental; as Rothstein (1983) suggests, syntactic predication requires an open position in the predicate which can be filled in by the subject. NP contains such an open position, which can be closed off in two ways. First, by predication, where the subject closes it off; second, by D. In this latter case, the result is an argument, a referential DP. Such a DP cannot function as a predicate, since the open position is no longer available for the subject. It is for this reason that identificational clauses differ from copular ones, since (40)a takes two referential elements, in this case two towns, and asserts their identity, while (40)b predicates a property of the subject argument. Since both terms of identificational clauses are arguments, either can appear in Spec/IP, with the result that these clauses are reversible, while true predication clauses are not.

- (40) a. Y Felinheli is Port Dinorwic.  
 b. Y Felinheli is pretty.  
 c. Port Dinorwic is Y Felinheli.  
 d. \* Pretty is Y Felinheli.

The failure of the predicate [ pretty] to appear in Spec/IP in (40)d calls into question the identification of the position of the displaced nominal predicate in Irish copular clauses with Spec/TP.

In fact there is direct evidence from the data that the position targetted by movement of the predicate is not an A-position. Recall that one of the arguments for the projection of a rightward specifier in copular clauses in Doherty (1996) is that an anaphor contained within the predicate can be grammatically construed with an antecedent that linearly follows it, while the reverse order is impossible.

(41) a. Is [ cosúil lena chéile<sub>i</sub> ] iad<sub>i</sub>.  
 cop-pres like with each other them  
*They are like each other.*

b. \* Is [ cosúil leo<sub>i</sub> ] a chéile<sub>i</sub>.  
 cop-pres like with-3pl each other

(Doherty 1996, p14-5, his (31) and (32))

If the position targetted by the movement of the predicate in (41) is not an A-position, then the binding facts are immediately explained, since reconstruction occurs from A'-positions. When reconstructed at LF to its base position, the anaphor in (41)a will be c-commanded by its antecedent; reconstruction in (41)b will on the contrary place the antecedent where it fails to c-command the anaphor.<sup>15</sup>

When the Irish copular construction is compared to Welsh, a striking similarity between the two becomes apparent. As pointed out by Rouveret (1996), alongside the *mae*-construction in (39), there exists a predicate-initial copular construction there too. Whereas in the *mae*-construction the locative element *yn* is obligatory, in (42) it is absent, and an anaphor in the initial predicate is grammatically construed with an antecedent which does not c-command it at Spell-out.

(42) a. Arwr yw Siôn  
 hero cop Siôn  
*Siôn is a hero*

b. Rhy bard i wthio 'i hunan<sub>i</sub> ymlaen yw Siôn<sub>i</sub>  
 too ready to push himself forward is Siôn  
*Siôn is too ready to push himself forward.*

(Adapted from Rouveret (1996, pp148-149, his (51a) and (52b))

The conclusion which can be drawn here is that the position targetted by movement of the predicate in Irish is an A'-position, a conclusion independently proposed by Rouveret (1996) for Welsh. But movement of the predicate to an A'-position can only occur if it is driven by the requirement to check an uninterpretable feature in the sense

<sup>15</sup> Both Carnie (1995) and Doherty (1997) appeal to LF-reconstruction to account for the binding facts in (41), but neither notes the asymmetry in reconstruction between A- and A'-positions.

of Chomsky (1995). In other words, these predicates in Irish and in Welsh must bear a feature which forces their displacement.

A predication necessarily involves the introduction of new information: the predication *John is a doctor* requires that doctorhood is a property which has not previously been asserted to hold of John. In this way, it is possible to regard predication as introducing a Focus feature; if this is assumed, then movement of the predicate to Spec/FocP will induce predicate subject order and account for the reconstruction facts.<sup>16</sup> There is in fact additional evidence to show that Focus movement is involved here. In neither Irish nor Welsh is it possible to front more than one element, which indicates, following Rizzi (1997), that fronting is not topicalisation. There is one fact about Irish copular constructions which remains completely unexplained by any of the previous analyses. It is not possible to cleft either the subject or the predicate out of a copular construction. Subjects can be clefted without any difficulty at all from English copular sentences such as (44)a, and since Hiberno-English also allows the predicate to be clefted, as shown in (44)b, the lacuna in (43) is mysterious.<sup>17</sup>

(43) a. \* Is            Seán is            dochtúir.  
          cop-pres Seán cop-pres doctor  
          *It's Seán that's a doctor.*

b. \* Is            dochtúir is            Seán.  
          cop-pres doctor cop-pres Seán  
          *It's a doctor that Seán is.*

(44) a.            It's Yvonne that is a doctor.

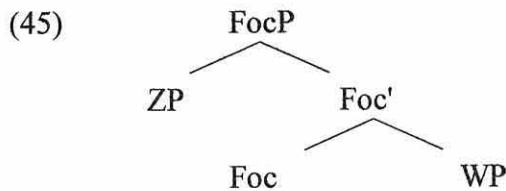
b.            It's a doctor that Yvonne is. (HiE)

Recall from Chapter Two that Rizzi (1997) identifies uniqueness as one of the defining properties of Focus constructions - only one element per clause can be focussed. His explanation of this is essentially semantic, in that in (45), the presupposition is equated with WP. If Focus were not unique, then each Focus head

<sup>16</sup> The idea that predicates can bear Focus is supported by Green (1997), who argues at length that copular clauses in Hausa and a number of other African languages exhibit predicate-movement to FocP.

<sup>17</sup> Stenson (1981, pp105-112) makes essentially the same claim.

could take a complement with a presupposed interpretation, resulting in a clause containing two presuppositions. The lower presupposition would exclude some of the material contained in the upper, and would not therefore carry all the old information.



ZP = Focus

WP = Presupposition

(Rizzi 1997, p287, his (6))

Alternatively, there is, as Kiss (1998) points out, another way of accounting for the uniqueness of Focus, since the chains formed from each would induce conflicting A'-dependencies, and thus a wh-island violation. If it were maintained, as in Carnie (1995) and Doherty (1997), that the predicate moves to an A-position, then it is difficult to see how the clefts in (43) could be ruled out, since no presupposition would be involved, and no conflicting A'-chains either. In this account advocated here, however, (43) is ruled out for exactly the same reasons that the sentences in (46) are impossible in English.

- (46)
- a. \* It was Pam<sub>i</sub> that it was *t<sub>i</sub>* that bought a pink car.
  - b. \* It was in London that it was Mullie that I stayed with.

The essence of this analysis is that Irish does not have a copular construction at all. Instead, it has a cleft construction, which is used to license bare predicates by movement to a Focus position in CP to check a Focus feature. The failure of the copular particle to show verb-like behaviour is explained if it is in fact a C-particle which marks a cleft.<sup>18</sup> Again, this claim is similar to that in Rouveret (1996, p150),

<sup>18</sup> The assumption that *is* is a C-particle receives supporting evidence from the fact that it coalesces completely with other C-material such as negation, interrogative markers and subordinating conjunctions (see (28)). The existence of so many C-particles with distinctive interpretative properties means that it is extremely likely that Irish CP can usefully be split in a manner similar to that in Rizzi (1997), but the process of coalescence itself makes determining the relative order of functional projections in CP extremely difficult.

who asserts that predicate-initial constructions in Welsh are in fact "concealed cleft sentences."<sup>19</sup> <sup>20</sup>

#### 4.4.4. The substantive verb revisited

It was noted earlier that the syntax of the substantive verb *bí* differs greatly from that of the copula, and that it showed all the hallmarks of full verbhood (see (25) and (26) above). If this is the case, then the syntax of clauses containing *bí* is expected to be very different from that of copular clauses. (25) and (26) confirm this. The discussion of the cleft in (15)c, repeated here as (47), was postponed earlier; it is now time to examine it.

- (47) a.      Níl              sé tinn; is      [AP caochta] a      tá      sé.  
              neg-be-pres he sick; cop-pres drunk      comp be-pres he  
              *He's not sick; it's drunk he is.*

(Adapted from Stenson 1981, p99, her (17h))

[*Caochta*] is an adjectival predicate with a stage-level interpretation, and it appears in (47) with *bí*. If the analysis of copular constructions as clefts developed above is correct, then it does not apply to (47), since this is not a copular construction. The prediction, then, is that it should be possible to cleft the predicate which appears with the substantive verb, since the verbal construction is not a cleft construction. This

<sup>19</sup> Since the claim made here essentially states that there is no TP in the copular construction, the issue of how these clauses receive a tense interpretation at all. In Cottell (1995), I argue that the tense-marking on complementisers in Irish seen in (4) above results from the presence of a Tense feature in CP. This marking is found together with verbal tense-marking, so it cannot be argued that it is the same feature that verbs bear. This tense-marking is impoverished, in that it marks only past versus non-past, precisely the distinction that is found in copular clauses (see (27) and (28) above). I suggest, therefore, that it is this T-feature which permits an LF tense interpretation to be assigned to copular clauses.

<sup>20</sup> It must be admitted that this account of copular constructions makes it unclear how the subject of predication is licensed. In Carnie (1995) and (Doherty (1997), this takes place in the normal manner, since the full range of IP-level functional projections is present; for Doherty (1996), the subject of predication is generated in Spec/IP and is presumably licensed there. Note that the subjects of copular clause show "accusative" case-marking rather than the normal nominative; this is not necessarily a significant fact, since it was observed by Ken Hale that only 3rd person pronouns show any morphological case (e.g. 3rd person masculine *sé* (nominative), *é* (accusative)), and that this distinction is only made when the subject is immediately to the right of a tensed verb. The putative case distinction could merely be a PF process, in which event "accusative" case-marking on the subjects of predication could simply result from the absence of a verb in these clauses. Given the possibility of a modal interpretation for a past tense copular clause, it could tentatively be proposed that these clauses include a ModalP, the specifier of which could be the position of the subject. I am grateful to David Adger for useful discussion on this point.

conclusion is borne out by the grammaticality of (47). Furthermore, it is possible to cleft nominal and prepositional predicates with *bí*.

- (48) a. Is ina leachtóir a tá Seán anois.  
 cop-pres in-his lecturer comp be-pres Seán now.  
*It's a lecturer that Seán is now.*
- b. Is i mBaile Átha Clíath a tá mé anois  
 cop-pres in Dublin comp be-pres 1sg-nom now  
*It's in Dublin that I am now.*

Aside from the confirmation that sentences like (48) provide of the non-cleft status of constructions involving the substantive verb, the availability in the grammar of clefted predicates such as this is important for another reason. The analysis of the copular construction developed above claims that, there, predicates are licensed by moving to FocusP to check their Focus feature; given the unusual syntax of these clauses, it is logically possible that the Focus feature is only available to predicates in the copular construction. What (48) indicates is that predicates can optionally bear a Focus feature which triggers movement even in circumstances where they are not required to move. The consequence of this is that it is possible to state that this Focus feature is potentially assignable to all predicates in Irish: in copular constructions, a derivation which does not include this feature will crash, since predicate-clefting is obligatory, while clefting is optional, but still available, to predicates such as those in (47) and (48), as well as to verbal predicates such as those in (20) and (23), repeated here in (49).

- (49) a. Is ag éisteacht leis an ceol atá na leanaí.  
 cop-pres prog. listen-VN to the music comp.be-pres the children  
*It's listening to the music that the children are.*
- b. Is [<sub>VP</sub> ag déanamh a chuid ceachtannaí] a tá Tadhg.  
 cop-pres prog do-VN his portion lessons comp be Tadhg.  
*It's doing his lessons that Tadhg is.*

The implication of this is that Irish differs from Standard English in precisely the same way that Hiberno-English does: in Irish and Hiberno-English, Focus is a



feature which can be borne by predicates. In Hiberno-English predicational constructions, and in Irish non-copular ones, this assignment is optional, but in Irish copular constructions, a numeration which does not include it is doomed.

#### 4.5 Focus in Celtic

The proposal that has been advanced in this chapter departs from previous analyses of the Irish copular construction. However, it makes possible an account of the Focal properties of copular constructions which is available otherwise only by stipulation. In particular, it identifies a particular property of Irish as crucial: the possibility of assigning a Focus feature to predicates.

In the previous chapter, it was shown that Hiberno-English also permits predicates to bear a Focus feature, and that this feature is responsible for the distinctive cleft constructions that are found in that dialect. In addition, we have seen that Rouveret (1996) proposes a similar analysis for Welsh. The point has yet to be made that Irish, Hiberno-English and Welsh clefts are identical. No evidence has yet been adduced that shows that Welsh can cleft VPs. It perhaps comes as no surprise to find the following data.

- (50) a. [VP por'i'r comin a'r cloddiau ]  
           browse-the common and-the hedges prt  
           a wnaeth Ifas am y lleill  
           did-3sg Ifas for the others  
           *It was browse the common and the hedges that Ifan*  
           *did for the others.*
- b. Dywedodd mai [VP gadael y ddinas ] a wnaeth y rhai eraill  
           said-3sg prt leave the city prt did the ones other  
           *He said that it was leave the city that those others did.*
- (Tallerman 1996, p100, 101, her (5b) and (8d))

Tallerman (1996) shows that examples such as these have all the properties of cleft constructions, and suggests that they should be analysed as derived by movement to a specifier position within a recursive CP. This is entirely in keeping with the view of



clefts defended in this dissertation. However, it still remains to demonstrate that the data in (50) affect the same type of constituent that is clefted in Hiberno-English and in Irish. It still remains possible that the VPs in (50) are not predicates, but some larger constituent. But (51) and (52) confirms that the distinction between Agentive and non-Agentive verbs is found in Welsh too. Yet again, it is necessary to test the hypothesis using minimal pairs such as *listen/hear* and *watch/listen*, since Welsh uses similar periphrastic constructions to Irish where English uses psych-verbs.<sup>21</sup>

- (51) a. Gwranddo ar y cerddoriaeth oedd y plant  
listen-VN to the music were the children  
*It was listening to the music that the children were.*
- b. \* Clywed y cerddoriaeth oedd y plant  
hear-VN to the music were the children  
\* *It was hearing the music that the children were.*
- (52) a. Edrych ar yr adar oedd y plant,  
look-VN at the birds were the children,  
dim chwarae efo nhw  
not play with them  
*It was looking at the birds the children were, not playing with them.*
- b. \* Gweld yr adar oedd y plant....  
see-VN the birds were the children....  
*It was seeing the birds the children were....*
- c. Gweld Mr Jones o'n i yn yr ysbyty  
see-VN Mr Jones was I in the hospital  
*I was seeing Mr Jones in the hospital*

The data in (51) and (52) confirm that clefting of VPs in Welsh also distinguishes Agentive from non-Agentive contexts. (52)c is particularly interesting in this respect, since it indicates that it is precisely Agentivity that is at work here, rather than a

<sup>21</sup> I am grateful to Wini Davies and Ros Temple for supplying the data in (51).

purely lexical process. This example is grammatical, but only when *gweld* is interpreted as "see" in the sense of "visit", rather than "perceive".<sup>22</sup>

The unstated implication here is, of course, that there is something common to Irish, Welsh and Hiberno-English that permits the clefting of predicates. To claim that two Celtic languages are similar in syntax is hardly novel; claiming that the same process is at work in what is, historically, a Germanic language is rather more controversial. There is, so far as I am aware, no explicit theory which determines how a substrate language can influence a superstrate. Lexical transfer from substrate to superstrate of course occurs all the time, but lexicon is easily borrowed, as vast amounts of the lexicon of English attest. The common property of the three languages that has been uncovered here cannot be regarded as lexical; it is instead a rather fine-grained, purely syntactic, distinction.

I do not intend here to develop a theory of substrate influence in syntax. Instead, I will attempt to address some of the issues that would be involved. I assume, in common with most recent generative work on acquisition and language change (e.g. Radford (1990), Lightfoot (1991), Pintzuk (1999) and many others) that it is acquisition which drives language change, and that the process of syntactic acquisition involves setting parameters which determine values of formal features, for which positive evidence is required. In other words, the absence of a feature from the input is not sufficient to set a negative value for that feature.<sup>23</sup> Substrate influence is possible when a child is exposed to two grammars and is setting parameters for each. If the superstrate language has a negative value for a particular feature, there will be no triggering data for it in the input to the child; if, on the other hand, the same parameter has a positive value in the substrate, then it is possible for the child to set the parameter to the positive value, hypothesising that the lack of data in the superstrate is merely accidental. The result will be a novel array of parameter settings, which differs from both substrate and superstrate: essentially, a new language, since a language is, viewed from this perspective, simply a parameter array.

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<sup>22</sup> The same contrast is available in Hiberno-English; (i) and (iii) grammatical; (ii) and (iv) are not:

- i. It's seeing her lecturer at 12.00 she is.
- ii. \* It's seeing spots in front of her eyes she is.
- iii. It was hearing cases that the judge was all afternoon.
- iv. \* It was hearing voices that the judge was all afternoon.

<sup>23</sup> For discussion of the irrelevance of negative evidence, see Lightfoot (1991, pp10-3)

To consider how this might have worked in practice, assume a child exposed to both Irish and English. The data to which s/he is exposed will contain the structures similar to the following:

- (53)
- a. John is a doctor.
  - b. It was in the street that I met her.
  - c. It was the bread that he baked.
  - d. Is dochtúir Seán.  
cop-pres doctor Seán  
*Seán is a doctor.*
  - e. Beidh Seán ina dhochtúir an bhliain seo chugainn.  
be-fut Seán in-his doctor next year  
*Seán will be a doctor next year.*
  - f. Is leabhar a cheannaigh Seán.  
cop-pres book comp buy-past Seán  
*It was a book that Sean bought.*
  - g. Is ar an mbóthar a bhuaifidh mé leat.  
cop-pres on the road comp meet-fut I with-2sg  
*It's on the road that I'll meet you*
  - h. Is ina leachtóir a tá Seán anois.  
cop-pres in-his lecturer comp be-pres Seán now.  
*It's a lecturer that Seán is now.*
  - i. Tá na leanaí ag éisteacht leis an ceol.  
be the children prog. listen-VN to the music  
*The children are listening to the music*
  - j. Is ag éisteacht leis an ceol atá na leanaí.  
cop-pres prog. listen-VN to the music comp.be-pres the children  
*It's listening to the music that the children are.*

(53)a tells the child how predication is realised in English; (53)b and (53)c tell him/her that English has clefting of arguments and adjuncts. Since there is no cleft predicate in the English input, the child will not infer that it is impossible, merely absent. On hearing (53)d, the child finds that nominal predicates can be clefted in Irish; then the child hears (53)e, this confirms that predicates in Irish need not be

clefted to be licensed, which is consistent with the English data. (53)f shows that Irish too has clefting of arguments and adjuncts. When (53)h is encountered, the child infers that the clefting of predicates is optional since (53)e, with no clefting, is also in the input, and (53)i and (53)j confirm this for VPs. At this point, the child has inferred that clefting of arguments, adjuncts, and predicates is possible, although only obligatory for one type of predication structure, (53)d. Nothing in the input indicates that predicates cannot be clefted in English, so in the presence of data which confirm that it is possible for a human language to cleft them, the child assumes this for English. In this way, a new grammar arises, one which differs minimally, but significantly, from the superstrate, in that it permits the clefting of predicates.

Since a p-Celtic language and a q-Celtic, Welsh and Irish respectively, have predicate-clefting, it is tempting to state that this is a common property of Celtic. The evidence is suggestive, although admittedly slight. In Scots Gaelic, structures such as (54) are no longer productive, having in the modern language a distinctly archaic air, but they are attested.<sup>24</sup>

- (54)           Is           tidsear Calum  
                  cop-pres teacher Calum  
                  *Calum is a teacher.*

Cornish and Manx (Kneen 1931) and Breton (Press 1986) show similar structures. If predicate-fronting in all the Celtic languages were predicate-clefting, then the case for the process in Proto-Celtic would be rather strong, especially since syntax is not inherited as the lexicon is, but is created in the mind of each generation. Since distinguishing clefting from topicalisation requires fine judgements on the part of a native speaker, it will never be possible to know. But the Focus feature in predicates is common to Welsh and Irish, and it has survived into Hiberno-English. In fact, it also survives into Welsh English, as the following show (see also Taniguchi (1972) and Thomas (1994)). These cannot be Topics, since in (55)e there is a weak crossover violation, and their status as clefts is confirmed by the availability of generalised pied-piping in (55)d and by the ungrammaticality of the fronted quantifiers in (55)b and (55)c.

<sup>24</sup> I am grateful to David Adger for discussion surrounding this point, and for the datum in (54).

- (55) a. The coal, I bought.  
 b. \* Every book, I bought.  
 c. \* Nothing, I bought.  
 d. Every book with a RED cover, I bought.  
 e. \* Mary<sub>i</sub>, her<sub>i</sub> little lamb followed down the road.

#### 4.6 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the hypothesis that the clefting of predicates is not an isolated feature of Hiberno-English, but that it is also found in Irish, where it appears in two guises: first, in the clefting of predicates for focal effect, and secondly, in licensing the predication relation itself in copular clauses, a claim that receives additional support from an examination of Welsh. The reconstruction facts in both languages lead to the conclusion that the predicate in both moves to an A'-position with all the properties associated with that targeted by cleft displacement.

While the mechanisms that allow grammatical features of a substrate language to appear in a dialect of the superstrate are, now at least, poorly understood, it is possible to hypothesise about the conditions that could lead to such transfer. That such transfer has occurred is most strongly indicated both by Hiberno-English and Welsh English, which both evince the predicate-clefting which is ungrammatical in Standard English. Since assignment of the Focus feature to predicates has stubbornly persisted from these Celtic languages to their daughter Celtic Englishes, it is then probable that only a single feature is involved, since one is more likely to have survived than a conspiracy of several. For how long that feature has survived must at present be conjecture, but it is at least possible that it is many centuries.

## CONCLUSION

This dissertation has examined cleft constructions in Standard English, Hiberno-English and Irish, and has shown that, in the framework provided by Principles and Parameters/Minimalism, there are convincing grounds to propose that all three languages use a movement strategy to derive them. This proposal is preferable to either an operator analysis or to one which would derive them from another sentence-type, not only for theoretical reasons, in that the mechanisms here are all independently required by the grammar - the basic operations of Merge and Move, and a set of cross-linguistically well-motivated abstract formal features which map to functional projections - but also because it allows maximal unification across the three grammatical systems in question. While previous analyses of the Standard English cleft construction might be superficially attractive for that one dialect, neither an operator analysis nor a derivation from pseudo-clefts is a plausible candidate when confronted with data from Hiberno-English and Irish. A movement analysis is by far the preferable model for capturing the facts which relate to the clefting of predicates.

The novel facts presented in this dissertation, particularly in the case of non-standard dialects of English and of Irish, extend our knowledge of focal constructions and of how they are configured in the grammar. Insofar as the model of grammar deployed here can account for this body of new facts, it receives confirmation. The difference between Standard English on the one hand and Hiberno-English and Irish on the other is attributable to a single difference in the assignment of a formal feature, which is indirect evidence for the validity of a grammatical theory which exploits such features.

On the other hand, a strong implication of the closing chapter is that there is scope for the development of a formal account of substrate influence; an outline of how such influence might come about was sketched, but is hardly an explicit theory. A further conclusion that can be drawn from this work is that the syntactic analysis of non-standard dialects is crucial to an understanding of grammar; to adapt Max Weinreich's *nostrum* it is a shame to ignore the syntactic complexity of a language merely because it lacks an army and a navy. This issue comes into particularly sharp focus in the case of clefts, since previous analyses, looking only at the standard language, have taken it as a given that the absence of predicates in the inventory of

cleft constituents is a defining property of the construction. It is precisely to avoid such parochialism that comparative work is valuable in syntax.



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