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ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

Menczer Izabella
Anglisztika alapszak
Amerikanisztika szakirány

2015

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Focus, Definiteness and Relative Clauses in There-sentences

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Bölcsészettudományi Kar

ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

*Fókusz, határozottság és vonatkozó mellékmondatok
there-mondatokban*

Focus, Definiteness and Relative Clauses in There-sentences

Témavezető:

Dr. Newson Mark
egyetemi docens

Készítette:

Menczer Izabella
Anglisztika alapszak
Amerikanisztika szakirány

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Abstract

This paper inspects the definiteness of the post-verbal determiner phrase (PVDP) in copular *there*-sentences and claims that, for this analysis, the sentences have to be divided into two classes based on the kind of focus occurring in them. The existential type has broad focus or contrastive narrow focus with no list reading, whereas the cleft type has a PVDP that is an element on an open list. These two classes have different requirements for their PVDPs, which will be analysed in detail. The first type requires a PVDP that is not uniquely identifiable and the PVDP of the second type has to be discourse-new. Furthermore, the two classes require different kinds of relative clauses (RCs) and cleft clauses.

Keywords: existential *there*-sentence, list *there*-sentence, definiteness, broad focus, narrow focus, relative clause, cleft clause

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Introduction

An expletive or pleonastic phrase is an element that does not have a semantic purpose, as it is only inserted into the clause for a syntactic reason. In the case of an expletive subject, this reason is to satisfy the Extended Projection Principle (EPP), which requires each and every finite clause in English to have a subject (Newson et al., 2006, p. 291). There are two widely-acknowledged expletive subjects in English: *there* (see (1a)) and *it* (see (1b)) (Newson et al., 2006, p. 439). Clauses with an expletive *there*-subject will henceforth be referred to as *there*-sentences.

- 1) a. There was a problem with the car.
- b. It is important for you to know that she is not coming to the beach today.

There-sentences can further be divided into two subcategories according to the type of the verb the subject takes. The first type is where the verb is the copula *be*, as in (2a), which can be an existential *there*-sentence, a list *there*-sentence (e.g. in Keenan, 1987), which two types will be analysed in detail. Moreover, the copula can be followed not only by a DP, but also by a participle clause. The other type of *there*-sentence is where the main verb is unaccusative, as in (2b), which is called a presentational *there*-sentence¹ (Ward & Birner, 1996). This paper will treat the definiteness of the post-verbal determiner phrase (henceforth PVDP) appearing in copular *there*-sentences.

- 2) a. There were several hundred people at the party.
- b. There arrived a train at the station.

1 Even certain passives can appear in such a construction (i). It is important to note that ii) is not a passive, but a participle clause, as in a *there*-passive, the passive verb has to be between the subject and the PVDP.

- i) There were awarded several prizes. (Radford, 2004, p. 190)
- ii) There were several prizes awarded.

A copular *there*-sentence has an expletive *there* in its subject position, which does not have a θ -role (Newson et al., 2006, p. 171). What follows the *there*-subject is the inflected form of the copula *be* and a DP in the specifier of VP (PVDP). The case of the PVDP is also debatable and will be touched upon later.

The definiteness of the PVDP in *there*-sentences is a delicate issue, considering that many definite DPs cannot appear in certain *there*-sentences, whereas they can in others. According to the so-called definiteness effect, only indefinite PVDPs can occur in *there*-sentences, as in (3a), hence the ungrammaticality of (3b) and (3c) (see e.g. in Keenan, 1987). However, this rule is not universal, as (3e) is a completely felicitous sentence.

- 3) a. There is a bunny on the lawn.
 b. *There is the bunny on the lawn.
 c. *There arrived the train at the station.
 d. *There is the GIRL in the garden (not the boy).
 e. There was also GEORGE she wanted to marry.

The PVDP in (3e) can be definite because the kind of focus this PVDP has differs from the foci in the other examples. A sentence has broad focus if the focus domain is the whole IP, whereas, in the case of narrow focus, the focus domain is only part of the sentence (Wells, 2005). Out of the examples in (3), only (3d) and (3e) have narrow focus; however, the nature of these two foci also differs from each other. (3d) has contrastive focus and the PVDP in (3e) is an element on an open list; thus, this kind of focus will henceforth be referred to as list focus. The list focus is the only type that normally allows for definite PVDPs. In what follows, capitals will mark phrases in narrow focus in the examples for clearer differentiation.

For the analysis of the definiteness of a certain structure, two views defining the pragmatic and semantic properties of definite and indefinite DPs have to be introduced. According to the familiarity view, an indefinite determiner has a discourse-new NP, whereas

the NP of a definite determiner is discourse-old. The classical view says that the referent of an indefinite determiner is not uniquely identifiable while that of a definite determiner is. The existence proposition, which is present in both theories, states that the existence of the referent of definites is presupposed, whereas no such restriction applies to the referent of indefinites (see e.g. in Abbot, 1999). However, a great number of DPs do not conform to these two views, which complicates the classification of *there*-sentences. Moreover, even though proper names are definite structures, they do not have to be discourse-old, only hearer-old in most cases.

This paper claims that copular *there*-sentences with a DP in post-verbal position can be divided into two types based on the kind of focus they have, namely the existential and the list type, which licence different kinds of PVDPs, considering that uniquely identifiable PVDPs do not appear in the former type and the PVDPs of the latter type are mostly discourse-new. A detailed account of the mechanism of these two types will be provided with emphasis on the kinds of RCs they might have. An existential *there*-sentence can have a non-restrictive relative clause (non-RRC) only with the *which* relative and a restrictive relative clause (RRC) where this clause does not make the referent uniquely identifiable. Both RRCs and non-RRCs are felicitous in the list type, too; moreover, here, another kind of subordinate clause, the cleft clause, can appear as well. As the analysis of *there*-sentences in this paper is on pragmatic (familiarity view) and the semantic (uniqueness theory) levels, it is claimed here that it is the pragmatic and semantic properties of the PVDPs that determine their classification, not their syntactic definiteness. Therefore, if a PVDP does not conform to the theories about the pragmatic and semantic properties of DPs, it is possible for an existential *there*-sentence to have a syntactically definite determiner (e.g. in the case of so-called false definites). Moreover, this classification is not applicable to unaccusative *there*-structures, the

few existing examples of *there*-passives and to copular *there*-sentences with a whole clause in post-verbal position.

2. Existentials

2.1. Broad Focus vs. Contrastive Narrow Focus

The first type of copular *there*-sentence to be analysed is the one involving only broad focus, or narrow focus with no list reading, which are often referred to as existential structures (Ward & Birner, 1995). In the case of broad focus, the focus domain is the whole sentence, whereas a phrase in narrow focus might express opposition or it can add an element to a list. The following two terms have to be distinguished here. Focus and topic are stressed phrases in a clause, where the topic is an old element with the comment that follows being new information (see (4a)), whereas focus conveys new information and the comment is old information (see (4b)) (Newson, 2006, p. 271). Focus and topic can be contrastive (Lee, 2003), as in the two examples below, and this feature will prove important in the analysis of clefts, which will be discussed in section 3.

- 4) a. A: I just met an arsenal supporter. He told me...
 B: An ARSENAL SUPPORTER, I wouldn't trust.
- b. A: Well, you trust everyone. Is there someone you wouldn't?
 B: An ARSENAL SUPPORTER I wouldn't trust.

(answers in (4) are from Newson et al., 2006, p. 272, ex. 111)

Narrow focus in *there*-existentials will be dealt with in section 2.4. in detail, where it will also be shown that *there*-sentences with contrastive narrow focus and no list reading belong to the same category as those with only broad focus regarding the definiteness of their PVDP.

2.2. *There*-existentials and Other Copular Sentences

There-existentials are seemingly similar structures to a predicate nominal (as cited in Hartmann, 2010); however, they greatly differ from a predicate nominal with a meaningful subject (see (5b))². In a predicate nominal, the predicate has to be a DP, which in (5b) is *a lawyer* and in (5a), it would have to be *a lot of people*. The fact that an expletive subject cannot be the argument of the PVDP is against the predicate nominal analysis of *there*-existentials, but most certainly, the two structures have to behave in a different way. In (5b), the relationship between the subject and the predicate is token to type, considering that *John* is a specific *lawyer*. In contrast; in (5a), *there* cannot be a specific example of *a lot of people* owing to its expletive nature. Whether or not the PVDP in existential *there*-sentences can be considered the predicate is the issue of an ongoing debate (see e.g. in Hartmann, 2010).

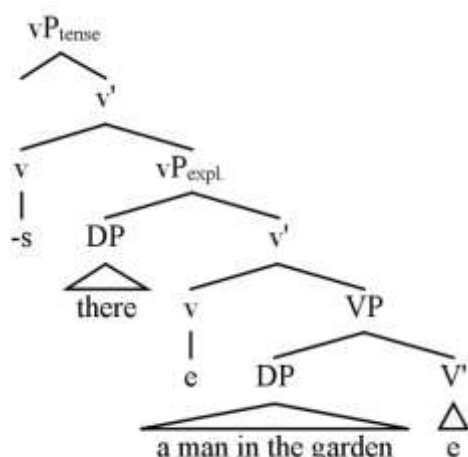
- 5) a. There were a lot of people at John's party.
 b. John is a lawyer.

(6) is a possible x-bar analysis of an existential *there*-sentence, and in spite of the differences, this analysis resembles that of a predicate nominal. The case of the PVDP is debatable, since the only DPs that show case in English are personal pronouns, which cannot appear in such a position because they uniquely identify an individual. According to Burzio's generalisation, as the abstract light-verb of the expletive *there* does not assign a θ -role to its subject, it cannot assign accusative case to the specifier of VP either (as cited in Newson et al., 2006, p. 171).

² If, in a copular sentence, both the subject and the predicate are uniquely identifiable (i), or neither are (ii), the equation is complete; thus, it is rather the case of coordination than that of a predicate nominal (Hartmann, 2010).

- i) Hugh Jackman is the Wolverine in X-Men.
 ii) A lawyer is a clever man.

6) There is a man in the garden.



If an existential *there*-sentence is transformed into a copular sentence without the *there*-expletive, as in (7a), the felicity of the new sentence is questionable, considering that these structures prefer definite DPs (see (7b)). It is important to note that if the PVDP in (7a) is a contrastive focus, the sentence becomes completely felicitous.

7) a. ?? A man is in the garden.

b. The man with the big hat is in the garden.

As definite PVDPs normally cannot appear in *there*-sentences and indefinite DPs are only questionably felicitous in the subject position of a copular sentence, these two structures seem to be in complementary distribution, as (8) shows. In light of the classical view on DPs, the PVDP in an existential *there*-sentence has to have an indefinite referent, whereas the other type of copular sentence requires a definite referent.

8)

	Indefinite PVDP	Definite PVDP
Referent	not uniquely identifiable	uniquely identifiable
<i>There</i> -sentence	There is a man in the garden.	*There is the man with the big hat in the garden.
Not <i>there</i> -sentence	?? A man is in the garden.	The man with the big hat is in the garden.

Example (9) is another piece of evidence for this claim, as it shows that if a DP can either be indefinite or definite, it will be automatically indefinite in the existential *there*-sentence and automatically definite in subject position. The word *life* can have several meanings, and according to these, it can either be definite or indefinite. If it is definite, it can mean the whole entity, in which case it does not have a determiner, as in (9a), or it can refer to the portion a living being gets from this entity, where the word becomes definite and it can have a determiner (9b). In an existential *there*-sentence, the word is indefinite, as it refers to a part of an uncountable mass noun, as in (9c). The only possible interpretation of (9d) is that all life is on Mars, i.e. there is life only on Mars and nowhere else. Several other abstract nouns behave in the same way, e.g. death, love, hate, beauty, ugliness. Uncountable concrete nouns can also be used similarly with the difference that these appear with the definite determiner whenever their meaning is definite, e.g. *soup* in (9e) and (9f).

- 9) a. Life has a meaning only if you enjoy it.
 b. The life of a farmer is hard.
 c. There is life on Mars. / There is still life in him.
 d. ?? Life is on Mars.
 e. There is soup on the floor.
 f. The soup is on the floor.

The obvious question of why the PVDP has to be indefinite in existential *there*-sentences arises here. Based on the two views on definiteness, it may be because the PVDP has to have a hearer-new referent (familiarity view), or because the PVDP cannot be uniquely identifiable (classical view), or because the existence of the referent(s) cannot be presupposed (both views). Ward & Birner (1995) claimed that the PVDP has to be hearer-new (thus, naturally discourse-new as well); therefore, it can be definite only if it is still hearer-new in some respect. Based on this principle, they have set up five different classes where such PVDPs might occur. However, when criticising Ward & Birner's theory, Abbot (1999) pointed out that unfamiliar definite PVDPs with a uniquely identifiable referent are ungrammatical in *there*-sentences, see (10). Thus, she claimed that what causes most PVDPs to be indefinite is that they cannot be uniquely identifiable, i.e. it is the classical view that determines the definiteness of these structures. Still, if there is only broad focus in the sentence, the referent is normally hearer-new; however, with narrow focus, it can also be hearer-old, as the next subsection will show.

10) *There is the first costumer to show up waiting to see you. (Abbot, 1999, ex. 12)

Another peculiarity of existential *there*-sentences is that they must quantify only over a stage of the individual, not an entire entity. A property that demonstrates this is that their PVDPs are temporally dependent (Musn, 1996). For example, in (11a), the subject could be

a professor either now or when he was at the wedding or both. However, in (11b), he or she necessarily has to be a professor at the time of the wedding and whether he or she still is or not is of no importance. Another peculiarity proving Musan's supposition is that the PVDPs in *there*-sentences are about one given moment of the individual and they cannot go through change in time, which has to do with the fact that they cannot be uniquely identifiable. When the *there*-sentence is in a perfect aspect, as in (11c) and (11d), the PVDP does not have to denote the same individual throughout time. For example, *a man* in (11c) can be ten different people in the course of years, which property might be better represented by (11d). Thus, the rule of the quantification over stages of individuals can be retained.

- 11) a. A professor was at the wedding ten years ago.
 b. There was a professor at the wedding ten years ago.
 c. There has always been a man that could help you.
 d. There has always been someone that could help you.

2.3. RCs of *There*-existentials

RRCs for definite DPs serve to make a referent uniquely identifiable to the hearer in case it would not be so without the RRC, as in (12a). However, in the case of an indefinite DP, the RRC cannot have this purpose, as the DP remains unidentifiable, even after the RRC is added (examples (12b), (12c), and (12d)). The perfect aspect in the RRC of (12d) might question the rule about the quantification over stages of individuals in copular *there*-sentences, as the referent of the PVDP *a boy* goes through a change. However, the matrix clause still conveys a single moment of the referent in which no change takes place (owing to the copular verb and the simple aspect). Thus, it seems that Musan's observation about the quantification over stages of individuals is applicable only to the matrix clause and can be overridden by a subordinate clause, which might involve other aspects about the referent.

- 12) a. I'm talking about the teacher that wants to meet me (not the teacher that doesn't want to see me).
- b. Then, a boy that had been sitting in the shadow suddenly stood up.
- c. Even now, there is a man that wants to meet me.
- d. There was a boy in the classroom who had been trying to solve the problem for a long time.

Only the *which*-type of non-RRCs is applicable to existential *there*-sentences, as (13a) is awkward; however, (13b) is completely felicitous. The *who*-relative has only the DP as referent, whereas the *which*-relative normally refers to a whole clause. Thus, non-RRCs in existential *there*-sentences cannot have only the DP as referent. This is a property of the predicate nominal, as presented in (13c) and (13d) (Hartmann, 2010). In predicate nominals, it is possible to have a non-RRC of the *which* type with only the DP as referent, as in (13e); however, this kind of RRC is not applicable to existential *there*-sentences, as (13f) shows (Hartmann, 2010).

- 13) a. ?? There is a God, who always watches over you.
- b. There is a solution, which is a good thing.
- c. *John is a lawyer, who is very clever.
- d. John is a lawyer, which is a good thing.
- e. John is a murderer, which is a horrible thing to be. (Hartmann, 2010, ex. 12a)
- f. *There is a God/a solution, which is a good thing to be.

In short, the PVDP of existential *there*-sentences cannot be uniquely identifiable, and thus has to be indefinite in most cases owing to the classical view. Moreover, this DP quantifies over only a stage of an individual, as it is temporally bound and cannot change throughout time. RRCs only restrict certain aspects of these DPs, as they do not make them uniquely identifiable. However, it is not only *there*-sentences with broad focus that can be

classified into the existential group, but also those with contrastive focus but no list reading. The following section will present this type.

2.4. Contrastive Narrow Focus with No List Reading

There are two distinct types of *there*-sentences with the PVDP in narrow focus, which have different properties including the way they behave regarding the definiteness of their PVDP. The basis of the distinction is the kind of narrow focus their PVDP has. The two types are where the PVDP is in contrastive focus only and where it is in list focus (which might also be contrastive). In cases where the PVDP only has a contrastive reading and is not in list focus, it cannot be uniquely identifiable, similarly to the case with broad focus, whereas if it is an element on an open list, it has to be either discourse-new or at least not mentioned in the discourse for a while. This subsection will elaborate on the properties of the former type of *there*-sentences.

There-sentences with only contrastive and no list focus have a positive and a negative part one of which may remain unpronounced. Both the positive and the negative parts can be the ones uttered in the *there*-sentence, and the other part is either added at the end or omitted completely. The two types will be presented here, i.e. when the positive part and when negative part is expressed in the *there*-sentence.

In the first type, the part expressed in the *there*-sentence is the positive one, and the negative part can be optionally added. The parentheses in the two examples below aim to show this optionality. (14a), where the PVDP is indefinite, is a grammatical sentence, whereas (14b), where the PVDP is definite, is not. Thus, the rule requiring indefinite DPs to appear in copular *there*-sentences and definite DPs to appear in subject position without the expletive – as in example (14c) – is true both for DPs in broad and contrastive narrow focus.

- 14) a. There is a BUNNY RABBIT on the lawn, (not a KITTEN).
 b. *There is the BUNNY RABBIT on the lawn, (not the KITTEN).
 c. The BUNNY RABBIT is on the lawn, not the KITTEN.

The only case where the emphatic PVDP is a topic rather than a focus, i.e. it is discourse-old (thus also a hearer-old), is in the negative. As only indefinite PVDPs can occur in such sentences, none of the PVDPs in these sentences conform to the familiarity view on DPs, as they are both indefinite and discourse-old. The fact that definite PVDPs cannot appear even in this position, where the PVDP is necessarily hearer-old (see 15c), is further evidence for the classical view being in the background of the ungrammaticality of definite PVDPs in existential *there*-sentences. In the examples below, focus (or topic) is marked with capitals. An indefinite PVDP in contrastive focus is more felicitous in a *there*-sentence than in the subject position of a copular sentence, as (15a) and (15b) show. The focused PVDP of negative *there*-existentials cannot be definite, as in (15c). (15d) is an example of a *there*-sentence with list focus – a cleft –, which will be the examined in section 3. This structure cannot be negated either with an indefinite, or with a definite PVDP, as here, the PVDP has to be discourse-new. However, a *there*-sentence with only broad focus can be negated, as (15e) and (15f) show. Out of these two examples, (15e) necessarily has to be discourse-old and (15f) can be discourse-new and also hearer-new, even though it appears in a negative existential sentence. Thus, negative copular *there*-sentences with PVDPs that are not elements on a list are examples where most PVDPs have to be hearer-old ((15f) is an exception). However, the same stands for *there*-sentences with the copula focused whether positive or negative, as in (15g). Uniquely identifiable PVDPs are ungrammatical in these sentences, too, as (15h) shows.

- 15) a. There's not a KITTEN but a BUNNY RABBIT on the lawn.
 b. ? Not a KITTEN but a BUNNY RABBIT is in the garden.

- c. *No, there's not the KITTEN on the lawn but the BUNNY RABBIT.
- d. *No, there's not a/the KITTEN either that I want to pet.
- e. No, there isn't a man in the garden.
- f. There isn't a chance that you will succeed.
- g. But there IS still hope. / No, there ISN'T any hope.
- h. *But there WAS John at the party.

Thus, the distinction between the two structures that definite and indefinite DPs prefer to appear in, as presented in (7), not only applies to DPs in narrow focus, but also to those in contrastive focus/topic. This rule applies whether the main clause is positive or negative. However, as related before, there is also another kind of *there*-sentence, which behaves in a completely different manner and thus has to be examined separately. Section 3 will present this type.

3. Clefts

A *there*-sentence with a PVDP in list focus involves a focused PVDP, which is discourse-new in most cases; however, it does not have to be hearer-new. It can thus be both definite and indefinite, and can also have a certain type of subordinate clause, the cleft clause, which might be considered a kind of RRC (Reeve, 2007). This section will point out the basic differences between *it*-clefts and *there*-clefts, show how focus and topic work in clefts and elaborate upon the question of the definiteness and the case of the PVDPs in *there*-clefts, and will finally study the kinds of relative clauses *there*-clefts can have.

3.1. *It*-clefts vs. *There*-clefts

The cleft is a specific type of sentence where emphasising an XP results in the division of an otherwise simple sentence into a matrix clause and a subordinate clause. These sentences are

called clefts because they involve the focusing of a phrase, which is clefted from the original simple sentence and, in most cases, moved into the newly generated matrix clause (this phrase will henceforth be referred to as the clefted XP). The clause the XP is extracted from is called the cleft clause (Reeve, 2007). The matrix clause can have one of the two expletives as subject – *it*-cleft, as in (16a) and *there*-cleft, as in (16b), but it does not necessarily have to include an expletive – pseudo-cleft (or *wh*-cleft) as in (16c) and inverted pseudo-cleft (or reverse *wh*-cleft) as in (16d) (Delin & Oberlander, 1995). A basic comparison of the *it*-cleft and the *there*-cleft will be provided here and the PVDPs of *there*-clefts will be analysed in detail; however, the analysis of the remaining types of clefts is not within the range of this paper.

- 16) a. It is JOHN that I want to meet, not MARY.
 b. There is also JOHN that I want to meet, not only MARY and SARAH.
 c. What I really want to do right now is TO MEET JOHN.
 d. TO MEET JOHN is what I really want to do right now.

According to Delin & Oberlander (1995), clefts can be characterised by the following four principles. Firstly, the uniqueness or exhaustive listing principle states that the condition expressed by the cleft clause applies only to the clefted XP, i.e. it displays a closed list. Thus, in (17a), *Mary* does not want anything but the *small dog*. Secondly, the principle of presupposition says that the truth condition of the cleft clause is presupposed. For example, the presupposition of (17b) is the following: *Someone uses this form of greeting*. (Delin & Oberlander, 1995, ex. 14b). According to the third principle, the presupposition and the information structure are different, i.e. the clefted XP does not necessarily have to be the new element in the sentence, or, in other words, it can not only be a contrastive focus but also a contrastive topic (see (17c)). Since the clefted XP can be hearer-old and even discourse-old, the purpose of the cleft sentence is not to introduce a new element in either the clefted XP or

the cleft clause, but to make a connection between the two of them. Finally, clefts have a stativising effect, i.e. the cleft clause expresses a given state rather than a change, which can be accredited to the use of the copula. In (17d), *Victoria* probably found out the killer's identity after seeing the victim's face, whereas in (17e), no such change takes place, as *Victoria* already knew who the killer was even before turning over the body.

- 17) a. It is THE SMALL DOG that Mary wants.
- b. It is THE ANGEL who uses this form of greeting. (Delin & Oberlander, 1995, ex. 4a)
- c. A: And does the Head know? B: No. Oh, wait a minute. It was THE HEAD who arranged it. (Delin & Oberlander, 1995, ex. 8)
- d. Victoria turned over the body. She knew the killer's identity. (Delin & Oberlander, 1995, ex. 10a)
- e. Victoria turned over the body. It was SHE who knew the killer's identity. (Delin & Oberlander, 1995, ex. 10b)

The first and the third principles do not apply to *there*-clefts, as these sentences do not involve exhaustive reading but contain elements (or an element) on a non-exhaustive list (Davidse, 2012) (see (18a) and (18b)) and they have to introduce discourse-new information in the PVDP (i.e. this phrase is normally a focus, not a topic). As the presupposed information cannot be the PVDP, the cleft clause has to convey the discourse-old, presupposed, meaning. The other two principles are valid also for *there*-clefts, namely, they necessarily have to involve presupposition and they are stativising structures. However, *it*- and *there*-clefts not only differ in these two principles, but also in the possible grammatical category of the clefted XP. In *there*-clefts, this XP can only be a DP, whereas, in *it*-clefts, the category can vary (see (18c)). Moreover, the PVXP in an *it*-cleft is a contrastive element, while the PVDP in a *there*-cleft has to be part of a non-exhaustive list. Thus, the focus of the PVDP of the latter type is not necessarily contrastive but it can be, in case the list was presupposed to be exhaustive and

the *there*-sentence serves to claim the opposite with the addition of another element (or other elements) to the pre-existing list (see example (18d)).

- 18) a. *A: And does the Head know? B: And there was also THE HEAD who participated in the conspiracy.
- b. A: Who participated in the conspiracy? B: Well, there was GEORGE, JOHN and even THE HEAD who did.
- c. It was in the garden that I wanted to meet him.
- d. There is a HARVARD STUDENT/JOHN at the door as well, not only an OXFORD STUDENT/MARY.

A possible problem when interpreting the PVDP of a *there*-cleft as an element on a non-exhaustive list might be that the words *just* and *only* are applicable in these sentences, as in (19). Ward & Birner (1995) suggested that what is universal in these sentences is not the list reading but that they all have an instantiation of a variable in an open proposition (OP), and without this presupposed information, the mere list would be meaningless. For example, in (19a), this OP is that *there are people who can see this*, and the variable is *only me and you*. Ward & Birner claimed that the list might not be necessary once an OP is present. However, there is without doubt a list opened by the OP, which might then be closed, e.g. if *just* or *only* is added to the PVDP, as it is in the examples.

- 19) a. You are quite right David, it was engineered, seems there's only ME AND YOU who can see this. (Davidse, 2012, abstract)
- d. There were just THE TWO OF US. (from Chicago Tribune, as cited in Ward & Birner, 1996, ex. 8)

3.2. Sentences in the *There*-cleft Category

There are three important pieces of information as to what can be interpreted as a cleft, at least in the present categorisation, where the emphasis is on the definiteness of the PVDP. Firstly, not all the PVDP has to be in the focus domain for the *there*-sentence to be a cleft. If at least one phrase inside the DP is in list focus, the sentence can only be a cleft. In the examples of (20), the range in which the contrast of the focus applies indicates what the focused elements are. Secondly, if a copular *there*-sentence has a PVDP in list focus, it can be characterised as a cleft even without the cleft clause, as the cleft clause is still present just unpronounced (see (21)). Finally, *there*-sentences with infinitival subordinate clauses will also be placed in the same category as clefts if their matrix clause has a PVDP in list focus, considering that the infinitival clause can be transformed into a cleft-clause, as in (22a) and (22b). This transformation, however, does not work with the *it* expletive, as here, the subordinate clause has to be finite, hence the ungrammaticality of (22c) and the grammaticality of (22d).

- 20) a. There is also a BEAUTIFUL DOG that I want to buy, not only an UGLY CAT.
 b. There is also a beautiful DOG that I want to buy, not only a beautiful CAT.
 c. There is also a BEAUTIFUL dog that I want to buy, not only an UGLY dog.

21) A: Who else was she planning to marry? B: Well, there was JOHN, GEORGE, PETER...
 and TOM (that she was planning to marry).

- 22) a. There is also MARY (for us) to invite to the party.
 b. There is also MARY that we can invite to the party.
 c. *It is MARY (for us) to meet.
 d. It is MARY that we have to meet.

3.3. Personal Pronouns in *There*-clefts

Even though the PVDP of a *there*-sentence with list focus can be definite, the question of its case still remains unresolved, as these DPs introduce either discourse-new information, as they are new elements on a list. Resulting from this restriction, one would expect that personal pronouns, the only DPs that show case in English, cannot appear in such positions; however, this is not true. First and second person pronouns are not necessarily discourse-old; thus, they can be grammatical in a *there*-sentence. As the nominative and the accusative forms of the second person pronouns are the same, these do not help reveal the case of the PVDP; however, the first person pronouns might, as in (23a). Furthermore, there are special examples where the *there*-sentence does not convey discourse-new information and can thus have a personal pronoun as its PVDP, as in (23b). The conversational background of such a sentence has to be specific, though, as here, the PVDP in the *there*-sentence can only be the confirmation of an earlier proposition to add an individual to a pre-existing open list. For example, a possible setting for (23b) might be the following: Speaker B is complaining about his or her numerous meetings and that he or she cannot keep track of the people to meet. B starts listing the names: “Well, there is MARY, SARAH, GEORGE, SUSAN...” and then stops, which is when speaker A intervenes by suggesting that B add *John* to the list, as well: “And what about John?”. The DP is discourse-new here, and the *there*-sentence that follows is only a confirmation, or an echo, of A’s suggestion, where B refers back to the already discourse-old DP with a personal pronoun.

23) a. There’s also ME that you should take into account. You forgot about me.

b. A: And what about John? B: Oh, yes, there’s also HIM I have to meet!

The pronouns appearing in (23) are in the accusative form, which would suggest that the case of the PVDP is accusative in a *there*-sentence, or at least in a *there*-cleft. However, this conclusion would be too premature, as the accusative is considered to be the default case

in English. This means that when no case is assigned to a DP, the least marked case appears; thus, nominative is used only in nominative case and, apparently, accusative, in all the others (Frazier, 2007). Furthermore, not only accusative, but also nominative forms of personal pronouns can appear as the PVDP of a cleft, as illustrated by example (17e). A possible scheme to decide about the case of the pronoun could be that if the pronoun is followed by a relative clause, it is nominative and if the relative clause remains unuttered, the pronoun is accusative. However, a nominative form in such position, though felicitous, might be a hypercorrection, as it certainly sounds more prestigious than the accusative, which is an equally correct form. This paper does not aim to solve the problem of which pronoun is correct or what the case of the PVDP is; it only points out that the fact that personal pronouns can appear in *there*-clefts does not provide an answer to the question of what the case of the PVDP might be.

24) a. A: Who wants to do it? B: Well, it's only ME.

b. A: And what about the experiment? B: Well, it's only ?I/ME who wants to do it.

3.4. RCs and Cleft Clauses in *There*-clefts

There-clefts can have both RRCs and non-RRCs, as presented in (25a) and (25b) regardless of whether the PVDP is definite or indefinite. If it is indefinite, the RC has a referent that is not uniquely identifiable even after the RC is added, similarly to the case of *there*-sentences with broad or only contrastive narrow focus. The PVDP of a list *there*-sentence can be followed by all types of non-RRCs, not only the *which*-type, unlike in the case of a *there*-sentence with only broad focus or contrastive narrow focus. The same difference is discernible between any predicate nominal with an indefinite DP and one with a definite DP, which might not even be a predicate nominal, as related before. In addition to these two types of RCs, there is also a specific type of subordinate clause that only clefts can have, and this is the cleft clause, which

might be considered a kind of RRC (Reeve, 2007). However, this clause is more central to the mechanism of the sentence than other RCs are, as the cleft clause has the main verb of the simple sentence the cleft can be transformed into; moreover, the subject or the object of the simple sentence is the predicate of the matrix clause of the cleft sentence. Cleft clauses and other RRCs can appear together, in one sentence, as (25a) shows. In (25b), the cleft clause is not directly uttered, and a non-RRC follows the PVDP.

- 25) a. A: Who else do you have to meet? B: There is SARAH, MARY, SUSAN and THE MAN THAT CALLED YESTERDAY that I have to meet.
- b. A: Who else came to the party? B: Well, there was JOHN as well, who is a very clever man.

Even though the cleft clause can easily be confused with a simple RRC, the two differ significantly. As described by Huddleston (1984), the matrix clause and the cleft clause are two distinct units with a possible pause between the two when uttered (as cited in Davidse, 2012). Another difference is that the RRC refers only to the bare NP without its determiners and the cleft clause has the whole DP as referent (Davidse, 2012). The subordinate clause in (26a) is a RRC, whereas the one in (26b) is a cleft clause. In (26a), the NP *man* can be replaced by *one*, which is an NP (e.g. *the one that called yesterday*), verifying the supposition that the RRC only has the noun phrase as its referent; however, this scheme does not apply to the referents of cleft clauses. Therefore, names, which are full DPs, can appear in (26b): *It was [JOHN] [that called]*, and they cannot appear in (26a): **It's [JOHN THAT CALLED]*. Even though the subordinate clause in (26a) is not a cleft, the sentence can be extended into a cleft if a cleft clause is added at the end. A possible explanation for why the RRC does not have full DPs as referents and the cleft clause does is that the former adjoins to N' (as in Newson et al., 2006, p. 265) and the latter adjoins higher up, maybe to DP (as in Reeve, 2007).

26) a. A: Who do you want to meet?

B: It's the [MAN THAT CALLED YESTERDAY].

b. A: So, the woman called you?

B: No, it was [THE MAN] [that called].

The principle that no proper names can appear before a RRC is logical, even without taking the adjunction site of RRCs into account, as names are uniquely identifiable DPs, and RRCs serve to make the DP uniquely identifiable. Thus, in such a case, the presence of a RRC would prove redundant, as well as after any other kind of uniquely identifiable DP, e.g. *my mother, the Earth, the first day of Creation*.

4. Problematic *there*-sentences

As presented in this analysis, a *there*-sentence in list focus has to have a discourse-new PVDP in most cases, which DP is an element on an open list and can be either definite or indefinite; however, if it is indefinite, it refers to a type rather than to a token. This kind of *there*-sentence serves a different purpose from the existential, as its purpose is to introduce a new element (or new elements) on a list, whereas the *there* existential is the basic structure in sentences where the subject is not uniquely identifiable and the predicate is not verbal. In spite of this clear classification, in many cases, it is difficult to categorise a certain example, as many PVDPs behave in ways which are contradictory to expectations. Moreover, *there*-sentences can have a whole clause in post-verbal position, not only a DP. Some of these problematic types will be presented here.

4.1. False Definites

One example is the so-called false definites, which have syntactically definite but hearer-new and not uniquely identifiable PVDPs, as in (27a) (Ward & Birner, 1995). The most common definite determiner in such sentences is *this*, but other definites can also be

used, e.g. universal quantifiers, *all*, *every* (Ward & Birner, 1995). Interestingly, *the most* can also appear as *a most* in a false determiner position, as if to signal that this DP is not really definite. (27b) and (27c) are other examples of problematic sentences where the PVDPs here are neither uniquely identifiable nor necessarily hearer-old, even though they are definite.

Ward & Birner tried to find a situation in which the DP *the usual crowd* is not hearer-old to support their claim that the PVDP in a *there*-sentence has to be hearer-new in some respect.

According to them, the DP denotes a hearer-new token of a hearer-old type. However, this DP does not have to be hearer-old in any way, as it can be a possible interpretation of the sentence that all the speaker presupposes is that the hearer knows that there are people at the beach, and this alone will not make the DP hearer-old. According to another interpretation, the hearer might know exactly what set of people the speaker is referring to. In this interpretation, the emphasis is not on the identities of the referents either, but on the fact that it was the same set of people as it always is. This might better be represented by (27c), where the word *same* does not serve to identify the man, but rather to point out that there has been no change since the day before. Thus, sentences like (27b) and (27c) cannot be answers to questions regarding the identity of the referent of their PVDP (see (27d)).

27) a. There is the most curious discussion of them in our paper. (Ward & Birner, 1995, ex. 44b)

b. There was the usual crowd at the beach. (Ward & Birner, 1995, ex. 21)

c. There was the same man at the counter as yesterday.

d. A: Who was at the counter today?

B: The same man as yesterday.

B: *There was the same man as yesterday.

4.2. *There*-sentences with PVIPs/PVCPs

The classification of *there*-sentences into the existential and the list types is applicable only to copular sentences that have a DP as the post-verbal phrase. However, *there*-sentences can also appear with a participle clause, in which case, the post-verbal phrase is not a DP but rather an IP or a CP (see (28a)). Another example where the predicate is a whole clause is what Lambrecht (2001) defined as a presentational-eventive cleft, where this clause describes a whole event, as in (28b) (as cited in Davidse, 2012). The behaviour of the DPs in these sentences goes beyond the limits of this account as well as the categorisation of the PVDPs in presentational *there*-sentences.

- 28) a. There was a girl saved by the firemen.
 b. There was a girl got saved the other day.

5. Summary

This paper divides copular *there*-sentences with only a DP in post-copular position into two groups and claims that these groups are two distinct structures. The emphasis of this classification is on the definiteness of the PVDP, and is summarised in (29).

29)

	<i>Broad focus/ Contrastive narrow focus</i>	<i>List narrow focus - Clefts</i>
<i>reading</i>	– existential	– list (variables in OP)
<i>PVDP</i>	– no uniquely identifiable referent – mostly indefinite PVDP (based on classical view)	– referent mostly discourse-new, but can be hearer-old – both indefinite and definite PVDPs can occur
<i>RCs</i>	– non-RRC only with which-	– non-RRC possible

	relative – RRC possible, but still not uniquely identifiable	– RRC possible only if PVDP is not uniquely identifiable by itself – cleft clause present even if unuttered
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Even if, in some cases, they are hard to distinguish from each other, the acknowledgement of the two presented types of copular *there*-sentences might help account for differences in the behaviour of the PVDP. Though this categorisation is not applicable to all kinds of *there*-sentences, it most certainly uncovers many mysteries regarding the definiteness of the PVDP.

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