

The Noteworthiness of Some Copular Construction in English*

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1. Introduction

In colloquial English, sentences like (1-3) are commonly attested, and they occur in both actual conversations and movies or novels.¹

- (1) That's a beautiful dress you're wearing. (*The Sight of the Stars*, 2004, novel)
(2) That's a lovely accent you have there...New Jersey? (*Dumb and Dumber*, 1994, movie)
(3) That's a fine young man you have here. (*Ella Enchanted*, 2004, movie)

The sentences in (1-3) have a surface form that can be schematically represented as in (4), where DEM represents a demonstrative (DEM) subject, XP represents some sort of nominal, and YP represents some sort of gapped relative clause (RC).

- (4) Components of sentences in (1-3):
[DEM *be* XP YP]

And they resemble what are called *identificational* copular sentences with an RC modifier and *cleft* sentences with a DEM subject, as one can see from comparing (1-3) with (5-6).

- (5) English **identificational** copular sentences (Higgins 1973: 221, (56d, b)):
a. That is a tiger.
b. This is the house I mentioned.
(6) English **cleft** sentences with a DEM subject (Hedberg 2000: (3c) & (18)):
a. That was John that I saw.
b. That was the platoon sergeant that said that.

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¹ Unless otherwise noted, all grammatical data presented here are obtained from *Google* searches, personal observations in naturally occurring conversations, and have been verified by several native speakers of English. I wish to thank Jake Arstein for his assistance in data search, and Anastasia Coles, Stephan French, Sage Maliepaard, Keir Moulton, Anne-Michelle Tessier, and Kristen West for English data judgments. I'm especially grateful to Anastasia Coles and Sage Maliepaard for helpful discussions about some of the data presented here. Needless to say, I am solely responsible for any remaining errors.

Ever since Higgins's (1973) seminal work, English copular sentences have received much attention in the literature (see, e.g., Hedberg 2000, Mikkelsen 2011, Moltmann 2013, Reeve 2011, and the references there), but sentences like (1-3) have not been part of that discussion. In this paper, I aim to show how sentences like (1-3) are both similar and dissimilar to identificational copular sentences (identificational) and cleft sentences (clefts) and suggest a formal analysis that captures their characteristic properties. The upshot of my proposal will be that these sentences are a subtype of *equative* sentences whose matrix subject denotes the object of a direct perception, whose YP component characterizes the situation being perceived, and whose XP component indicates what is *noteworthy* about the situation.

Since sentences like (1-3) have not been dealt with in the literature, in particular in comparison to typical identificational or clefts², for ease of reference, I will henceforth call them *that*-presentational sentences (*that*-PSs) on the basis of the fact that they are typically uttered out of the blue in a manner analogous to presentational *there*-BE sentences in the sense of Lambrecht (1994) (e.g., *There are children playing outside*).

2. Characteristic properties of *that*-PSs

In this section, I introduce characteristic properties of *that*-PSs, starting from those that pertain to the matrix subject position, by comparing them with some identificational or cleft sentences.

2.1. Properties pertaining to the matrix subject

One of the first notable properties of what I call *that*-PSs is that their matrix subject is referential but not anaphoric. This is evidenced by the fact that, unlike identificational sentences or clefts, they cannot occur in answer to a *wh*-question, yet there is a sharp intuition shared by native English speakers that their matrix subject refers to some entity. To see this, compare (7-8) and (9).

(7) Identificational in answer to a *wh*-question:

A: What's this?

B: That's a tiger.

B': That's the house I mentioned the other day.

(8) Clefts in answer to a *wh*-question:

A: Who did you see?

B: That was John that I saw.

B': That was the thief that I saw.

(9) *That*-PSs in answer to a *wh*-question:

a. A: What's this?

B: #That's a beautiful dress you're wearing.

b. A: Who is this?

B: #That's a fine young man you have there.

² Hedberg (2000: 901) briefly discusses the datum given in (i), but she treats it as a *th*-cleft in the sense of Bolinger (1972) and therefore does not compare it with typical cleft sentences.

(i) **That's** the French flag **you see flying over there**, Pierre Dufour, a former legionnaire, pointed out.

The next characteristic property of *that*-PSs is that only DEM pronouns can occur as their matrix subject; in identificational or cleft sentences, other possibilities (i.e., ‘DEM + N’ or *it* subjects) are also permitted. To see this, compare (10-11) with (12).³

(10) Identificational sentences:

- a. **That**’s a tiger.
- b. **That animal** is a tiger.

(11) Cleft sentences:

- a. **That** was John that I saw.
- b. **It** was John that I saw.

(12) *That*-PSs:

- a. **That**’s a beautiful dress that you’re wearing.
- b. ***That outfit/dress** is a beautiful dress that you’re wearing.
- c. ***It**’s a beautiful dress that you’re wearing.

2.2. Properties pertaining to the XP position

When it comes to the XP position of *that*-PSs, the first thing to note is that only nominals may occur in this position. To see this, consider (13a,b) in comparison to (1) and (2).

(13) *That*-PSs with a non-nominal constituent occurring in postcopular position:

- a. *That’s **beautiful** you’re wearing.
- b. *That’s **lovely** you have there.

What is illustrated in (13) is a notable property because there is a sense in which the matrix subject and the YP of *that*-PSs form some sort of semantic unit in a manner similar to pseudo-clefts, but while pseudo-clefts may have an adjective phrase (AP) occur in postcopular position, as shown in (14), *that*-PSs cannot.

(14) Pseudo-cleft sentences with an AP occurring in postcopular position:

- a. What you’re wearing is **beautiful**.
- b. What you have there is **lovely**.

The next characteristic property of the XP position of *that*-PSs is that it can be occupied by any type of nominal—regardless of whether it is definite or indefinite, or singular or plural—if certain conditions are met. Strong quantificational phrases (QPs) are usually out but even they can be permitted if they contain APs like *conceivable*, *imaginable*, or *possible* and

³ What I call *that*-PSs may have *this* occur as their matrix subject, as shown in (i). But such examples are rare to come by, so I do not discuss such cases at length in the text.

(i) Well, Susan, **this** is a fine mess you are in.

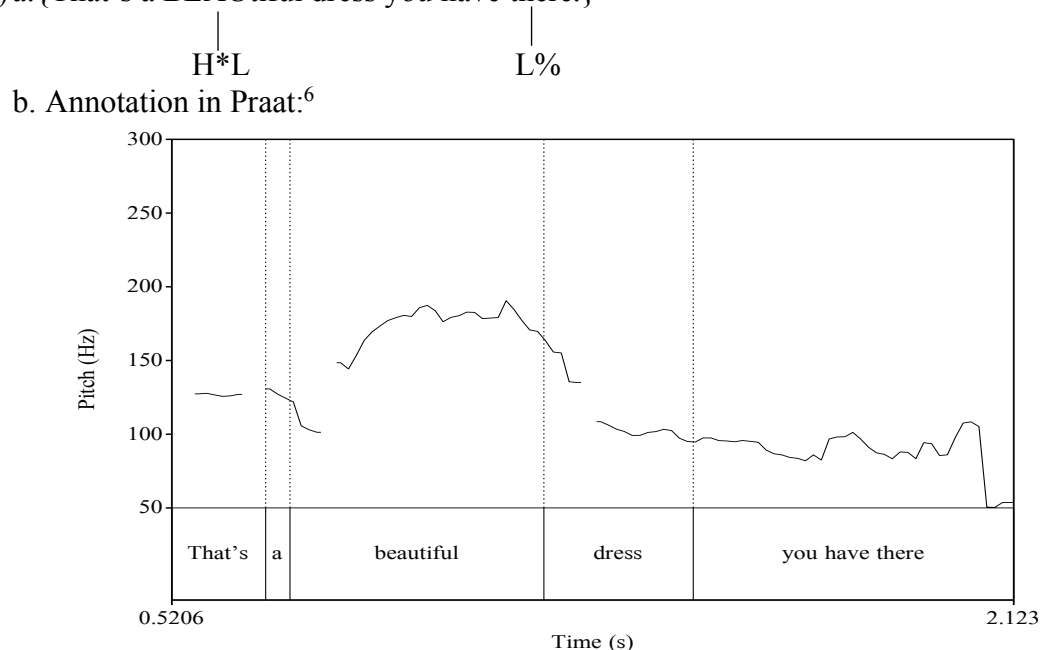
(*The Elements of Style*, 1959)

if some part of them is *focused*.⁴ To exemplify this, consider (15a-e).⁵ (Here and below, capitalization indicates focal stress.)

- (15) a. Context: Talking to a mother whose daughter just won a chess tournament.
That's **the EIGHTH wonder of the world** you have over there!
- b. Context: Talking to a twin sister who stole my dress.
That's **MY dress** you're wearing!
- c. Context: I'm at Mary's wedding. And to my knowledge, she is getting married to Bill.
That's **GEORGE** who's standing next to Mary! Is she by any chance marrying **HIM**?
- d. Context: Talking to two male friends of mine who are dressed up for some occasion.
Those are **BEAUTIFUL ties** you two are wearing!
- e. Context: Talking to a friend who is showing to me all the possible solutions to some linguistic problem I've been struggling with.
Wow, that's really **EVERY *(CONCEIVABLE) solution** you have there!

(15) already shows that the XP component of a *that*-PS carries a focal stress, but this can be further verified by the fact that the transcription of the sentence *That's a beautiful dress you have there* uttered by an English speaker has the tonal properties given in (16).

- (16) a. {That's a BEAUtiful dress you have there.}



Since clefts have similar prosodic contours, it may seem that there is no difference between clefts and *that*-PSs with respect to their information structure, but the foci that their XP

⁴ In this regard, *that*-PSs resemble *there*-BE sentences, as one can see from comparing (15e) with (i).

(i) There was every vegetable ***(imaginable)**.

(adapted from *Brixton Beach*, 2018)

⁵ These data have been constructed but their grammaticality has been verified by native English speakers.

⁶ I thank Aaron Braver for help with this Praat annotation.

constituents carry are of a different kind: while a clefted constituent carries what can be notated as *exhaustive focus* (Szabolcsi 1981, É. Kiss 1998, 1999), its syntactic counterpart in a *that*-PS does not, as the contrast between (17) and (18) shows.

(17) Cleft sentence:

It was JOHN that I saw. #And I saw Mary **too**.

(18) *That*-PS:

That's a BEAUTIFUL dress you're wearing. And you're wearing a lovely scarf **too**.

2.3. Properties pertaining to the YP position

Turning now to the YP component of *that*-PSs, there are at least four characteristic properties that are worth noting.

First of all, as mentioned in the introduction, the YP component has to be a gapped RC, and this is shown in (19).

(19)a. That's a beautiful dress you're wearing (***a dress**).

b. That's a lovely accent you have (***a lovely accent**) there...New Jersey?

Secondly, the gap position inside the YP component has to *semantically match* what occurs as the XP, and this is illustrated by the contrast between (20a) and (20b).

(20)a. But yeah, I think that's a great idea that you're **saying**.

(<https://www.rivaliq.com/blog/unleash-instagram-marketing-using-instagram-metrics/>)

b. #But yeah, I think that's a great idea that you're **wearing**.

Thirdly, although what is illustrated in (20) suggests that there is some semantic connection between the gap inside the YP and what occurs as the XP of a *that*-PS, 'XP + YP' strings actually cannot occur in argument positions and in this regard, *that*-PSs pattern with clefts and not with identificationals, as one can see from comparing (21) with (22-23).

(21) a. That's a beautiful dress you're wearing.

(*that*-PS)

b. *I bought [a beautiful dress you're wearing].

(object position)

c. *[A beautiful dress you're wearing] was expensive.

(subject position)

(22) a. That's a book written by Chomsky.

(**identificational**)

b. I bought [a book written by Chomsky].

(object position)

c. [A book written by Chomsky] was found in my office.

(subject position)

(23) a. It was a snake that the mongoose caught.

(**cleft**)

b. *John killed [a snake that the mongoose caught].

(object position)

c. *[A snake that the mongoose caught] was venomous.

(subject position)

Finally, the embedded clause and the matrix clause of a *that*-PS have to *overlap temporally*, and this is illustrated by the minimal pairs given in (24-25).

(24) a. Wow, that's really EVERY CONCEIVABLE solution you **have** there! (*that*-PS)

b. *Wow, that's really EVERY CONCEIVABLE solution you **had** there!

(25) a. That **was** a BEAUTIFUL dress you **were** wearing at the prom! (*that*-PS)

- b. *That's a BEAUTIFUL dress you **were** wearing at the prom!⁷

I should note at this juncture that while such a temporal constraint does not apply to identificationals, it does to clefts, as shown in (26).

- (26) a. That's the house I **mentioned** the other day. (identificational)
 b. It **was/*is** a snake that the mongoose **caught**. (cleft)

On the basis of the pattern that emerges from (24-26), one may think that *that*-PSs are more like clefts than identificationals. But while the YP of a cleft has to be *presupposed* (É. Kiss 1998, 1999) though it may be discourse-new⁸, the YP of a *that*-PS *need not* be although its content may be relegated as background information by the time the utterance has been processed, and this is a behavior that some identificational sentences exhibit as well. To exemplify this, while one cannot felicitously utter (23a) without presupposing (27a), one can felicitously utter (21a) or (22a) without presupposing (27b) or (27c).

- (27) a. $\exists x$ [the mongoose caught x]
 b. $\exists x$ [you are wearing x]
 c. $\exists x$ [Chomsky wrote x]

2.4. Section summary

To summarize thus far then, what I call *that*-PSs have the following syntactic and/or semantic properties:

- (28) Characteristic properties of *that*-PSs:
- The matrix clause has a DEM pronominal subject.
 - The matrix subject is referential but non-anaphoric.
 - The XP component has to be nominal.
 - The XP carries a focal stress but is not exhaustive in meaning.
 - The YP component has to be a gapped RC.
 - The gap inside of the RC has to be a nominal which matches the XP in meaning.
 - The YP does not form a nominal constituent with the XP.
 - The embedded clause and the matrix clause must overlap temporally (but see f.n.7).
 - The content of the YP need not be presupposed.

In the next section, I suggest a way to derive these properties within a formal framework. I also discuss the consequences of the proposed analysis of *that*-PSs for the study of English

⁷ Ordinarily, (25b) would be judged ungrammatical but if it is uttered in a context where the speaker is looking at a picture or a video clip that was taken at the prom and is commenting on the dress that the addressee was wearing at the prom, then it can be judged fine. I thank Mary Moroney for pointing this out to me.

⁸ As noted by Prince (1978: (41b)) and illustrated in (i), the content of the YP component of some clefts may be discourse-new, but even in such cases, we cannot deny that the YP's content is presupposed since for the utterance at issue to be judged felicitous, it has to be *taken for granted*.

(i) The leaders of the militant homophile movement in America generally have been young people. It was they who fought back during a violent police raid on a Greenwich Village bar in 1969, an incident from which many gays date the birth of the modern crusade for homosexual rights.

copular constructions by comparing it with some of the representative recent works on English clefts (e.g., É. Kiss 1998, Hedberg 2000) and English identificationals (Moltmann 2013).

3. Capturing the properties of *that*-PSs

3.1. The proposal

To begin, I'd like to first point out that, without the YP component, *that*-PSs look just like identificational sentences, but they will be judged infelicitous in an actual conversation with someone, *unless* they are accompanied by a gesture or pointing. To see this, consider (29).

- (29) Context: Out of the blue, without being accompanied by any gesture or pointing.⁹
- a. #That's a beautiful dress.
 - b. #That's a lovely accent.
 - c. #That's a fine young man.

Since conversations that begin with sentences like (29a,b,c) will most likely proceed as in (30), where the hearer asks for more information with which to resolve the reference of the matrix pronominal subject and the speaker answers the question by using a free relative, we are led to conclude that even though the YP component of a *that*-PS seems to be a modifier of some kind, its presence in a *that*-PS is necessary.

- (30) Context: A and B are strangers to each other and A is not looking at B nor is using any gesture or pointing.
- A: That's a beautiful dress.
 B: What is?
 A: What you're wearing.
 B: Oh, this? Thank you!

In light of the foregoing and the non-constituency of the 'XP + YP' strings in *that*-PSs illustrated in (21), the other conclusion we come to is that identifying the syntactic position of the YP component and capturing its relation to the matrix subject will unlock many of the puzzles sentences like (1-3) present.

Based on these conclusions, I propose that the YP of a *that*-PS modifies the DEM subject of the matrix clause yet its presence is necessary because, being a *deictic* element which denotes the object of a direct perception, the matrix subject has the status of a "defective" pronoun and this necessitates an overt clausal modifier spelling out its descriptive content, characterizing the situation being perceived at the same time, when the utterance is not being accompanied by any gesture or pointing.

To put this in more formal terms, I suggest that the matrix subject of a *that*-PS is a deictic D of type $\langle\langle e, t \rangle, e \rangle$ and it selects for a clausal constituent of type $\langle e, t \rangle$. More specifically, I propose (31) as its lexical entry.

- (31) Denotation of the matrix subject *that* which occurs in *that*-PSs:

$[[\mathbf{that}]] = \lambda f_{\langle e, t \rangle}. \lambda x \in C \text{ s.t. } \text{object.of.perception}(x) \ \& \ f(x) = 1$, where C is a contextually

⁹ These sentences will be judged fine in a *soliloquy* because the speaker will know what they are referring to.

salient subset of D_e .

This lexical entry shows that the *that* that occurs in *that*-PSs has a similar meaning to *the* under a Fregean analysis of definite descriptions, but while *the* is presuppositional,¹⁰ this *that* is not.

Since the DEM that occurs as the matrix subject of *that*-PSs does not select for an NP, its clausal complement instantiates what appears to be a *gapped* but *headless* RC. But as is the case with other more “ordinary” gapped RCs in English, this RC is comprised of a CP whose Spec position is occupied by an operator (Op) that is co-indexed with the gap position inside of it, as exemplified in (32). As a result, the syntactic complement of the matrix DEM subject of a *that*-PS denotes something of type $\langle e, t \rangle$, making the entire DP containing it denote something of type e .

(32) The underlying structure of the matrix subject and the YP component in (1):

$[_{DP} [_D \textit{that}] [_{CP} \text{Op}_i [_C' [_{TP} \textit{you're wearing } e_i]]]]]$

Turning now to the more global syntax, I propose that *that*-PSs have the predication structure headed by the equative *be* (BE_{EQ}) in the sense of Geist (2007): it denotes a function of type $\langle e, \langle e, t \rangle \rangle$, as given in (33), just like the *bes* that occur in sentences like (34a,b) (compare Partee’s (1986) treatment of equative *be*).

(33) The denotation of equative BE:

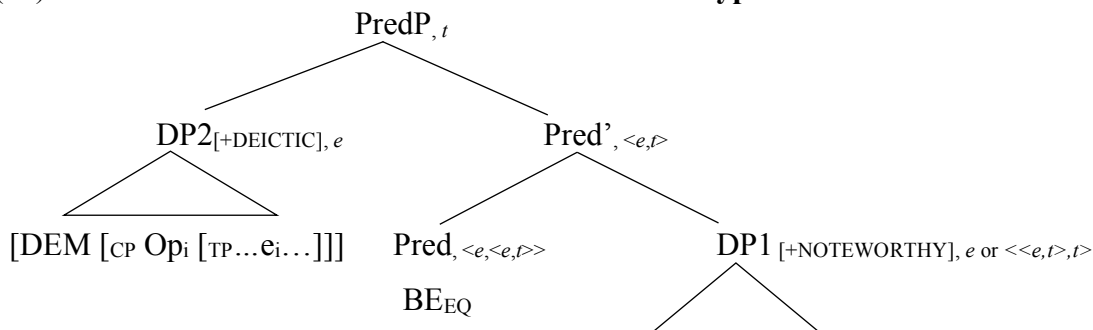
$[[BE_{EQ}]] = \lambda y. \lambda x [y = x]$

(34) Typical equative copular sentences in English:

- a. Cicero is Tully.
- b. John is my brother.

But the BE_{EQ} that heads the Predicate Phrase (PredP) of *that*-PSs differs from the copula that occurs in sentences like (34a,b) in that its inner argument (DP1) carries a *focus feature* which I notate as $[+noteworthy]$ for convenience, and its outer argument (DP2) is a *deictic definite description* with the internal structure given in (32), as depicted in (35).

(35) Predication structure of *that*-PSs and the **semantic type** of each node:



¹⁰ For example, Heim and Kratzer (1998: 81, (5³)) suggest the following lexical entry for *the*:

(i) $[[\textit{the}]] := \lambda f \in D_{\langle e, t \rangle}$ and there is exactly one $x \in C$ s.t. $f(x) = 1$. the unique $y \in C$ s.t. $f(y)$.

Furthermore, once the above structure is formed, due to its [+noteworthy] feature,¹¹ DP1 raises to the Spec of Focus Phrase (FocP), which is presumably projected right above the PredP, and this is followed by the DEM raising to [Spec, TP] for EPP reasons, and the BE_{EQ} raising to T to pronounce the tense/agreement features. Consequently, we obtain a surface structure where a deictic D occurs as the matrix subject followed by a tense-marked *be*, which is in turn followed by a focused DP and a gapped RC, as exemplified in (36) for (1). (Here and below, strike-throughs indicate feature valuations.)

(36) Derivation of (1) under the present analysis:

[_{TP} [*That*]_k [_{T'} [_T [*is*]_j] [_{FocP} [_{DP1} [~~+~~NOTEWORTHY] *a BEAUTIFUL dress*]_m [_{Foc'} [_{Foc} [~~+~~NOTEWORTHY]] [_{PredP} [_{DP2} [_D *t*]_k] [_{CP} _{Op}_i [_{C'} [_{TP} *you're wearing e_i*]]] [_{Pred'} [_{Pred} *t_j*] [_{t_m}]]]]]]]]

Under the present analysis then, derivation of *that*-PSs involves: (i) raising of a defective D to [Spec, TP], (ii) raising of BE_{EQ} to T, and (iii) raising of the syntactic complement of BE_{EQ} to [Spec, FocP]. Of these three movements, the first two are for phonological reasons and as such, they do not impact the semantic computation.¹² The third movement, however, has a semantic consequence, as we will see shortly. Hence, if we ignore the contributions of Tense/Aspect/Mood, then we can derive relatively accurate truth-conditions for *that*-PSs even if we assume a somewhat simplified tree structure such as what is given in (37) and feed it into the interpretive system. Note that in (37), the Arabic number 1 under '?' indicates the index of the focus-moved nominal, i.e., DP1. I postulate it here (and below) because I assume with Heim and Kratzer (1998) that the index of a moved constituent introduces the Predicate Abstraction (PA) operation via which the variable denoted by the trace of the moved element is bound by a lambda operator, as stated in (38).

¹¹ As Arum Kang points out, what I call [+noteworthy] is conceptually similar to what Ionin (2006) characterizes as a licensing condition for the indefinite but referential use of demonstrative *this* in English, which is exemplified in (i).

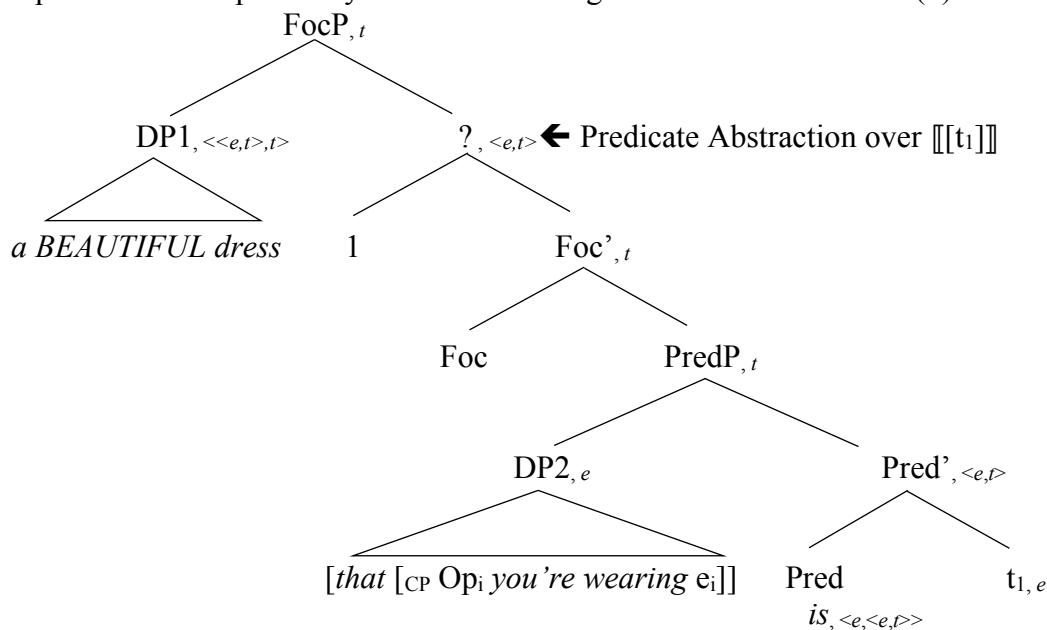
(i) There is **this man** who lives upstairs from me who is driving me mad because he jumps rope at 2 a.m. every night.

(Maclaran 1982: 85)

But while indefinite but referential uses of *this* do not require any special phonology (i.e., a focal stress) on any constituent of the sentence in which the apparent DEM occurs, the uses of *that* we are concerned with here do. Besides, what I call *that*-PSs do come in the form of clefts whereas indefinite but referential *this* can occur in any kind of sentence as long as it is construed as introducing a new discourse referent. So in this paper, I do not make a direct connection to the data that Ionin (2006) discusses which contain what she calls indefinite and referential *this*. Having said that, I do believe that future work needs to investigate why licensing such affective DEMs may require the relevant attitude holder's (which is typically the speaker's) intent to refer to a contextually salient individual that has a noteworthy property.

¹² Regardless of whether the deictic D and BE_{EQ} are interpreted in their base positions or surface positions, we obtain the same truth-conditions. For space reasons, I do not show this here but the reader can verify it.

(37) Input for the interpretive system in calculating the truth-conditions for (1):



(38) Predicate Abstraction Rule (Heim and Kratzer 1998: 186)

Let α be a branching node with daughter β and γ , where β dominates only a numerical index i . Then, for any variable assigner a , $[[\alpha]]^a = \lambda x \in D_e. [[\gamma]]^{ax/i}$.

Finally, I propose that what I call [+NOTEWORTHY] focus feature makes a semantic contribution at the discourse level, as spelled out in (39).

(39) Noteworthiness-Focus(F)-Marking (NFM) Rule:

A. Definition: When a syntactic constituent ZP is F-marked with [+NOTEWORTHY], the F-marking on it is translated as that function f s.t. f takes ZP's denotation as its input and returns that function g which has the same type as ZP's denotation s.t. g 's value description contains ZP's denotation and the predicate *noteworthy* and g lets the speaker assert that the way ZP's denotation holds true of the individual in its denotation is noteworthy.

B. Illustration of how the NFM Rule works:

- a. $[[\mathbf{beautiful}_{F-NOTEWORTHY}]] =$ via functional application (FA)
 $= [\lambda P_{\langle e,t \rangle}. \lambda x. P(x) \ \& \ noteworthy(P(x))](\lambda y. beautiful(y))$
 $=$ via λ -reduction
 $= \lambda x. beautiful(x) \ \& \ noteworthy(beautiful(x))$
- b. $[[\mathbf{George}_{F-NOTEWORTHY}]] =$ via FA $= \lambda y. \lambda x[x = y \ \& \ noteworthy(x = y)](George)$
 $=$ via λ -reduction
 $= \lambda x[x = George \ \& \ noteworthy(x = George)]$

To summarize the main claims of the proposed analysis then: *that*-PSs involve focus movement of XP to a pre-verbal position, the definite description comprised of *that* and a gapped RC refers to the object of a direct perception, *be* relates two individual-denoting expressions, identifying them with each other, the focus feature [+NOTEWORTHY] borne by XP

contributes an identity function that operates on the nominal's denotation, qualifying it with a speaker comment, the deictic D that forms a syntactic unit with a gapped RC raises to [Spec, TP] for EPP, and *be* raises to T to pronounce the relevant features.

3.2. Application of the proposed analysis to some sample data

When we interpret (1) based on the tree structure given in (37) and the Noteworthiness-F-Marking Rule given in (39), we obtain its truth-conditions in the manner spelled out in (40).

(40) Computation of the truth-conditions of (1):

- a. $[[DP2]] = \text{via FA} = [[\mathbf{that}]]([[CP]])$
 $= \text{via lexical entries and } \lambda\text{-abstraction over index } i$
 $= [\lambda f_{\langle e,t \rangle}. \alpha \in C \text{ s.t. object.of.perception}(\alpha) \ \& \ f(\alpha) = 1](\lambda z_i. \text{wearing}(z_i)(\text{you}))$
 $= \text{via } \lambda\text{-reduction} = \alpha \in C \text{ s.t. object.of.perception}(\alpha) \ \& \ \text{wearing}(\alpha)(\text{you})$
- b. $[[PredP]] = \text{via FA} = [[\mathbf{is}]]([[t_1]])([[DP2]])$
 $= \text{via lexical entries and from previous calculation}$
 $= [\lambda y. \lambda x[y = x]](m_1)(\alpha \in C \text{ s.t. object.of.perception}(\alpha) \ \& \ \text{wearing}(\alpha)(\text{you}))$
 $= \text{via } \lambda\text{-reduction}$
 $= 1 \text{ iff } m_1 = \alpha \in C \text{ s.t. object.of.perception}(\alpha) \ \& \ \text{wearing}(\alpha)(\text{you})$
- c. $[[?]] = \text{via PA over } [[t_1]] \text{ or any variable bearing the index } 1$
 $= \lambda m_1. m_1 = \alpha \in C \text{ s.t. object.of.perception}(\alpha) \ \& \ \text{wearing}(\alpha)(\text{you})$
- d. $[[DP1]] = [[\mathbf{a BEAUTIFUL dress}]] = \text{via FA}$
 $= [[\mathbf{a}]]([[beautiful \ dress]_{\text{F-NOTEWORTHY}}])$
 $= \text{via lexical entries, Predicate Modification (PM),}^{13} \text{ and the NFM Rule (39)}$
 $= \lambda P_{\langle e,t \rangle}. \text{there is some } y \text{ s.t. beautiful}(y) \ \& \ \text{dress}(y) \ \& \ \text{noteworthy}(\text{beautiful}(y) \ \& \ \text{dress}(y)) \ \& \ P(y) = 1^{14}$
- e. $[[FocP]] = \text{via FA} = [[DP1]]([[?]]) = \text{from previous calculations}$
 $= [\lambda P_{\langle e,t \rangle}. \text{there is some } y \text{ s.t. beautiful}(y) \ \& \ \text{dress}(y) \ \& \ \text{noteworthy}(\text{beautiful}(y) \ \& \ \text{dress}(y)) \ \& \ P(y) = 1](\lambda m_1. m_1 = \alpha \in C \text{ s.t. object.of.perception}(\alpha) \ \& \ \text{wearing}(\alpha)(\text{you})) = \text{via } \lambda\text{-reduction}$
 $= 1 \text{ iff there is some } y \text{ s.t. beautiful}(y) \ \& \ \text{dress}(y) \ \& \ \text{noteworthy}(\text{beautiful}(y) \ \& \ \text{dress}(y)) \ \& \ y = \alpha \in C \text{ s.t. object.of.perception}(\alpha) \ \& \ \text{wearing}(\alpha)(\text{you}).$

According to the last line of (40e), (1) will be true iff there is some *y* such that *y* is beautiful and is a dress and it is noteworthy that *y* is a beautiful dress and *y* is identical to the contextually salient object that the speaker perceives at speech time and it is what the hearer is wearing.

When we apply the proposed formal system to (15c), we obtain its truth-conditions as in (42) based on the LF structure given in (41).

¹³ I assume that any common noun (CN) modified by a first-order predicate is interpreted as in (i).

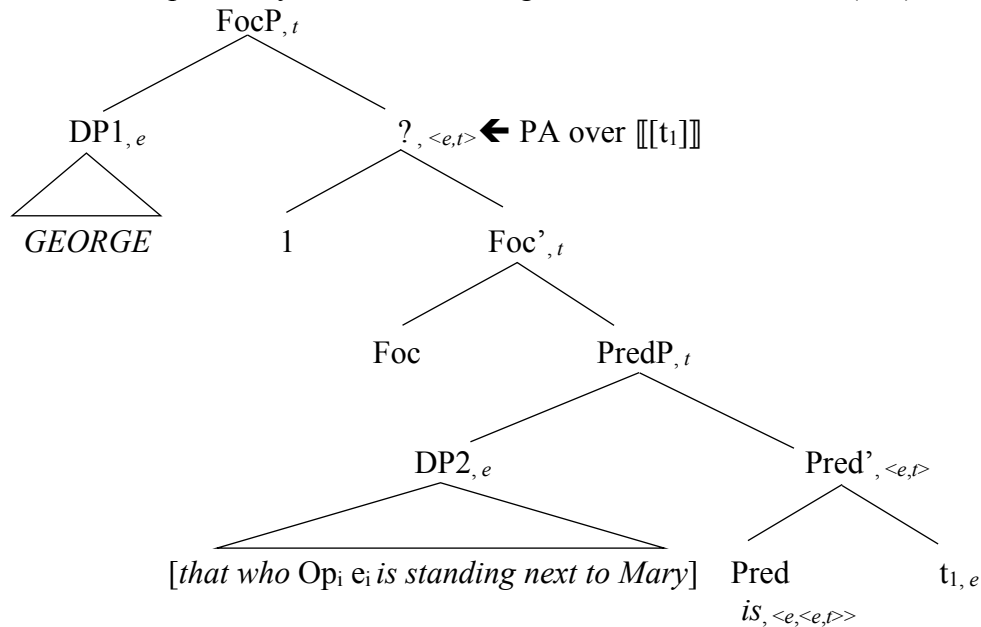
(i) Predicate Modification (Heim and Kratzer 1998: 65):

If α is a branching node, $\{\beta, \gamma\}$ is the set of α 's daughters, and $[[\beta]]$ and $[[\gamma]]$ are both in $D_{\langle e,t \rangle}$, then $[[\alpha]] = \lambda x \in D_e. [[\beta]](x) = [[\gamma]](x) = 1$.

¹⁴ I treat DPs headed by the indefinite article *a* as generalized quantifiers which have similar semantics to QPs headed by *some*. I also assume that even though in (1), the focal stress is borne by the AP *beautiful*, the F-noteworthiness marking targets the entire CN comprised of *beautiful* and *dress* since the sentence can be uttered in a context where the speaker is surprised by the fact that the hearer is wearing a dress and it is beautiful.

(15) c. That's **GEORGE** who's standing next to Mary!

(41) Input for the interpretive system in calculating the truth-conditions for (15c):



(42) Computation of the truth-conditions of (15c):

- a. $[[DP2]] = \lambda x \in C \text{ s.t. } \text{object.of.perception}(x) \ \& \ \text{standing.next.to}(Mary)(x) = 1$
- b. $[[PredP]] = 1 \text{ iff } m_1 = \lambda x \in C \text{ s.t. } \text{object.of.perception}(x) \ \& \ \text{standing.next.to}(Mary)(x)$
- c. $[[?]] = \text{via PA over } [[t_1]]$
 $= \lambda m_1. m_1 = \lambda x \in C \text{ s.t. } \text{object.of.perception}(x) \ \& \ \text{standing.next.to}(Mary)(x)$
- d. $[[DP1]] = [[\mathbf{GEORGE}]]$
 $= [[\mathbf{George}_{F-NOTEWORTHY}]]$
 $= \text{via lexical entry and the NFM Rule}$
 $= \lambda y[y = \text{George} \ \& \ \text{noteworthy}(y = \text{George})]$
- e. $[[FocP]] = \text{via FA} = [[?]]([[DP1]])$
 $= \text{from previous calculations}$
 $= [\lambda m_1. m_1 = \lambda x \in C \text{ s.t. } \text{object.of.perception}(x) \ \& \ \text{standing.next.to}(Mary)(x)](\lambda y[y = \text{George} \ \& \ \text{noteworthy}(y = \text{George})])$
 $= \text{via } \lambda\text{-reduction}$
 $= 1 \text{ iff } \lambda y[y = \text{George} \ \& \ \text{noteworthy}(y = \text{George})] = \lambda x \in C \text{ s.t. } \text{object.of.perception}(x) \ \& \ \text{standing.next.to}(Mary)(x).$

According to the last line of (42e), (15c) will be true iff the unique individual y such that y is George and it is noteworthy that y is George is identical to the contextually salient object that the speaker sees at speech time and this object has the property of standing next to Mary.

Turning now to cases like (15a), since their XP position is also occupied by an individual-denoting expression, we can derive their truth-conditions in essentially the same manner as we did for (15c), thereby arriving at what is given in (43) as the meaning of (15a).

(15)a. That's **the EIGHTH wonder of the world** you have over there!

(43) The truth-conditions of (15a):

[[**That's the EIGHTH wonder of the world you have over there!**]]

= 1 iff $\lambda y[y = \text{the eighth wonder of the world} \ \& \ \text{noteworthy}(y = \text{the eighth wonder of the world})] = \lambda x \in C \text{ s.t. } \text{object.of.perception}(x) \ \& \ \text{have.over.there}(x)(\text{you}).$

In view of (43), (15a) will be true iff the unique individual y such that y is the eighth wonder of the world and it is noteworthy that y is the eighth wonder of the world is identical to the contextually salient object that the speaker sees at the discourse time and the hearer has this individual at some location that is far away from the speaker. As is the case with (1) and (15c), this agrees with English speakers' intuitions about the meaning of (15a). Therefore, I conclude that the proposed analysis yields positive results for three representative data which exemplify what I call *that*-PSs.

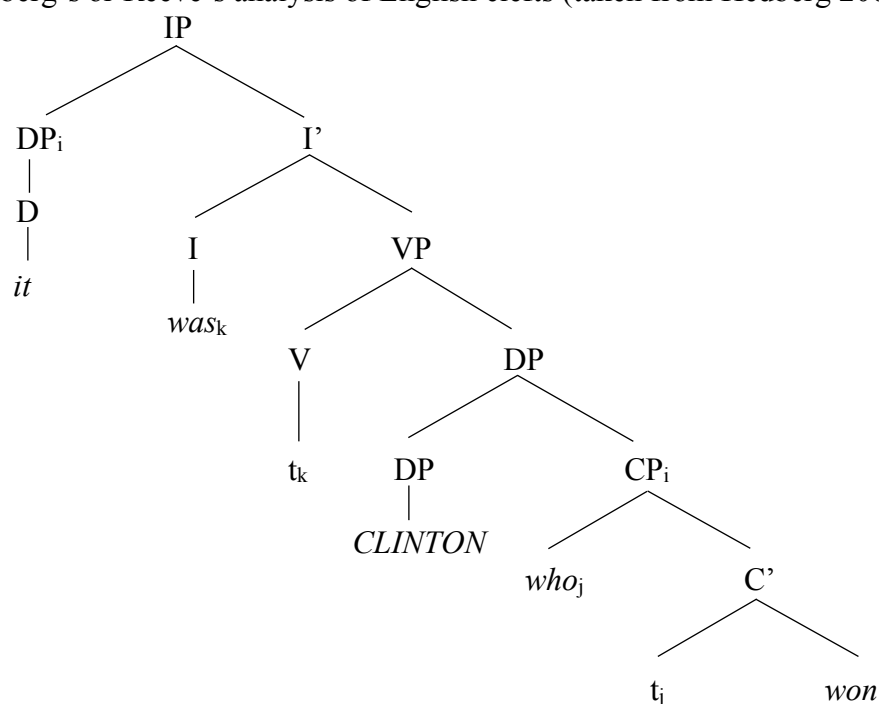
3.3. Consequences of the proposed analysis

Under the analysis I have just proposed, the matrix subject of a *that*-PS and the YP instantiate a *discontinuous* definite description after Spell-out. Notably, this idea is reminiscent of what has been proposed by authors like Jespersen (1927), Akmajian (1970), Percus (1997), Hedberg (2000), and Reeve (2011) for English clefts, and this may in fact account for why *that*-PSs exhibit similar behavior to clefts in some respects, as we have seen in section 2.

But while such authors argue for *extraposing* of the YP constituent of a cleft sentence, I argue for *raising* of a D category to [Spec, TP], which is independently motivated for EPP reasons anyways, and in so doing, I obviate the need for a rightward movement in deriving sentences like (1-3), a positive outcome in light of Kaynean (Kayne 1994) view of antisymmetry of syntax.

Given this, if we apply what I have proposed for *that*-PSs to sentences like (6a,b), we can prevent rightward movement or right adjunction in deriving English clefts also. Moreover, under the analyses proposed by authors like Hedberg (2000) and Reeve (2011), the "extraposed" RC ends up forming a syntactic constituent with what I call an XP, as one can see from (44), and this runs afoul of the fact that 'XP + YP' strings cannot occur in argument positions, as I have exemplified in (23).

(44) Hedberg's or Reeve's analysis of English clefts (taken from Hedberg 2000: 913, (35)):

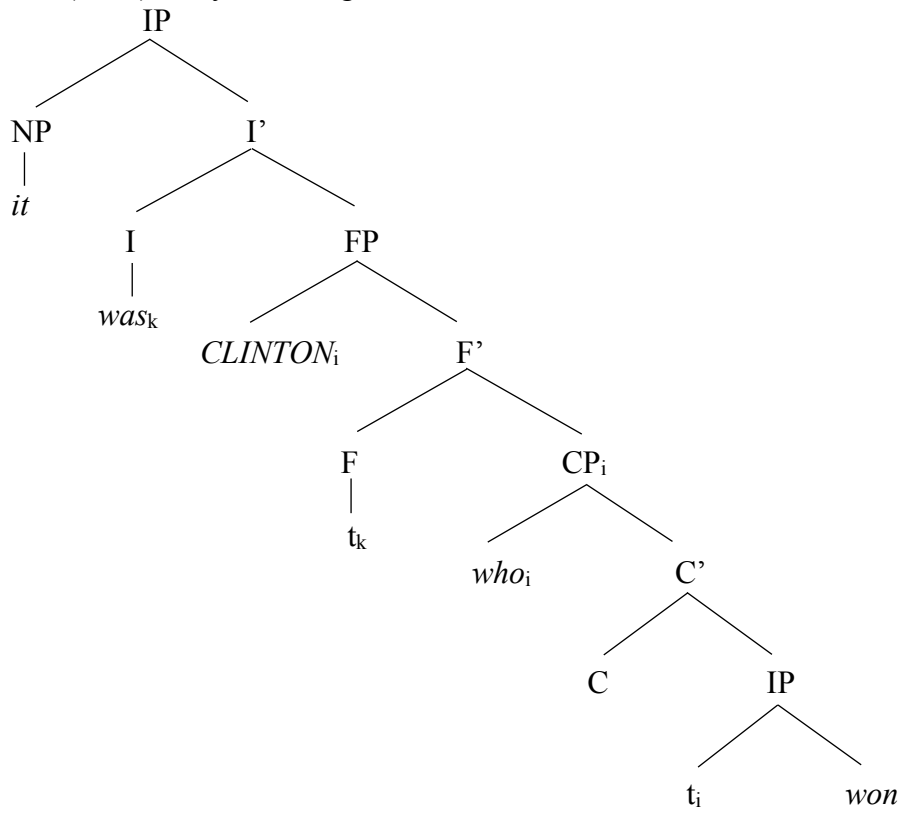


In short, then, the present analysis lets us capture the similarities between *that*-PSs and English clefts without running into the same problems as what are known as the ‘extraposition’ analyses of English clefts.

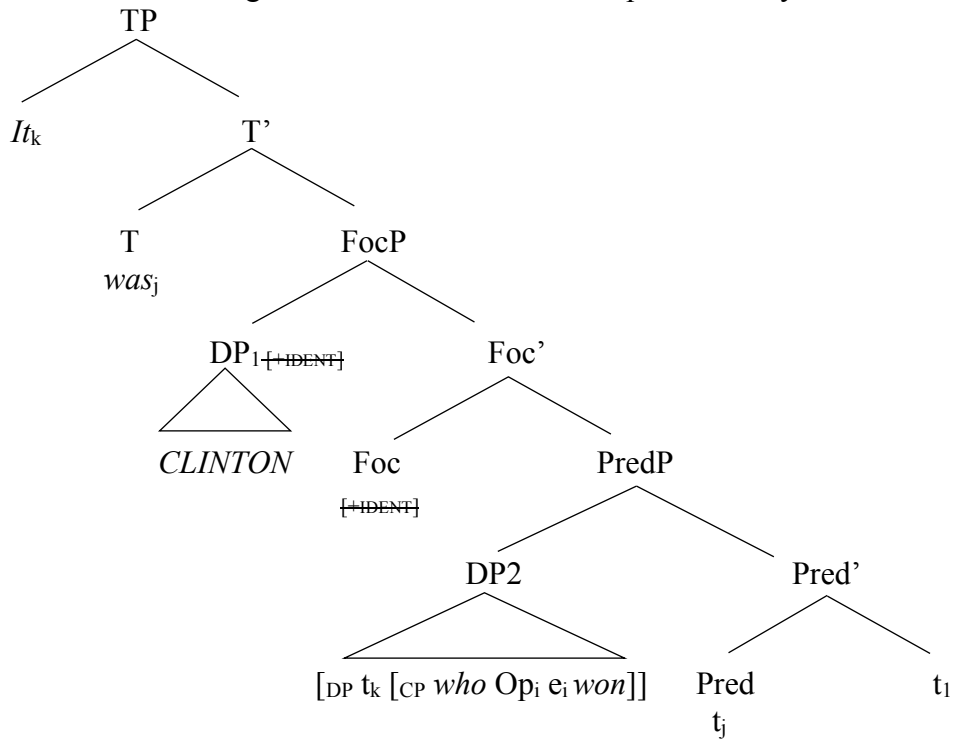
I should note at this juncture that the proposed analysis also enables us to incorporate the insights of so-called ‘expletive’ analyses of English clefts (e.g., Jespersen 1937, Chomsky 1977, Delahunty 1981, Rochemont 1986, Heggie 1988, É. Kiss 1998, 1999) while overcoming their weaknesses at the same time.

To see this, compare (45), the derivation of English clefts under É. Kiss’s (1998) analysis, with (46). Note that in (45), FP stands for ‘a focus phrase’, a node label that É. Kiss (1998, 1999) uses, and, in (46), ‘[+IDENT]’ stands for the focus feature [identificational] in the sense of É. Kiss (1998), which is to encode the *exhaustive/contrastive focus* semantics that characterizes cleft sentences.

(45) É. Kiss's (1998) analysis of English clefts:



(46) Derivation of an English cleft sentence under the present analysis:



Comparing these two derivations leads us to see that extending the present analysis to English clefts may let us capture their syntactic, semantic, and prosodic characteristics without treating *be* as a dummy element heading the FP or treating the matrix subject as semantically null, both of which have been part of the criticisms leveled against É. Kiss's (1998, 1999) analysis of English clefts in the literature (see, among others, Hedberg 2000 and Reeve 2011).

The analysis I have put forward for sentences like (1-3) also lets us capture their similarities to identificational sentences like (5b) since the equative predication structure outlined in (32) can be readily assumed for such cases as well (compare Moltmann 2013).

What I call *that*-PSs are predicted to behave differently from sentences like (5b), however, because while the *raison d'être* of identificational is to specify the identity of a concrete entity, the *raison d'être* of *that*-PSs is to specify some noteworthy aspect of a situation that the speaker perceives at topic time (TT).

Under this way of looking at things then, differences between *that*-PSs and identificational sentences stem from what the matrix DEM subject is meant to denote: in typical identificational sentences, it denotes a concrete entity. In what I call *that*-PSs, it denotes a more abstract entity which constitutes part of the situation perceived at TT. And this explains why in ordinary discourse contexts, the embedded clause and the matrix clause of a *that*-PS must overlap temporally: the situation described by the embedded clause has to be *perceivable* to the speaker at TT.

By the same reasoning, we can also make sense of why in a *that*-PS, the embedded clause's content need not be presupposed: its content can be something that even the speaker may not know about before perceiving the situation at TT.

Furthermore, what I have proposed here provides us with a way to differentiate between data like (1-3) and data like (47).

(47) That's a truly beautiful dress that I could wear to the prom if my father weren't such a tyrant!

Even though (47) looks like a variant of (1), under the present analysis, this sentence instantiates an *identificational* sentence because the 'XP + YP' string can occur in argument position, as shown in (48), so its YP component is analyzed as a noun modifier occurring inside DP1 in the syntactic structure proposed in (35).

(48) I saw [a truly beautiful dress that I could wear to the prom if my father weren't such a tyrant].

In addition, we now know that utterances like (49a,b,c) instantiate what I call *that*-PSs because their 'XP + YP' strings cannot occur in argument positions, as shown in (50a,b,c).

- (49) a. That's a cute puppy that you have in your picture!
(<https://www.listia.com/auction/26987869-lot-of-171-littlest-pet-shop-lps-dogs-of>)
b. This is a wonderful life that we have been lucky to find.
(<http://www.silvercentury.org/author/leigh-ann-hubbard/>)
c. That's a loaded question that you asked me about the name of Jesus.
(<https://www.made-magazine.com/todd-dulaney-on-the-art-of-walking-in-gods-promises/>)

- (50) a. *I like [a cute puppy that you have in your picture]!
 b. *Susan wants to experience [a wonderful life that we have been lucky to find].
 c. *I will answer [a loaded question that you asked me about the name of Jesus].

Lastly, the proposed analysis lets us account for why APs may not occur as the XP component of *that*-PSs, as illustrated in (13): under the present analysis, the sentential predicate of *that*-PSs is BE_{EQ}, and since this verb denotes a function of type $\langle e, \langle e, t \rangle \rangle$, only DPs of type *e* may occur as its syntactic complement.

Why then can certain QPs occur in XP position, as we observed in (15e), even though they would denote something of type $\langle \langle e, t \rangle, t \rangle$?

My answer is that such data obtain because raising of DP1 to [Spec, FocP] resolves a type mismatch, with the trace of the moved DP being interpreted as a variable of type *e*, but not all QPs can occur in XP position because the semantics *that*-PSs is such that their XP component has to denote something that is perceivable to the speaker at TT, so only QPs whose denotation ranges over *perceivable instantiations of kinds* may occur in that position.

To reiterate then, under the proposed analysis, the restriction on the XP position of *that*-PSs is due in part to the semantics and pragmatics of the construction. Notably, this line of analysis may give us a clue as to why presentational *there*-BE-existential sentences can have QP pivots only if they contain an AP modifier like *imaginable* or *conceivable*, as exemplified in (51a) (repeated from footnote 4), or their head nouns are words like *kind* and *type*, as observed by Lumsden (1988) and as exemplified in (51b), although verifying this possibility has to be left for future research.

- (51) a. There was every vegetable ***(imaginable)**.

(adapted from *Brixton Beach*, 2018)

- b. There is every ***(kind of)** fish in that market.

(adapted from Francez 2009: (76a))

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have looked at a subclass of English copular sentences that have not been discussed in the extant literature. These sentences have the surface form that resembles both identificational and clefts, yet they exhibit several properties that are not shared by them. I have argued that their characteristic properties emerge from the predication structure in which their subject is a definite description headed by a defective deictic D and their predicate is equative *be*.

According to the present analysis, English clefts, identificational like (5b) and (22a), and what I call *that*-PSs all stem from a PredP headed by BE_{EQ} whose XP component carries some sort of focus. But while identificational and clefts instantiate *categorical* judgments (i.e., ‘topic-comment’ information structure), *that*-PSs instantiate *thetic* judgments (i.e., ‘all-focus’ information structure).¹⁵ Hence, they are subject to different licensing conditions, and this explains why only the first two types of copular sentences may occur as answers to *wh*-questions, as illustrated in (7-9).

At the same time, however, under the proposed way of looking at things, while the matrix DEM subjects of *that*-PSs and English clefts are defective Ds which select for a clausal

¹⁵ For definitions for categorical vs. thetic judgments, see Sasse 1987, among others.

complement, the pronominal subjects of identificational sentences are not. Consequently, identificationals typically have a mono-clausal structure, unlike the case with clefts and *that*-PSs; if they come in a bi-clausal structure, as in (5b) or (22a), that's because the RC present in the sentence modifies the postcopular nominal, rather than the matrix subject.

One other notable implication of the present analysis is that in English, defective Ds may undergo Head-to-Spec raising to satisfy EPP, and if correct, this idea will provide a novel way to capture crosslinguistic variation in copular sentences. For example, French and Italian both have presentational sentences that look like what I call *that*-PSs although they have a locative clitic occur in T or subject position, namely, *y* and *ci*, respectively (see Karssenbergh 2017 for French and Cruschina 2018 for Italian). And since Italian is a *pro*-drop language whereas French is not, the fact that both languages require an overt locative element in their copular sentences to express what can be expressed by *that*-PSs or presentational *there*-copular sentences in English suggests that whether a language requires an overt subject or not may be independent of it being a non-*pro*-drop or a *pro*-drop language. Notably, Italian cleft sentences have *pro* subjects in contrast with what are referred to as *presentational-ci sentences* in the literature (see Cruschina 2018 and the references there). So even within a language, variation is found regarding copular sentences and why this may be so needs to be explained in future research.

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