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## 1 Introduction

The bulk of this chapter is concerned with a family of constructions which we illustrate initially in the [a] members of the following pairs:

- [1]    i a. *Her son was arrested by the police.*            b. *The police arrested her son.*  
       ii a. *It's unusual for her to be this late.*            b. *For her to be this late is unusual.*  
       iii a. *There were two doctors on the plane.*        b. *Two doctors were on the plane.*

Example [ia] belongs to the **passive** construction, [iia] to the **extraposition** construction, and [iiaa] to the **existential** construction. These constructions have the following properties in common:

- [2]    i They are non-canonical constructions; characteristically, they have a syntactically more elementary or basic counterpart, given here in the [b] examples.  
       ii They generally have the same core meaning as their basic counterpart, but they present – or ‘package’ – the information differently.

### The basic counterpart

The [b] examples in [1] are all structurally simpler than those in [a], as is evident from the fact that the latter contain extra words – the auxiliary *be* and the preposition *by* in [ia], the dummy pronouns *it* and *there* in [iia/iiaa]. In the examples chosen, the [b] versions are all canonical clauses, but there are similar pairs where both members are non-canonical, as in the negatives *Her son wasn't arrested by the police* and *The police didn't arrest her son*.

For the passive, there is an established name for the basic counterpart: [1b] is an **active** clause. But there is no established name for [iib]: this is simply the non-extraposition counterpart of [iia]. Similarly, [iiib] is just the non-existential counterpart of [iiia]. And this will be the case with the other constructions we deal with in this chapter: we have special names for the non-basic constructions, but not for their basic counterparts.

### Exceptional cases without a grammatically well-formed basic counterpart

We said that the non-canonical clauses **CHARACTERISTICALLY** have syntactically more basic counterparts. There are exceptions. In some cases the basic counterpart is in fact ungrammatical. This can arise, for example, with the existential construction:

- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| [3] | EXISTENTIAL  | NON-EXISTENTIAL                              |
|     | i a. <i>There was a bottle of wine on the table.</i> | b. <i>A bottle of wine was on the table.</i> |
|     | ii a. <i>There is plenty of time.</i>                | b. <i>*Plenty of time is.</i>                |

Both versions are permitted in [3i] (or in our original pair [1iii]), but only the existential version is grammatical in [3ii]. The verb *be* can't normally occur without an internal complement, so [3iib] is ungrammatical. There are other cases of this sort, as we'll see later.

### Core meaning and information packaging

The pairs in [1] have the same core meaning in the sense explained in Ch. 13, §4.2: since they are declarative clauses, having the same core meaning is a matter of having the same truth conditions. With pair [i], for example, if it's true that her son was arrested by the police it must be true that the police arrested her son, and vice versa. And likewise if [ia] is false, [ib] must be false too. The differences have to do not with the information presented but how it is organised and presented: the two clauses in each pair **PACKAGE THE INFORMATION DIFFERENTLY**. We refer collectively to the passive, extraposition and existential constructions – and others to be introduced below – as **information-packaging constructions**: they depart from the most elementary syntactic structure in order to package the information in special ways. Our major concern in this chapter will therefore be to describe the syntactic differences between these constructions and their basic counterparts and to investigate the factors which favour or disfavour the use of one of these constructions rather than the more basic counterpart.

### Exceptional cases where the core meanings are different

We have said that clauses belonging to one of the information-packaging constructions **GENERALLY** have the same core meaning as their basic counterpart: the qualification is needed because there are special factors that can cause a difference in the core meanings. Consider the following existential/non-existential pair:





clause subject appears internal to the passive VP, like internal complements (see Ch. 4, §1).

The auxiliary *be* of passive clauses takes on the inflectional properties of the verb of the corresponding active, except that any person and number features are determined by AGREEMENT WITH THE PASSIVE SUBJECT (compare *was* above with *were* in *The accidents were seen by everyone*).

### Voice and information packaging

The voice system provides different ways of aligning the two major NPs in a clause with the syntactic functions and hence of selecting their order of appearance. Generally the subject comes first in the clause and the object or internalised complement later. A major factor influencing the choice between these orders of presentation has to do with the **familiarity** status of the NPs. This involves the contrast between **old** (familiar) and **new** (unfamiliar) information.

To illustrate the contrast between old and new, suppose a conversation began with one of the following sentences:

- [9] i *The plumber says the dishwasher can't be repaired*, but I don't think *that's true*.  
 ii *My neighbour* came over this morning; *she* asked *me* if I'd seen *her cat*.

- In [i] the first underlined sequence represents new information: I'm telling you this, not treating it as something you are already familiar with. The word *that* is interpreted as “the dishwasher can't be repaired”, which is old – it's part of the information that has already been introduced.
- But information is to be understood in a broad sense that covers entities as well as facts or propositions. *My neighbour* and *her cat* in [ii] refer to entities that haven't been mentioned previously, so they represent new information. *She* is old information, since it makes a second reference to my neighbour. *Me* and *I* count as old because the deictic 1st and 2nd person pronouns refer to participants in the discourse who can always be regarded as familiar (if I'm telling you something, then there are at least two people in the world that we can both agree that we already know about: me and you).

In English there is a broad preference for packaging information so that SUBJECTS REPRESENT OLD INFORMATION. It's only a preference, of course: there's no question of a ban on subjects being new (that's obvious from [9], where both *the plumber* and *my neighbour* are new). But the preference is strong enough to be a clear influence on the choice between equivalent active and passive clauses. Compare these:

- [10] i a. *A dog attacked me in the park.*      b. *I was attacked by a dog in the park.*  
 ii a. *I bought a tie.*                              b. *?A tie was bought by me.*

In [i], the active example [a] has a new-information subject, and [b], the passive, has an old-information subject. The passive version will often be preferred in such pairs (though [ia] is nonetheless perfectly grammatical and acceptable).

Things are different in [ii], however. Suppose the context is one where I've just said that I've been shopping: *a tie* is new, while *I* (or *me*) is old information. Here only the active version will normally be acceptable.

**Active** is the **default** in the voice system. The use of actives is not restricted by actual **constraints** relating to the combination of old and new information, but the passive is. This is the generalisation that holds:

- [11] In a passive clause it is not normally possible for the **subject** to be **new** when the **internalised complement** is **old**.

There is far more to the choice between active and passive clauses than there is space to discuss here. But all we want to point out is that while they normally have the same core meaning, they are NOT FREELY INTERCHANGEABLE. They differ in how the information is presented, and one important factor in the choice between them concerns the status of the two major NPs as representing old or new information.

### 2.3 Short passives

In almost all cases the internalised complement is **OPTIONAL**. The passive clauses with no internalised complement are called **short passives**; the ones discussed so far are called **long passives**. Short passives are actually much more frequent than long passives. They have an important function: they enable us to **LEAVE OUT** something that would be obligatory in the active, namely a main clause subject. In [12] the active versions are not grammatical, but the passive ones are fine:

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| [12] | ACTIVE VOICE  | PASSIVE VOICE                                     |
|      | i a. * <i>Built the house in 1960.</i>              | b. <i>The house was built in 1960.</i>            |
|      | ii a. * <i>Damaged your car.</i>                    | b. <i>Your car was damaged.</i>                   |
|      | iii a. * <i>Know little about the cause of ALS.</i> | b. <i>Little is known about the cause of ALS.</i> |
|      | iv a. * <i>Made mistakes.</i>                       | b. <i>Mistakes were made.</i>                     |

The passive versions enable us to avoid saying anything about

who built the house (we may have no idea who it was, or it may not be relevant);  
which employee of ours accidentally damaged your car (there are liability issues!);

who exactly is ignorant (nobody knows the cause of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis); or

who blundered (people don't always want to directly admit error).

### 2.4 Lexical restrictions

Most transitive active clauses have passive counterparts, but not all. Some exceptional verbs are (either generally or in certain uses) inadmissible in passives:

- [13] i a. *The town boasts a great beach.* b. \**A great beach is boasted by the town.*  
 ii a. *Max lacks tact.* b. \**Tact is lacked by Max.*  
 iii a. *Jill has three wonderful kids.* b. \**Three wonderful kids are had by Jill.*  
 iv a. *The jug holds three litres.* b. \**Three litres are held by the jug.*

**Boast** and **lack** occur only in active clauses. **Have** occurs in passive constructions, in its dynamic sense, as in *She was happy to find there was both water and gas to be had*. **Hold** occurs in passives like *It was held in place by duct tape*, but not where it means “contain”.

## 2.5 Passives of ditransitive actives

Ditransitive clauses have two objects. Usually the passive of a ditransitive has a subject corresponding to the first one, the **indirect** object. However, some speakers (BrE rather than AmE) have an alternative passive construction, illustrated by [14iib], in which the subject corresponds to the **direct** object of the active ditransitive, but the passive of the construction with one object and a PP complement, as in [14iiiib], is widely preferred over it:

- [14] i a. *The boss gave me the key.* b. *I was given the key by the boss.*  
 ii a. *The boss gave me the key.* b. *<sup>%</sup>The key was given me by the boss.*  
 iii a. *The boss gave the key to me.* b. *The key was given to me by the boss.*

## 2.6 Prepositional passives

The subject of a passive may correspond to an object of a preposition rather than of the verb (we cite short passives in [15] for greater naturalness; the [b] examples are not exactly equivalent to the actives shown in [a]):

- [15] i a. *People are looking into the matter.* b. *The matter is being looked into.*  
 ii a. *They took advantage of us.* b. *We were taken advantage of.*  
 iii a. *Someone has slept in this bed.* b. *This bed has been slept in.*

In the [b] examples the doubly underlined preposition is stranded: no actual complement follows it, but an understood complement is retrievable from the subject. Clauses of this kind are called **prepositional passives**. Two subtypes can be distinguished.

### (a) Specified preposition

In [15i–ii] the preposition is **specified** by the preceding verb or verbal idiom. **Look** is a prepositional verb (see Ch. 7, §7.2) specifying *into* as preposition for the meaning “investigate”, and the idiom *take advantage* specifies *of*. This type of passive has **lexical** restrictions on its availability: some verbs or verbal idioms permit the

prepositional passive and some don't. *Come across* (meaning "encounter") and *lose patience with* don't permit it:

- [16] i a. *We came across some old letters.*      b. \**Some old letters were come across.*  
 ii a. *He lost patience with the children.*      b. \**The children were lost patience with.*

### (b) Unspecified preposition

In [15iii] the preposition is not specified; it has its ordinary meaning and in the active can be replaced by other prepositions: *Someone has slept under / on / near this bed*. Passives of this type are admissible only if the clause describes some significant EFFECT on the subject referent or some significant PROPERTY of it. Example [15iiib] is acceptable because sleeping in a bed affects it (that's why we change the sheets). And *Nauru can be driven around in about half an hour* is acceptable because if you can drive around a country in two hours, it is very small, and that's a significant property. On the other hand, \**The bed was sat near* is not acceptable: sitting near the bed wouldn't affect it, and doesn't suggest any significant property of it.

## 2.7 *Get*-passives

The passive clauses considered so far have the auxiliary *be*; we can call them *be*-passives. There is also a passive with *get* instead of *be*:

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| [17] | <b>BE-PASSIVE</b>                                  | <b>GET-PASSIVE</b>                                    |
| i    | a. <i>Pat <u>was</u> bitten by a snake.</i>        | b. <i>Pat <u>got</u> bitten by a snake.</i>           |
| ii   | a. <i>They <u>weren't</u> charged until later.</i> | b. <i>They <u>didn't get</u> charged until later.</i> |
| iii  | a. <i>She <u>was</u> elected mayor in 1990.</i>    | b. <i>She <u>got</u> elected mayor in 1990.</i>       |
| iv   | a. <i>Several shots <u>were</u> heard.</i>         | b. * <i>Several shots <u>got</u> heard.</i>           |

*Be* is an auxiliary verb, but *get* isn't. In the negative and interrogative, therefore, *get*-passives require the dummy auxiliary *do*, as seen in [iib].

The *be*-passive is stylistically neutral, but *get*-passives are a mark of **informal style**. They are used for describing situations where the subject-referent is involved in bringing the situation about, or where there is an adverse or beneficial effect on the subject-referent, as in [i–iii]. If no such factor is present, as with the inanimate subject in [iv], only the *be*-passive is acceptable.

## 2.8 Bare passives

*Be*-passives and *get*-passives have *be* and *get* as catenative verbs with past-participial complements. Past-participial clauses also occur elsewhere with passive interpretation, and we call these **bare passives** because they lack the *be* and *get* markers. They can be either **complements** or **modifiers**.



## (a) Bare passives as complement in complex catenatives

A few verbs that occur in the complex catenative construction – the one with an ‘intervening NP’ (Ch. 13, §4.3) – license bare passives as complement. They include *have*, *get* (in a different use from that of *get*-passives), *order*, and certain sense verbs, such as *see*:

- [18] i *We had the documents checked by a lawyer.*  
 ii *You should get yourself vaccinated against measles.*  
 iii *She ordered the records destroyed.*  
 iv *He saw his son knocked down by a bus.*

## (b) Bare passives as modifier

As modifiers, bare passives function in the structure of NPs:

- [19] i *We want [a house built after 1990].*  
 ii *[The complaint made by her lawyer] is being investigated.*

These are comparable to relative clauses in *be*-passive form: *a house which was built after 1990*; *the complaint that was made by her lawyer*.

## 2.9 Adjectival passives

*Be* can be followed by an adjective, and sometimes an adjective is formed from the past participle of a verb. This case must be distinguished from the *be*-passive. We can see this from the ambiguity of examples like [20], which can be either:

- [20] a. *Her leg was broken.*      b. *They were married.*

As a passive clause, [a] describes an event, as in *Her leg was broken in a hockey accident*. But it can also be a **complex-intransitive** clause – an intransitive clause containing a predicative complement, as in *Her leg was sore*. In this interpretation, [a] describes a state resulting from an earlier event: *She was using crutches because her leg was broken*. Here we say that *broken* (not the whole clause) is an **adjectival passive**.

The *be*-passive reading of [b] also involves an event, as in *They were married in the College Chapel*, but the complex-intransitive interpretation describes a state resulting from a prior event, as in *They were still happily married*.

The key syntactic difference between the constructions is that THE ADJECTIVAL PASSIVE CAN OCCUR WITH COMPLEX-INTRANSITIVE VERBS OTHER THAN *BE*:

- [21] a. *Her leg felt broken.*      b. *They stayed married.*

Here *broken* and *married* have only their adjectival, state interpretation.

### Prescriptive grammar note

Some writers on scientific topics appear to think that passives are required for objectivity (*The mice were anaesthetised* rather than *We anaesthetised the mice*). At the other extreme, some usage books and style guides insist that the passive is better avoided altogether. Both policies are excessive: passives are fully grammatical and acceptable, and a passive is often the right stylistic choice.

Short passives are sometimes criticised for a lack of frankness: they conceal the identity of the agent. In *Mistakes were made* we are not told who made the mistakes. But that is not an objection to passive clauses; there are many ways of avoiding identifying the responsible agent. For example, *Mistakes occurred* does not specify who made the mistakes either, but that is not a passive clause.

## 3 Extraposition

There are actually two **extraposition** constructions: **subject** extraposition and **internal complement** extraposition. Subject extraposition (the one illustrated in our original example [1iia]) is more commonly encountered, so we'll deal with it first.

### 3.1 Subject extraposition

Clauses with a subordinate clause subject generally have variants with the subordinate clause at the end and dummy *it* as subject:

[22]	BASIC VERSION	VERSION WITH EXTRAPOSITION
i	a. <i>That he was acquitted disturbs her.</i>	b. <i>It disturbs her that he was acquitted.</i>
ii	a. <i>How she escaped remains a mystery.</i>	b. <i>It remains a mystery how she escaped.</i>
iii	a. <i>To give up now would be a mistake.</i>	b. <i>It would be a mistake to give up now.</i>

At least two distinctive properties of the subject outlined in Ch. 4, §2.1 show that the dummy *it* must be the subject: it occurs before the VP, in the basic subject position, and it occurs after the auxiliary when there is subject–auxiliary inversion (the closed interrogative counterpart of [ib], for example, is *Does it disturb her that he was acquitted?*).

We call the subordinate clause in the [b] version an **extraposed subject**, but that doesn't mean it's a kind of subject; it's an element in extraposed position, outside the VP, that **CORRESPONDS** to the subject of the basic version.

With minor exceptions, extraposition is admissible only with subordinate clauses. Note, for example, the contrast between [22i] and [23]:

[23]	a. <i>His letters disturb her.</i>	b. <i>*It disturbs her his letters.</i>
------	------------------------------------	---

The subject in [a] is an NP and cannot be extraposed. The subordinate clauses concerned are predominantly declarative and interrogative content clauses and infinitivals, as in [22i–iii] respectively. (Gerund-participials are also found extraposed under sharply limited conditions; *It's been a pleasure talking to you* is an example.)

### Extraposition: more frequent and less constrained than the alternative

In [22] we have labelled the version on the left as the syntactically basic one: the one on the right has the extra pronoun *it*, and has a structure not found in any canonical clause. However, in pairs like these there are good reasons for regarding the version with extraposition as the default, as far as information packaging is concerned.

In the first place, it is much more common. This is because subordinate clauses tend to be **heavier** (longer and structurally more complex) than NPs, and there is in general a preference for placing heavy material at the end of the matrix clause, where it's easier to process.

Secondly, there are informational constraints applying to the version without extraposition but not to the one with extraposition, so extraposition is acceptable in a wider range of contexts. The context for a non-extraposed subject must permit its content to be taken as old information – familiar to the addressee, either through previous mention or the addressee's current knowledge. Take the following two passages, from a science article on human skin:

- [24] i *It is not easy to see, however, what positive advantages may have been responsible for human evolution toward nakedness, as compared with other primates. [It has been suggested that lack of a heavy fur may have had some adaptive value for running and hunting in the open savannas], but this is conjectural.*
- ii *In the effort to enhance its attractiveness, men and women submit their skin to systematic stretching, scraping, gouging, soaking and burning . . . To give it a 'healthy' tan, the skin is ritualistically exposed to excessive and injurious doses of sunlight and wind.  
[That the skin survives these daily torments is a remarkable tribute to its toughness.]*

The non-extraposed version of the bracketed clause in [i] would be completely unacceptable in that context. The content of the underlined clause can't be construed as old. The writer is introducing a new idea that might represent a positive advantage of nakedness: the content clause expresses the main informational content of the bracketed clause, and has to be extraposed.

In [ii] the first paragraph lists a number of 'torments' inflicted on the skin, and then we get a non-extraposed subject clause (underlined) that does represent old information: the reader of course knows already that our skin survives. What is new in this sentence is that our skin's durability indicates how tough it is. That means the constraint on using the non-extraposed version is satisfied. It doesn't mean, though, that we MUST use the extraposed version. It would also be acceptable to use the default version, with extraposition: *It is a remarkable tribute to its toughness that the skin survives these daily torments.*

## 3.2 Internal complement extraposition

Extraposition of an internal complement is found predominantly in complex-transitive constructions, where it is just about obligatory:

- [25] i a. \**I find that he gave up disappointing.*      b. *I find it disappointing that he gave up.*  
 ii a. \**She considers that I didn't consult her quite outrageous.*      b. *She considers it quite outrageous that I didn't consult her.*

In [b] dummy *it* appears as object and the subordinate clause as extraposed object.

The [a] versions are inadmissible by virtue of having the subordinate clause located between the verb and another complement.

## 4 Existential clauses

The pronoun *it* is not the only pronoun used as a dummy in English. The spelling *there* is today used for two different words, one a locative rhyming with *dare* and meaning “in or at that place” (as in *Put it there*), and the other a dummy pronoun pronounced unstressed with a reduced vowel. The primary role of the dummy *there* is to fill the syntactic subject position in clauses like the [b] examples in [26], which are called **existential clauses**:

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| [26] | BASIC VERSION                                  | EXISTENTIAL CLAUSE  |
| i    | a. <i><u>Some keys</u> were near the safe.</i> | b. <i><u>There</u> were <u>some keys</u> near the safe.</i> |
| ii   | a. <i><u>A nurse</u> was present.</i>          | b. <i><u>There</u> was <u>a nurse</u> present.</i>          |

*There* is the subject of the existential clauses in [26], just as *it* is subject in the extraposed subject construction, and similar arguments support this conclusion:

*there* occupies the basic subject position before the VP;

in subject–auxiliary inversion constructions it occurs after the auxiliary, as in *Was there a nurse present?*

It is significant that *there* also occurs as subject in interrogative tags, as in:

- [27] *There was a nurse present, wasn't there?*

Only pronouns are admissible in a tag like the one here, as we noted in Ch. 9, §2.3. That means we not only know dummy *there* is a subject, we know it is a pronoun.

We will refer to *some keys* and *a nurse* in [26ib] and [26iib] as **displaced subjects**. A displaced subject (like an extraposed subject) is not a kind of subject; it's the phrase that corresponds to the subject of the syntactically more basic construction.<sup>2</sup>

### Bare existentials

One common kind of existential clause contains just dummy *there*, the verb *be*, and a displaced subject (possibly with optional adjuncts that have no bearing on the

<sup>2</sup> *There* is an unusual kind of subject: it has no inherent number but takes on the number of the displaced subject – plural in [26ib], with *were* as the verb, and singular in [iib], with *was*. It's comparable to the relative pronouns *which* and *who*, which take on the number of their antecedent (*the guys who were talking* vs *the guy who was talking*). Note, however, that in informal style, especially in present tense declaratives with reduced *is*, many speakers treat *there* as always singular: they say %*There's a few problems* instead of *There are a few problems*. Prescriptivists disapprove, but the usage is too well established to be treated as an occasional slip.

structure or acceptability). We call these **bare existentials**. They have NO CORRESPONDING BASIC VERSION. The verb *be* normally requires an internal complement, so the basic versions that would have corresponded to bare existentials are all ungrammatical:

[28]	BARE EXISTENTIAL CLAUSE	UNGRAMMATICAL BASIC VERSION
i	a. <i>There is a god.</i>	b. * <i>A god is.</i>
ii	a. <i>There are many species of spiders.</i>	b. * <i>Many species of spiders are.</i>
iii	a. <i>There has been no news of them.</i>	b. * <i>No news of them has been.</i>
iv	a. <i>There was a serious accident.</i>	b. * <i>A serious accident was.</i>

The general term ‘existential’ is based on examples like [ia] and [iia] in [28], which are used to assert the existence of various things. But the existential construction described in this section covers other uses than merely talking about existence.

### Extended existentials

There are also **extended existentials**, which contain an additional element, the **extension**, within the VP. Some examples are given in [29], with the extension underlined.

[29]	i	LOCATIVE	<i>There's a snake <u>in the grass</u>.</i>
	ii	TEMPORAL	<i>There's another meeting <u>this afternoon</u>.</i>
	iii	PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVE	<i>There are still some seats <u>available</u>.</i>
	iv	HOLLOW INFINITIVAL	<i>There is poor old Albert <u>to consider</u>.</i>

- **Locative** complements as in [i] are particularly common extensions.
- **Temporal** extensions occur with displaced subjects that denote events, e.g. *another meeting* in [ii].
- **Predicative** complement extensions are restricted to a range of adjectives denoting temporary states as in [iii], e.g. *absent, available, missing, present, vacant*, and *wrong* (as in *There's something wrong*). Most adjectives don't occur as extensions like this: a sentence like *Some politicians are honest* doesn't have a corresponding bare existential \**There are some politicians honest*.

**Infinitival** extensions are hollow clauses in the sense of Ch. 13, §2.4: they have a gap in internal complement function, usually object, as in [iv], where there is a missing object for *consider*: we interpret [iv] as being about consideration for poor old Albert.

### Constraints on the use of basic and existential constructions

We showed in [28] that bare existential clauses don't have non-existential counterparts. The same is true of existentials extended by a hollow infinitival: [29iv] cannot be reformulated as \**Poor old Albert is to consider*. With other kinds of extended existential we cannot make a general statement about either the existential or the non-existential version being the default: there are constraints applying to both versions. We'll briefly mention two that apply to both bare and extended existentials.

#### (a) Indefinite NPs

With **indefinite NPs** there is a PREFERENCE FOR THE EXISTENTIAL CONSTRUCTION. In fact sometimes only the existential is acceptable:

- [30] i a. A policeman is here.                      b. There's a policeman here.  
 ii a. \*Two holes were in my sock.              b. There were two holes in my sock.

In [i] both versions are possible, but the second is considerably more likely.

In [ii] the basic version is unacceptable (this is generally the case with NPs denoting abstract entities).

### (b) Definite NPs

With **definite NPs** the preference is reversed, with the NON-EXISTENTIAL MORE LIKELY:

- [31] a. Your mother is here.                      b. ?There's your mother here.

Displaced subjects are presented as information that is **new to the addressee**. Definite NPs tend to be associated with **old** information, but they don't have to be. Consider this example:

- [32] A:     Who could we get to give a lecture on intonation?  
 B:     Well, [there's Sue Jones,] I suppose.

The underlined definite NP represents **new** information – the name is offered as a suggestion.

### Presentationals

A construction similar to the existential, known as the **presentational** clause, has dummy *there* as subject not of *be* but of an intransitive verb such as *appear*, *emerge*, *follow*, or *remain*:

- [33] a. Many problems remain.                      b. There remain many problems.

## 5 The *it*-cleft construction

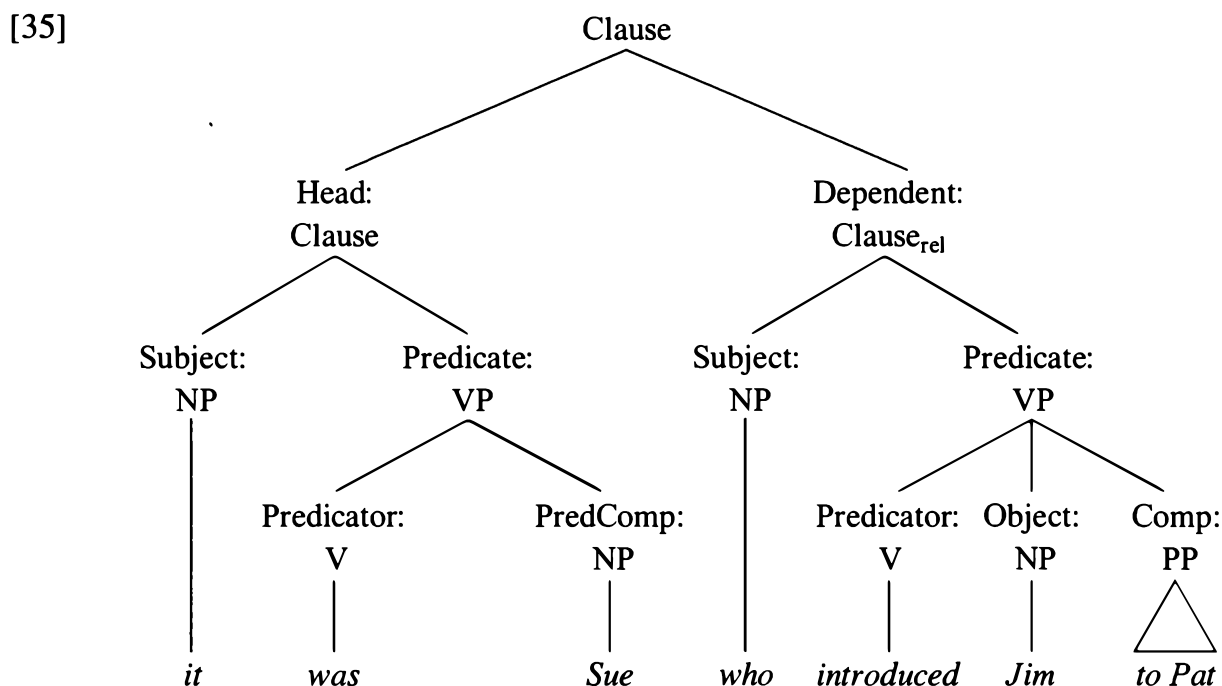
We turn now to a number of information-packaging constructions not illustrated in the introduction to the chapter, beginning with the ***it*-cleft construction**. This generally provides more than one variant of the corresponding non-cleft clause – at least one for each NP, in fact:

- |      |                               |   |
|------|-------------------------------|---|
| [34] | NON-CLEFT                     | IT-CLEFT  |
|      | a. Sue introduced Jim to Pat. | { b. It was <u>Sue</u> who <u>introduced Jim to Pat</u> .<br>c. It was <u>Jim</u> who <u>Sue introduced to Pat</u> .<br>d. It was <u>Pat</u> who <u>Sue introduced Jim to</u> . |

To form an *it*-cleft clause from a syntactically more basic non-cleft we divide it into two parts – hence the ‘cleft’ component of the name. One part (marked here by double underlining) is **foregrounded**, while the other (single underlining) is **backgrounded**. A considerable range of elements can be selected as the foregrounded element: for example, in [b] it is the subject, in [c] the object, in [d] the complement of the preposition *to*.

### Syntactic structure of the *it*-cleft

The foregrounded element functions as complement to *be*. The subject is invariably *it*, a meaningless dummy pronoun. The backgrounded part is expressed as a relative clause, with the foregrounded element as antecedent for the relativised element, here *who* (see Ch. 11, §1). So the structure of [b] is as follows:



The relative clause is of the integrated type (cf. Ch. 11, §2), but it's not a dependent of *Sue*: the words *Sue who introduced Jim to Pat* do not form a syntactic constituent. In an ordinary integrated relative like *They were [people who needed help]*, the bracketed sequence *people who needed help* is a constituent, an NP. This means there may be ambiguity between *it*-clefts and ordinary integrated relatives:

[36] *It was the song that impressed them.*

- As an *it*-cleft, this means *The song impressed them*, and the *it* is a dummy. It might be used to answer the question *What impressed the record company?*
- As a non-cleft, you can imagine [36] as an answer to *Why did they choose that song to release as a single?* Here *it* is an ordinary pronoun referring to the song, and *the song that impressed them* does form a constituent.

### The foregrounded element

In our initial example, [34b–d], the foregrounded element was an NP whose function in the corresponding non-cleft clause was subject, object, and complement of a preposition. There are many other possibilities, a few of which are illustrated in [37] (where the relative clauses are of the non-*wh* type):

- |      |  |  |
|------|--|--|
| [37] | NON-CLEFT  | IT-CLEFT   |
|      | i a. <i>They think <u>you</u> should leave.</i>        | b. <i>It's <u>you</u> they think should leave.</i>             |
|      | ii a. <i>Sue introduced Jim <u>to Pat</u>.</i>         | b. <i>It was <u>to Pat</u> that Sue introduced Jim.</i>        |
|      | iii a. <i>He signed the bill <u>with this pen</u>.</i> | b. <i>It was <u>with this pen</u> that he signed the bill.</i> |
|      | iv a. <i>She doesn't <u>often</u> miss a class.</i>    | b. <i>It isn't <u>often</u> that she misses a class.</i>       |
|      | v a. <i>I resigned <u>to avoid being fired</u>.</i>    | b. <i>It was <u>to avoid being fired</u> that I resigned.</i>  |

In [ia] *you* is **subject of an embedded content clause** (*you should leave* is complement of *think*).

In [iia] *to Pat* is a **PP in complement** function; note that [iib] is a variant of [34d], more formal in style, avoiding the stranded preposition; see Ch. 7, §5.

- The underlined elements in the other [a] examples – a **PP**, an **adverb**, and a **non-finite clause** respectively – are all **adjuncts** of various kinds.

This wide range of possibilities further distinguishes this type of relative clause from the prototypical type that modifies a noun. For example, *that he signed the bill* in [iiib] couldn't occur as modifier to *pen*: we couldn't say \**This is [the pen that he signed the bill]* (we'd need to include the preposition: *This is [the pen that he signed the bill with]*).

### Backgrounded element as presupposition

The effect of backgrounding is to present the information in question as a **presupposition** – information that is taken for granted, its truth not being at issue. In [37ib] I take it for granted that they think someone should leave, and assert that you're the one they have in mind. And in [37iib] it is not at issue whether Sue introduced Jim to someone: the question is who.

Presuppositions are normally not affected when we negate the containing construction, and this is the source of a sharp difference between clefts and their non-cleft counterparts:

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| [38] | a. <i>Sue didn't introduce Jim to Pat.</i> | b. <i>It wasn't to Pat that Sue introduced Jim.</i> |
|------|--|---|

The non-cleft [a] simply denies that Sue introduced Jim to Pat: it doesn't convey that she introduced Jim to someone else. The cleft [b] is different: the presupposition that Sue introduced Jim to someone stands, and what's denied is that Pat was that person.

In likely uses of all the examples considered so far, the presupposition will be **old** information, introduced into the prior discourse or inferrable from it. The natural context for [37iib] and [38b], for example, is one where Sue is introducing Jim to someone who has already been mentioned. But this is not a necessary feature of *it*-clefts. The backgrounded material may introduce **new** information into the discourse. This happens in [39]:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| [39] | <i>The Indians were helpful in many ways. [It was they <u>who taught the settlers how to plant and harvest crops successfully in the New World.</u>]</i> |
|------|--|



## 6 Pseudo-clefts

The **pseudo-cleft** is quite similar to the *it*-cleft in some ways: again we have a division between foregrounded and backgrounded elements, with the backgrounded material representing presupposed information. But in the case of pseudo-cleft, the backgrounded material is placed in a **fused relative** construction:

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| [40] | NON-CLEFT                                | PSEUDO-CLEFT  |
|      | i a. <i>We need more time.</i>           | b. <i><u>What we need</u> is <u>more time.</u></i>              |
|      | ii a. <i>He claims he was insulted.</i>  | b. <i><u>What he claims</u> is <u>that he was insulted.</u></i> |
|      | iii a. <i>I'll postpone the meeting.</i> | b. <i><u>What I'll do</u> is <u>postpone the meeting.</u></i>   |

Again we use single underlining for the backgrounded element and double underlining for the foregrounded one. The backgrounded material forms a fused relative construction in the sense explained in Ch. 11, §4 (compare *what we need* with the non-fused relative *that which we need*). In [ib], for example, I take it for granted that we need something and assert that that something is more time. As before, the presupposition normally survives negation: if I say *What we need is not more time, it's some fresh ideas*, I'm still taking it for granted that we need something.

### The foregrounded element

There is only partial overlap between the elements that can be foregrounded in the pseudo-cleft and those that can be in the *it*-cleft. Thus we could have an *it*-cleft instead of [40ib] (*It's more time that we need*), but not the others (*\*It is that he was insulted that he claims*, *\*It's postpone the meeting that I'll do*). Pseudo-clefts accept subordinate clauses as foregrounded element much more readily than *it*-clefts do.

*Who* is not normally found in fused relatives in present-day usage, so pseudo-clefts don't allow foregrounding of personal NPs: we don't find *\*Who introduced Jim to Pat was Sue*. Instead we use an *it*-cleft or a non-fused relative construction such as *The one who introduced Jim to Pat was Sue*.

### Pseudo-clefts and the specifying *be* construction

The pseudo-cleft is really just a particular case of the specifying *be* construction discussed in Ch. 4, §4.3. As usual, subject and complement can be reversed, giving *More time is what we need*, and so on.

Note also that the pseudo-cleft is less systematically related to non-clefts than the *it*-cleft. There are cases of pseudo-clefts with no non-cleft counterparts:

- |      |  |  |
|------|--|--|
| [41] | PSEUDO-CLEFT   | NON-CLEFT  |
|      | i a. <i>What I object to is that he lied.</i>                              | b. <i>*I object to that he lied.</i>                             |
|      | ii a. <i>What I like about her is that she always means what she says.</i> | b. <i>*I like about her that she always means what she says.</i> |

## 7 Dislocation

The prototypical **dislocation** construction has an extra NP located to the left or right of the main part of the clause, consisting of subject and predicate, which we call the **nucleus**. The extra NP serves as antecedent for a **personal pronoun** within the nucleus:

[42]	NON-DISLOCATED CLAUSE	DISLOCATED CLAUSE
i	a. <i>One of my cousins has triplets.</i>	b. <i>One of my cousins, she has triplets.</i>
ii	a. <i>I think <u>the man next door's</u> car was stolen.</i>	b. <i><u>The man next door</u>, I think <u>his</u> car was stolen.</i>
iii	a. <i><u>Her father</u> can be very judgemental.</i>	b. <i><u>He</u> can be very judgemental, <u>her father</u>.</i>

Examples [ib/iib] illustrate **left dislocation** (the NP in question is positioned to the left of the clause nucleus), while [iiib] has **right dislocation**. Both are characteristic of relatively informal style, such as conversation, especially oral personal narrative.

The pronoun may be the subject within the nucleus, as in [ib] and [iiib]. It can also be direct or indirect object, complement of a preposition, and so on. In [iib] it is subject-determiner within the subject of an embedded clause.

Dislocated constructions can be easier to understand than their basic counterpart.

Left dislocation may put a complex NP early in the sentence, replacing it with a pronoun in the nucleus, so the nucleus is structurally simpler. (Note that in [42iib] the subject-determiner in the dislocated version is simply *his*, whereas in [42iia] it is the more complex genitive *the man next door's*.)

Right dislocation often has an NP that clarifies the reference of the pronoun. (Imagine that [42iiib] was uttered following *Tom didn't dare tell her father*: the NP *her father* would make clear that *he* means her father, not Tom.)

### Extrapolation is not right dislocation

The extrapolation construction discussed in §3 above looks superficially like a special case of right dislocation, but in fact it isn't. The differences are as follows:

In dislocation the NP placed to the left or right of the nucleus is set apart prosodically from the rest of the clause, but extrapolation clauses usually have unbroken intonation.

The *it* of extrapolation is a dummy, not a referential pronoun like the *he* of [42iiib]. Thus the extraposed clause doesn't 'clarify the reference' of *it*: the *it* has no reference. If the extraposed clause were omitted, the speaker's intended meaning would normally be lost. The right dislocation [42iiib], by contrast, would make sense even without the final NP.

Extrapolation is stylistically quite neutral, whereas right dislocation, as noted above, belongs mainly to informal style.

## 8 Preposing and postposing

All the information-packaging constructions considered so far in this chapter differ structurally from their syntactically more elementary counterpart in a way which involves one or more functions:

- \* a passive clause has a different subject from the corresponding active;
- \* a cleft clause has as complement of *be* a foregrounded element that can have a range of functions within the non-cleft counterpart;
- \* extraposition and existentials have dummy subjects;
- \* dislocation involves pronouns substituting for dislocated NPs.

In this section we review some constructions where there are no such changes to the syntactic functions in the clause; rather, constituents with given functions appear in an unexpected position in the sentence. We look in turn at **preposing**, **postposing** and two kinds of **inversion**.

[43]	i PREPOSING	<i>Some of them he hadn't even read.</i>	
	ii POSTPOSING	<i>I understood eventually the reason for their antagonism.</i>	
	iii INVERSION	{ a. <i>Never had I felt so alone.</i>	[subject–auxiliary inversion]
		{ b. <i>In the drawer was a gun.</i>	[subject–dependent inversion]

- \* **Preposing** involves putting an element before the subject of a clause when its basic position would be after the verb.
- \* **Postposing** involves putting an element at or near the end of the clause rather than in the earlier position that would be its default place.
- \* In [iiia] there is **inversion** of subject and auxiliary verb following preposed *never*.
- \* The inversion in [iiib] combines preposing (of a PP) and postposing (of the subject NP).

### (a) Preposing

The contrast between basic order and preposing is seen in such pairs as the following:

[44]	BASIC ORDER	PREPOSING
	i a. <i>I wasn't allowed to watch TV <u>when I was at school</u>.</i>	b. <i><u>When I was at school</u> I wasn't allowed to watch TV.</i>
	ii a. <i>I said he could have <u>the others</u>.</i>	b. <i><u>The others</u> I said he could have.</i>
	iii a. <i>They made <u>costume jewellery</u>.</i>	b. <i><u>Costume jewellery</u>, they made.</i>
	iv a. <i>Mr Brown is not <u>humble</u>.</i>	b. <i><u>Humble</u>, Mr Brown is not.</i>
	v a. <i>I said I'd pay for it, [<u>and I will pay for it</u>].</i>	b. <i>I said I'd pay for it, [<u>and pay for it I will</u>].</i>

The preposed element in [ib] is an **adjunct**. Preposing of adjuncts occurs relatively freely. In the other examples it is a **complement** that is preposed. This is more constrained; a preposed complement serves as a link to the preceding discourse, and must be closely related to information previously introduced into the discourse:

- ✧ In [iib], *the others* refers to a subset of some set of things already mentioned.
- ✧ The original preceding context for [iiib] was this: *So when I left school I took some of those things to show to a jewellery manufacturer and asked for a job.* There is previous mention of jewellery, and the preposed element denotes a kind of jewellery.
- ✧ The original full version of [ivb] was this: *His humility must have been invented by the adman, for humble, Mr Brown is not.* So *humble* relates to the earlier mention of humility.
- ✧ In [vb] we see a special case of complement preposing that occurs with complements of auxiliary verbs and typically serves to emphasise the truth of what is being asserted.

### (b) Postposing

Further examples of postposing are given in [45], along with their default order counterparts:

[45]	BASIC ORDER	POSTPOSING
	i a. <i>They brought <u>an extraordinarily lavish lunch</u> with them.</i>	b. <i>They brought with them <u>an extraordinarily lavish lunch</u>.</i>
	ii a. <i>A man <u>whom I'd never seen before</u> came in.</i>	b. <i>A man came in <u>whom I'd never seen before</u>.</i>

The postposed element is an object in [ib] (as in [43ii]), and a dependent (modifier) within the subject NP in [iib].

The major factor leading to the choice of a postposing construction is relative **weight**. Weight of constituents is primarily a matter of length and complexity. In [45i] the object NP is quite heavy in comparison with the PP complement *with them*, and for this reason can readily be put at the end of the clause instead of in the default object position immediately after the verb. Note two things:

- ✧ If the object were simply *lunch* then the basic order would normally be required.
- ✧ If we lengthened it to something like *an extraordinarily lavish lunch that their daughter had helped them prepare*, then postposing would be more or less obligatory.

A postposed element occurs in a position that tends to receive greater phonological prominence and where complex material is easier to process. Extraposition is syntactically distinct from postposing in that it introduces the dummy pronoun *it* into the structure, but it shares with postposing the effect of positioning heavy material (a subordinate clause) at the end of the matrix clause.

### (c) Subject–auxiliary inversion

[46]	BASIC ORDER	SUBJECT–AUXILIARY INVERSION
	i a. <i><u>The pain was so bad</u> that I fainted.</i>	b. <i><u>So bad was the pain</u> that I fainted.</i>
	ii a. <i><u>I realised my mistake only later</u>.</i>	b. <i><u>Only later did I realise</u> my mistake.</i>

This type of inversion, as the name implies, requires the presence of an auxiliary verb. If there is no auxiliary in the basic order version, then dummy *do* is inserted, as in [iib] (cf. Ch. 3, §3.1).

Subject–auxiliary inversion is found in a considerable range of constructions, some of which have nothing to do with information packaging; most obvious among the latter is the closed interrogative construction, with inversion distinguishing interrogative *Is it ready?*, say, from declarative *It is ready* (Ch. 9, §2.1). Here, though, we're concerned with subject–auxiliary inversion as an accompaniment of preposing. In the examples given, subject–auxiliary inversion is triggered by the preposing of *so bad* and *only later*. The main elements that trigger inversion like this include:

- negatives, as in [43iiia];
- expressions containing *so* or *only*, as in [46] – or *Sue is going, and so am I*.
- similar forms with *such*: *Such a fuss did they make that we abandoned the idea.*

#### (d) Subject–dependent inversion

- |      |  |  |
|------|--|--|
| [47] | BASIC ORDER  | SUBJECT–DEPENDENT INVERSION  |
| i    | a. <u><i>A bowl of fruit</i></u> <i>was</i> <u><i>on her desk</i></u> .      | b. <u><i>On her desk</i></u> <i>was</i> <u><i>a bowl of fruit</i></u> .      |
| ii   | a. <u><i>The view from the top</i></u> <i>is</i> <u><i>even better</i></u> . | b. <u><i>Even better</i></u> <i>is</i> <u><i>the view from the top</i></u> . |

This time the elements inverted are the subject and another dependent of the verb. The latter is usually a complement – most commonly a locative or an adjectival predicative complement, as in [47]. The verb is most often *be*, but other verbs of relatively little informational content, such as *appear, lie, sit*, etc., are also found.

This type of inversion puts the subject in final position, where it typically receives greater phonological prominence than in its basic position. It very often represents new information, and we will not normally have inversion if the subject is old and the dependent new. Compare [a] and [b] in [48], where the version with old + new is completely natural while the one with new + old is highly unnatural:

- |      |                             |            |                             |                         |
|------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| [48] | OLD                         | NEW        | NEW                         | OLD                     |
| a.   | <u><i>In the drawer</i></u> | <i>was</i> | <u><i>a gun</i></u> .       | b.                      |
|      |                             |            | ? <u><i>In a drawer</i></u> | <i>was</i>              |
|      |                             |            |                             | <u><i>the gun</i></u> . |

## 9 Reduction

In this final section of the chapter we review summarily a number of constructions where a constituent representing old information is reduced to a pronoun or similar form or else omitted altogether. We use **ellipsis** for the omission of old information and introduce the modern term **pro-form** in place of 'pronoun or similar form':

- |      |    |   |                         |
|------|----|---|-------------------------|
| [49] | i  | <i>I'd like to go with you but I can't ___.</i> | [reduction by ellipsis] |
|      | ii | <i>My father said <u>he</u> would help you.</i> | [reduction by pro-form] |

In [i] the VP *can't* is understood as “can't go with you”, the missing infinitival complement being recoverable from the preceding clause. We can generalise the concepts of **anaphora** and **antecedent** to cover such cases of ellipsis (cf. Ch. 5, §8.1): the ellipsed complement is thus anaphorically related to the antecedent *go with you* in the first clause.

In the salient interpretation of [ii] it is a matter of my father helping you: the pronoun *he* is anaphoric to the antecedent *my father*.

### Pro-form VS pronoun

The reason why we need the term ‘pro-form’ as well as ‘pronoun’ can be seen from such examples as the following:

[50]		PRONOUN?	PRO-FORM?
i	A: <i>Was she arrested?</i> B: <i>I'm afraid <u>so</u>.</i>	No	Yes
ii	<i><u>It's</u> time to go.    <u>Who</u> broke the vase?</i>	Yes	No

In [i], *so* is a pro-form (interpreted anaphorically as “she was arrested”), but it isn't a pronoun. It couldn't be: *afraid* takes a clause as complement (*I'm afraid she was arrested*) but not any kind of NP (*\*I'm afraid her fate; \*I'm afraid it*).

In [ii], *it* and *who* are pronouns: they head NPs in subject position and do not permit determiners. But they are not pro-forms: they do not represent old information retrievable in full from the context.

## 9.1 Reduction of NPs

There are three main types of reduction to consider under this heading.

### (a) Personal pronouns

This is the central case illustrated in [49ii]; it was discussed in Ch. 5, §8.1 and needs no further commentary here.

### (b) The pro-forms *one* and *other*

[51]        *She left us six pears; this one is riper than the others / the other ones.*

These forms always have a count interpretation, and unlike pronouns they have an antecedent that is not a full NP: in this example it is *pears*, not *six pears*. Syntactically they are common nouns, not pronouns.

They differ from pronouns in that they take determiners, such as *this* and *the* in [51].

They are like prototypical common nouns in having an inflectional contrast between singular *one/other* and plural *ones/others*.

### (c) The fused head construction

What we have called the **simple** and **implicit partitive** uses of the fused head construction (Ch. 5, §7.1) are generally interpreted anaphorically:

- [52] i *I need some ink, but I can't find any.*  
 ii *I had put some mangoes on the table and as usual Max took the largest.*

The fused determiner-head *any* is interpreted anaphorically as “any ink” and the fused modifier-head *largest* as “largest of them”, i.e., “largest of the mangoes”.

## 9.2 Reduction of clauses, VPs and other phrases

### (a) Clause reduction

- [53] i *He says Jill informed the press, but that can't be true.*  
 ii *She may change her mind, but I doubt it.*  
 iii *I'm not sure I'll finish today, but I hope so.*  
 iv *She's coming round to see us, but she didn't say when \_\_\_.*

- \* NPs such as *that*, *this* and *it* can have clauses rather than NPs as antecedent, as in [i–ii].
- \* *So* can serve as a kind of ‘pro-clause’, as in [iii] and [50i] above. It functions mainly as internal complement to such verbs as *believe*, *think*, *seem* (as in *It seems so*), etc.
- \* In [iv] we see ellipsis of everything but the initial phrase of an interrogative content clause.

### (b) VP reduction

- [54] i *He suggested we put the house on the market, but I don't want to do that yet.*  
 ii *She drove us to the station, but she did so reluctantly.*  
 iii *Ed isn't ready, but I am \_\_. Come if you can \_\_. I saw it and Pat did \_\_ too.*  
 iv *You can come with us if you want to \_\_.*  
 v *I don't promise to get it finished today, but I'll try \_\_.*  
 vi *They asked me who informed the press, but I don't know \_\_.*

- \* The NPs *this*, *that* and *it* can combine with the lexical verb **do** to form a ‘pro-VP’; *do that* in [i] is interpreted anaphorically as “put the house on the market”.
- \* *So* combines with **do** in a similar way: *did so* in [ii] is understood as “drove us to the station”.
- \* The examples in [iii] involve the ellipsis of the complement of an auxiliary verb. This is another construction where the dummy auxiliary verb **do** is used if there would not otherwise be an auxiliary verb present, as in the third example (“Pat saw it too”).<sup>3</sup>
- \* Quite similar is the ellipsis of a VP following the infinitival marker *to*, as in [iv].
- \* A relatively small number of lexical catenative verbs allow ellipsis of their non-finite complement: *try* in [v] is understood as “try to get it finished today”.
- \* Similarly, some verbs, such as *know* in [vi], permit ellipsis of a content clause complement: “I don't know who informed the press”.

<sup>3</sup> A further construction of this kind is the one where stress is used to emphasise that a clause is positive, not negative: *I HAVE told you*. Dummy **do** is needed if there is no other auxiliary to carry the stress: *I DID tell you* (contrasting with non-emphatic *I told you*).

## (c) Pro-forms for predicative complements and locative PPs

- [55] i *She was extremely bright / an excellent manager, or at least she seemed so.*  
 ii *He was born in Boston and lived there all his life.*

- \* So has other anaphoric uses than those mentioned above; in particular, it can function as predicative complement, allowing a variety of categories of antecedent, such as the AdjP *extremely bright* or the NP *an excellent manager* in [i].  
 \* The preposition *there* is commonly used anaphorically with a locative expression as antecedent, as in [ii]. It can also be used deictically, as in *Just put it over there*.

## Exercises

- For each of the main clauses below say whether it is **canonical** or **non-canonical**. If it's non-canonical, say which non-canonical construction it belongs to.
  - It doesn't matter any more.*
  - That'll be the day.*
  - I'm looking for someone to love.*
  - It's so lucky that you found me.*
  - I want money.*
  - Do you love me?*
  - What a time we had.*
  - What's wrong with me?*
  - I feel so bad.*
  - This sort of thing I have no patience with.*
- Classify the **main** clauses of the following examples with respect to **voice**, saying whether each is **active** or **passive**.
  - A bus blew up in Jerusalem today.*
  - Buses often get blown up in Jerusalem.*
  - Someone blew up a bus in Jerusalem.*
  - A bus was blown up in Jerusalem.*
  - They blew up a bus in Jerusalem.*
  - Was a bus blown up in Jerusalem today?*
  - The attack was planned by an unknown terrorist group.*
  - An unknown terrorist group is responsible.*
  - An unknown terrorist group is thought to be responsible.*
  - An unknown terrorist group is thought by intelligence specialists to be responsible.*
- For each of the following **active** clauses, if it has a **passive** counterpart, supply it; if not, do your best to give a general statement of why this sort of clause doesn't have a passive. (For example, if given *Jim remains chairman* you might say that *chairman* is a predicative complement and as such could never become the subject of a corresponding passive clause, as seen by \**Chairman is remained by Jim*.)
  - The weather ruined our holiday.*
  - The secretary gave a copy of the report to all board members.*
  - Both her children have malaria.*
  - One of the guests sat on my glasses.*
  - My sister lives just around the corner.*
  - Your letter arrived this morning.*
  - Most people believe them to be genuine.*
  - Your new proposal looks a real improvement on the last one.*
  - The college awarded her a prize.*
  - My schoolmates often made fun of me because of my accent.*
- Express each of these examples with all clauses entirely in the **active voice**.
  - I'm afraid I was robbed by bandits on the way to class and my homework was stolen.*
  - It is clear that your goldfish has been killed by an evildoer.*
  - 'You should have that looked at by an expert,' I was told by all my friends.*
  - On Thursday I was hit by the bad news that we were being shut down by the police.*



- v *She went swimming and was attacked by a crocodile.*
5. For each of the following, say whether it is (a) a **passive** clause (a **be-passive** or a **get-passive**); (b) a **complex-intransitive** clause with an **adjectival passive** as complement; or (c) **ambiguous** between the two. For the ambiguous cases, describe the difference in meaning.
- The motion was carried unanimously.*
  - The rod was magnetised.*
  - The farm was surrounded by troops.*
  - One of the letters wasn't signed.*
  - Several people were injured during the demonstration.*
  - I got bitten by the neighbours' dog.*
  - They got reprimanded for it.*
  - They were lost.*
  - They got dressed.*
  - One of the letters didn't get signed.*
6. For each underlined clause, give an **extra-posed** counterpart if one is available, or if none is available, explain why.
- Why you put up with it is incomprehensible.*
  - It isn't clear to me whether he was even listening.*
  - The fact that they are married should make no difference.*
  - It feels good to be back in my home town.*
  - For you to do that would be deeply unethical.*
  - I appreciate that you returned it sincerely.*
  - That I should have to clean it all up seems a bit unfair.*
  - I'm afraid whining about the pain is no use.*
  - Why she had to do that will always be a mystery.*
  - Meeting you and your family has been a great pleasure.*
7. Give **existential** or **presentational** counterparts of the following clauses if they are available. If none is available explain why.
- Carpentry tools are available for your use.*
  - A friend of yours is on the phone.*
  - His wife was very rich.*
  - Only one doctor was present.*
  - Several important points emerged.*
  - A beggar followed her home.*
  - One key was missing.*
  - His father died on the plane.*
  - Something is wrong with the battery.*
  - Is your job available?*
8. Give **non-existential** counterparts of the following clauses if one is available, and where none is available explain why.
- There's a serious mistake in your argument.*
  - There were two students on the committee.*
  - There's nothing to worry about.*
  - There had been a violent demonstration against the new bill.*
  - There's no doubt that he's the main culprit.*
9. For each of the following, give an **it-cleft** counterpart with the same truth conditions, with the underlined constituent as the foregrounded element.
- I blame you.*
  - Most of the leaf growth occurs in the spring.*
  - They left the campground only reluctantly.*
  - George took the Volvo.*
  - I liked the other one most.*
10. For each of the following, give a **pseudo-cleft** with the same truth conditions, with the underlined constituent as the foregrounded element.
- The absurd waste of it all bothers me.*
  - Most of the leaf growth occurs in the spring.*
  - The backgrounded material gets put in the fused relative construction.*
  - George took the Volvo.*
  - I liked the music most.*
11. Classify the following examples as (a) **left dislocation**; (b) **right dislocation**; (c) **preposing**; or (d) **postposing**. Underline the dislocated or reordered constituent. In cases of dislocation, also underline the

personal pronoun in the nucleus that has the dislocated phrase as its antecedent.

- i *To my son Ben I leave my collection of antique chess pieces.*
- ii *They said he was a professional, the guy that stole your stuff.*
- iii *Richard, who built this wall, he's my brother, and he lives in England.*
- iv *The garage, I don't really use it except for storing junk.*
- v *We explained to the police everything they asked us to explain.*
- vi *People like that you can never really trust.*
- vii *Was she just crazy, that teacher who had an affair with that boy?*
- viii *Surprise everyone you certainly did!*
- ix *You should get it checked out, soon, that rattling sound in the transmission.*
- x *The Monkey Club is proud to present for the first time in Grenville this coming Saturday at eight p.m. the fabulous Rockmonsters.*