

On the distribution of subject properties in formulaic presentationals of Germanic and Romance: A diachronic-typological approach

Volker Gast, Florian Haas (Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena)

Abstract

The present study deals with the distribution of subject properties in ‘formulaic’ presentational constructions such as Engl. *there is* NP, Fr. *il y’a* NP and Span. *hay* NP, approaching the problem from a diachronic-typological perspective. Nine major types of presentational constructions are distinguished by cross-classifying the three-valued parameters ‘type of existential predicate’ and ‘type of expletive’. Moreover, a language-level parameter is introduced which distinguishes languages allowing verb-initial order inthetic sentences (‘thetic-V1 languages’) from languages disallowing such an order (‘thetic-XV languages’). It is shown thatthetic-XV languages tend to use expletives in their existential formulas, which attract subject properties and qualify as impersonal. By contrast,thetic-V1 languages often do not use expletives at all, and if they do, these do not attract subject properties. The corresponding constructions are consequently not impersonal. Accordingly, a correlation can be established between the parameters ‘thetic-XV’ vs. ‘thetic-V1’, on the one hand, and ‘impersonal presentational’ vs. ‘personal presentational’, on the other.

Keywords: presentative, presentational, expletive, existential,thetic

1 Introduction*

This study deals with the formal means used for the introduction of new discourse referents in selected Germanic and Romance languages. Speech events in which a speaker “call[s] the attention of an addressee to the hitherto unnoticed presence of some person or thing in the speech setting” (Lambrecht 1994: 39, 177) will be called ‘presentative utterances’, or simply ‘presentatives’.¹ Structural configurations conventionally used to encode presentative utterances will be called ‘presentational constructions’,² or simply ‘presentationals’. The concept of a ‘presentative (utterance)’ will function as a *tertium comparationis* of the study, and the ‘presentational constructions’ of selected Germanic and Romance languages will constitute the objects of comparison.

It is well known that presentationals are often characterized by a non-canonical distribution of subject properties over the (pro)nominal constituents of a sentence (e.g. Seeffranz-Montag 1983, Lambrecht 1986, 2000, Lazard 1994, Koch 2003, Börjars and Vincent 2005, among many others). The ‘novel NP’ – the NP introducing a new discourse referent (Milsark’s 1974 ‘pivot’) – exhibits properties of both subjects and objects in many languages. Moreover, many presentational constructions contain an ‘expletive subject’, i.e. a (mostly pronominal) element which does not play an obvious role in the argument structure or interpretation of a sentence while still exhibiting some (or all) subject properties (see for instance Askedal 1986, Lazard 1994, Vikner 1995 and Lødrup 1999). Such presentationals belong to the class of ‘impersonal constructions’, understood as constructions lacking a referential subject (cf. Siewierska & Malchukov this volume). In terms of Malchukov & Ogawa (this volume), they qualify as ‘T-impersonals’. Given that there are also presentationals with a referential subject, a distinction can be made between ‘personal’ and ‘impersonal’ presentationals. As will be seen, this distinction provides a useful parameter of variation in the typology of presentationals, as it correlates with an important structural property of the languages under investigation, i.e. the (im)possibility to use verb-initial order in thetic sentences.

The main objective of our investigation is to formulate generalizations concerning the distribution of subject properties over the two candidates for subject status in presentational constructions, i.e. the ‘novel (postverbal) NP’ and the expletive. We address this question from a diachronic-typological point of view, i.e. by devising a typology of presentationals which is historically motivated. Two major developments can be observed: (a) a shift of subject properties from the novel NP to the expletive, and (b) the acquisition of subject properties by a (formerly non-subject-like) postverbal NP. The former type of development, which leads to the formation of impersonal presentationals, is found in those languages that do not allow verb-initial order in thetic sentences (the so-called ‘thetic-XV languages’, i.e. the Germanic languages under consideration and French). The second type of development, which results in personal presentationals, can be observed in those languages which do allow verb-initial order in thetic sentences (Romance languages except French, subsumed under the term ‘thetic-V1 languages’). At a general level, our conclusion is that the presentationals of thetic-XV languages show a tendency to becoming ‘more impersonal’, while the presentationals of thetic-V1 languages tend to change towards ‘more personal’ constructions. This broad generalization emerges from a more fine-grained typology of presentational

constructions which makes use of the parameters ‘type of existential predicate’ and ‘type of expletive’.

The discussion starts in Section 2 by delimiting the object of study, i.e. presentationals. Presentational constructions of German, Spanish and German are illustrated and two major types of presentationals are distinguished (‘formulaic’ and ‘non-formulaic’ ones). In Section 3, the morphosyntactic properties of the novel NP in presentationals are surveyed, and an explanation of their ‘hybrid’ nature provided by Lambrecht (2000) is discussed, which serves as a blueprint for our own analysis. In Section 4, a diachronic typology of formulaic presentationals is presented. Presentationals are classified along two parameters, i.e. (i) the type of predicate and (ii) the type of expletive used. Moreover, the aforementioned classification of Germanic and Romance languages into thetic-V1 languages and thetic-XV languages is introduced. Section 5 discusses the presentationals of selected Germanic and Romance languages against the background of the typology presented in Section 4 with a focus on matters of argument structure. The results of this study are summarized in Section 6.

2 What is a presentational?

2.1 Presentationals in English, Spanish and German

At least two constructions can be regarded as being more or less conventionally used to encode presentative utterances in English: (i) sentences introduced by the ‘existential formula’ *there is/are* or *there’s*, and (ii) the syntactic rearrangement rule of ‘main verb inversion’, often alternatively called ‘(locative) inversion’ (e.g. Levin 1993, Birner & Ward 1998, Ward & Birner 2004). The two constructions are illustrated in (1). The ‘novel NP’ – the NP introducing the new participant – is indicated by a subscript ‘NOV’.

- (1) a. *There is [a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him....]*_{NOV}
 (*there-existential*)
- b. [*Until the end of the war so very few folk had beards, and then only short ones nicely trimmed, but into the room came [a young man with a black fuzz of over eight inches]*]_{NOV}. (BNC) (*locative inversion*)

While both structures illustrated in (1) occur in presentative utterances, they have strikingly different distributions. The ‘existential formula’ *there is/are* is often used as a ‘generic’ existential predicate, e.g. in *There are more than 1,200 species of bamboo in the world*, understood as an answer to the question *How many species of bamboo are there in the world?*. In this case, the sentence is not used to “call the attention of an addressee to the hitherto unnoticed presence of some person or thing in the speech setting” (Lambrecht 1994: 39), but to answer a question about some previously established topic.

Locative inversion as illustrated in (1b) above covers a more restricted range of contexts than *there-existentials* (cf. Levin 1993, Bresnan 1994, Birner & Ward 1998, Ward & Birner 2004). In this construction, a directional complement (typically a PP like *into the room*) occupies the preverbal position, while the novel NP – the prime candidate for subject status – occurs in a postverbal position. One of the most prominent semantic or pragmatic conditions on locative inversion is that “the referent of the inverted subject is introduced or reintroduced on the (part of the) scene referred to by the preposed locative” (Bresnan 1994: 85). Even though this condition may not apply in all cases (cf. e.g. Birner 1994), it is certainly a prominent factor in the textual usage of this construction.³

Presentationals similar to the English structures illustrated in (1) can be found in all the major German and Romance languages, but the constructions in question differ considerably in their structural and distributional properties. For example, Spanish has an ‘existential formula’ *hay* which does not require an expletive corresponding to English *there* (but note that *hay* [aj] contains a phonological remnant of a former expletive, i.e. the final glide [j] < Lat *ibi* ‘there’). The use of *hay* in presentational utterances is illustrated in (2) with the past tense form *había*.

- (2) Standard Iberian Spanish

*Había [muchos estudiantes que trabajaban en bares]*_{NOV}.

EX.PAST many students who worked in bars

‘There were many students who worked in bars.’

Spanish also has a construction that is comparable to locative inversion in English; it can also use VS-order with other types of predicates. Unlike in English, where the preverbal position is invariably filled, either with a locative expletive (*there*) or with another preposed constituent (e.g. a prepositional phrase, cf. (1b)), no preverbal element is required in Spanish (cf. (3)).

- (3) [_V *Entró*] [_{NP} *un hombre con una barba larga*]_{NOV}.
 entered a man with a beard long
 ‘There entered a man with a long beard.’

Prima facie English locative inversion and Spanish VS-order are rather similar in both functional and structural terms. However, they differ considerably with respect to their distribution. While locative inversion in English is (more or less) restricted to the function of a presentative utterance, VS-order in Spanish is also commonly used in other, ‘non-presentative’ utterances with ‘sentence focus’ (Lambrecht 1986, 1994, 2000), i.e. inthetic sentences (cf. Sasse 1987). For example, it is used in contexts like (4), where locative inversion would be impossible in English (cf. (5)).

- (4) *Acabó la película*.
 has.ended the movie
 ‘The movie has ended.’

- (5) **There has ended the movie*.

Yet another type of presentational is found in verb-second languages like German. On the face of it, (6) seems to instantiate a structure completely parallel to locative inversion in English.

- (6) German

[*Herein*] [*kam*]_V [*ein junger Mann mit einem schwarzen Bart*]_{NOV}.
in came a young man with a black beard
 ‘In came a young man with a black beard.’

However, the German sentence in (6) simply represents the canonical verb-second order that this language commonly uses in main clauses. From a purely structural point of view, there is nothing special about (6). German also has an existential formula similar to the English and Spanish ones pointed out above, i.e. *es gibt* ‘it gives’ or, alternatively (and more commonly used in Southern varieties), *es hat* (‘it has’). It is illustrated in (7).⁴

- (7) *Es gibt/hat einen Mann in dieser Stadt, der alles weiß.*
 EXPL gives/has a man in this city who everything knows
 ‘There is a man in this city who knows everything.’

What the examples given in (1)–(7) show is that the function of a presentative utterance may be encoded with different degrees of specificity. The ‘existential formulas’ *there is*, *hay* and *es gibt* are often, but not necessarily, used with the function of a presentative utterance. The three syntactic configurations illustrated in (1b), (3) and (6) also differ in their distribution. The German example (6) simply uses the ‘generic’ verb-second order that is used in all types of main clauses, and that is not associated with any specific type of information structure. Verb-first (V1) order in Spanish as illustrated in (3) has a more specific function, covering as it does a class of contexts which can broadly be subsumed under the notion of ‘thetic judgement’. Finally, English locative inversion (cf. (1b)) is distributionally heavily restricted, with presentative utterances providing the most important context of use.

As has been seen, we regard the category of ‘presentative utterance’ as a special case of the more inclusive class of thetic judgements. It is important to bear in mind that ‘thetic’ and ‘presentative/presentational’ do not mean the same thing, even though Lambrecht (2000: 623) remarks that “the overriding function of the SF [sentence-focus/thetic] category is presentational”. To what extent this is true obviously depends on the exact definition of these terms. We will use ‘thetic’ in the traditional sense (cf. Sasse 1987), and ‘presentative/presentational’ only for those cases where a new discourse referent (in the sense of Karttunen 1976) is introduced.

2.2 *Formulaic vs. non-formulaic presentationals*

In order to introduce a new discourse referent, a presentational sentence must necessarily contain a predicate either expressing or entailing existence. As was pointed out in Section 2.1, existence is often predicated by ‘(explicit) existential formulas’, e.g. Engl. *there is*, Span. *hay* and Germ. *es gibt/hat*. These formulas are highly conventionalized and largely bleached semantically, thus coming close to being natural language correlates of an existential quantifier, commonly represented as ‘ \exists ’ in predicate calculus. Presentationals containing an explicit existential formula will be called ‘formulaic presentationals’. This type was illustrated

in (1a), (2) and (7) above. Two additional examples from French and Italian are given in (8) and (9), respectively ('EX' stands for 'existential formula').

(8) French

[*Il y'a*]_{EX} [*un homme nu*]_{NOV} [*dans mon jardin*]_{LOC}.
 there.is a man nude in my garden
 'There is a nude man in my garden.'

(9) Italian

[*C'è*]_{EX} [*un uomo nudo*]_{NOV} [*nel mio giardino*]_{LOC}.
 there.is a man nude in.the my garden
 'There is a nude man in my garden.'

Presentationals without an explicit existential formula like the ones illustrated in (1b), (3) and (6) will simply be called 'non-formulaic presentationals', as there is no 'segmental constant' in the relevant constructions, which are characterized only by specific word order configurations. In the remainder of this study, we will concentrate on formulaic presentationals. This is not to say that non-formulaic presentationals are uninteresting, or less relevant to the questions under investigation. However, as a source of insights into diachronic processes, formulaic presentationals have the advantage of providing relatively transparent evidence concerning the changes in argument structure accompanying the process of conventionalization. For example, the Spanish formula *hay* NP_{NOV} originated as a transitive construction in which the novel NP had the function of an object (< Lat. *habet ibi* NP_{ACC}, cf. Section 5.3.1). In specific varieties of Spanish (e.g. Mexican Spanish, cf. Section 3.3), this NP now has the status of a subject. Such processes of change can be more easily identified when the predicate of the construction is kept constant. Moreover, existential predicates are arguably the most typical predicate used in presentative utterances and, hence, provide a reasonable point of reference for follow-up studies taking a broader view on the matter.

3 Non-canonical subjects in presentationals

Having delimited the object of study, we can now turn to a discussion of the main issue dealt with in this study, i.e. the distribution of subject properties over the nominal constituents of a presentational construction. Section 3.1 provides a brief overview of the properties generally

assumed to be typical of (non-)subjecthood. In Section 3.2, the ‘hybridity’ of postverbal NPs (with respect to their status as a subject or non-subject) is related to a conflict between form and function which emerges in the presentationals of specific Germanic and Romance languages. Section 3.3 critically reviews an influential explanatory approach to the problem of ‘non-canonical subjects’ in presentationals, i.e. the one advocated by Lambrecht (1986, 2000). Lambrecht’s hypotheses – which we summarize under the label ‘global repulsion hypothesis’ – will serve as a background for our own analysis presented in Sections 4 and 5.

3.1 *On subjects with object properties*

Lambrecht (1986, 2000) has argued that the novel NP in presentationals is basically a subject that is stripped of (some or all of) its subject properties.⁵ Consequently, it has a status somewhere between subjecthood and objecthood. Lazard (1994) has coined the term ‘actant H’ for such ‘hybrid NPs’, which is an entirely arbitrary label meant to prevent any type of *a priori* assumptions about their status as a subject or object. In a nutshell, ‘actant H’ stands for a single argument of a predicate which occupies a postnominal position. Lambrecht (2000: 625) identifies the properties listed in (10) as being typically associated with (focal) objects. Subjects are characterized by the complementary set of attributes.

(10) Object properties according to Lambrecht (2000)

- (i) prosodic prominence,
- (ii) specific linear position relative to the verb,
- (iii) cooccurrence with ‘focus particles’,
- (iv) absence of grammatical agreement with the verb,
- (v) non-nominative case marking,
- (vi) single constituent status of the verb-object sequence,
- (vii) constraints on null anaphora.

According to Lambrecht (2000), the sole argument in a ‘sentence focus’ construction (‘thetic sentence’, in our terminology) tends to exhibit some or even all of the properties listed in (i)–(vii) above, while functionally being more similar to a subject than to an object. Lambrecht’s criteria can roughly be grouped into three major categories: (a) discourse-related properties (criterion [i]), (b) properties concerning constituency and locality (criteria [ii], [iii], [vi] and [vii]), and (c) morphosyntactic properties (criteria [iv] and [v]). In the following, we will

concentrate on morphosyntactic properties, as they are most relevant to the study of argument structure. We do not regard matters of word order or constituency as very good indicators of subject or object status. In fact, our typology will make use of a parameter that groups languages into those that have a postverbal subject position (thetic-V1 languages) and those that do not have such a position (thetic-XV languages). Moreover, we will use one type of locality restriction as a criterion of subjecthood, i.e. S-X-raising (subject-to-subject or subject-to-object/exceptional case marking). Our diagnostics indicative of a subject status are listed in Table 1.

	subject	non-subject
agreement with verb	yes	no
nominative case marking	yes	no
S-X-raising	yes	no

Table 1: Criteria for subjecthood and objecthood used in this study

We will briefly illustrate the three criteria using presentational constructions exhibiting a ‘non-canonical’ distribution of subject properties. *There’s* NP in spoken English is often used as an example of a formulaic presentational suspending agreement between the verb and the postverbal NP (cf. Lazard 1994, Lambrecht 2000). Examples like (11a) are commonly used in specific registers of English, as an alternative to (standard English) (11b) (cf. Rupp 2005 for details; the register restriction is here indicated by ‘%’). A similar phenomenon can be observed in (specific varieties of) Italian. In (12a), the novel NP *dei contadini* ‘farmers’ does not agree in number with the copula *era* (‘was.SG’), which forms part of the existential formula *c’era*. The corresponding sentence in the standard language, where the existential formula contains a plural form of the copula, is given in (12b).

- (11) English
- a. % *There’s three students waiting outside.*
 - b. *There are three students waiting outside.*

- (12) Italian
- a. %*C'-era dei contadini.*
 there-was INDEF.PL farmers
- b. *C'-erano dei contadini.*
 there-were INDEF.PL farmers
 'There were farmers'
 (Koch 2003: 158)

While in the b-sentences the novel NPs qualify as subjects, controlling as they do verbal agreement, in the a-sentences they have lost this property and are therefore 'less subject-like'.

The two constructions illustrated in (11) and (12) differ with respect to their behaviour in S-S-raising, e.g. with epistemic predicates like 'seem'. While those varieties of English that allow (11) (mostly) also allow (13) – where the raising verb does not agree with the postverbal/novel NP – the Italian example (14) is ungrammatical with singular agreement, and a plural form of the raising verb *sembrare* is required. We regard this as evidence that *ci* – unlike Engl. *there* – does not undergo raising, and that Engl. *there* is thus 'more subject-like' than Italian *ci* (in fact, we will argue in Section 5.2.2 that Italian *ci* is not a subject at all).

- (13) English
 %*There seems to be some students waiting outside.*
- (14) Italian
*Ci sembrano/*sembra essere molti studenti.*
 there seem.PL/seem.SG to.be many students
 'There seem to be many students.'
 (Federica da Milano, p.c.)

Non-nominative case marking on the novel NP can be observed in German. The novel NP in (15) (*großen Ärger* 'big trouble') is in the accusative case, as is witnessed by the *n*-suffix on the attributive adjective (though, in this particular case, not on the noun itself).

- (15) German
Es gab großen Ärger.
 it gave big.ACC trouble
 'There was great trouble.'

Note that postverbal NPs of the type of *großen Ärger* in (15) do not exhibit any subject property at all; they are clearly objects. We will return to this construction in Section 5.3.2.

For the time being, suffice it to say that novel NPs in presentational constructions of Germanic and Romance languages may display subject and non-subject properties to varying degrees.

3.2 *A conflict between form and function*

The heterogeneous distribution of subject properties in presentationals can be regarded as a reflex of a conflict between form and function. Presentative utterances present an interesting problem for the mapping from information structure to syntax, insofar as they impose ‘conflicting demands’ on the structure of a sentence. At least three important ‘functional requirements’ of a presentative utterance can be identified (cf. (16)).

(16) Functional requirements of a presentative utterance

- (i) the ‘novel NP’ must be stressed,
- (ii) it should (ideally) be the only argument of the sentence, and
- (iii) it should (ideally) come late in the sentence.

Point (i) can be regarded as a universal principle of discourse organization and is related to the fact that the processing of new information requires more attention on the part of the hearer than the processing of given information. Point (ii) is a ‘desideratum’ of discourse organization which is closely related to point (i): The fewer arguments a clause contains, the more attention can be paid to each one of them. Point (iii) can be motivated in terms of several principles of discourse organization. For example, it has been observed that the later a new referent is introduced in the clause, the closer it will be to its next mention in the following sentence, where it is typically picked up in the form of a pronominal subject (cf. Hetzron’s 1975 notion of ‘presentative movement’). Moreover, the NP introducing a novel referent typically comes with additional (postnominal) specifications and is thus rather ‘heavy’. In accordance with the ‘principle of end weight’ (cf. Behaghel 1909; Hawkins 1994) it is thus expected to take up a right-marginal position in the sentence. Point (iii) is also obviously related to point (i), as stress, in itself, implies a certain weight and, hence, a preferred positioning at the right margin of a sentence.

Quite obviously, two of these ‘functional requirements’ – those under (ii) and (iii) – conflict with the syntactic ‘default rules’ of some Germanic and Romance languages, as the ‘ideal’ presentational is expected to exhibit VS-order, and to contain no argument other than

V and S (often there are, of course, locative and temporal adjuncts). While most Romance languages allow VS-sentences (cf. Section 4), Germanic languages as well as French require the presence of some element in the slot preceding V. We will call this slot an ‘obligatory preverbal slot’ (which is actually an abbreviation for ‘obligatorily filled preverbal slot’). In verb-second (V2) languages (West Germanic except English), the obligatory preverbal slot is typically taken by topics (and sometimes foci), while in the SVO-languages English and French it is taken by subjects. As will be seen, the presence or absence of an obligatory preverbal slot has important consequences for the ‘dynamics of subjecthood’, as only expletives in obligatory preverbal slots appear to attract subject properties, whereas in languages without an obligatory preverbal slot the subject properties tend to go to the postverbal NP. Accordingly, it is only in languages with an obligatory preverbal slot (thetic-XV languages) that impersonal presentationals emerge.

3.3 *Lambrecht’s ‘global repulsion hypothesis’*

The ‘hybrid’ nature of novel NPs has been explained by Lambrecht (1986, 2000) in terms of two principles which are based on the assumption of comparison of, or competition between, alternative syntactic and prosodic structures made available by a given grammar. Lambrecht argues that the make-up of subject-focus sentences – which he regards as being largely specialized to the function of a presentative utterance, cf. the quotation from Lambrecht (2000: 623) given above – is crucially determined by the need to be distinct from other, more ‘canonical’ structures, in particular predicate focus structures (i.e. categorical statements). He formulates the two principles in (17) and (18).

(17) **The Principle of Detopicalization**

SF [sentence focus] marking involves cancellation of those prosodic and/or morphosyntactic subject properties which are associated with the role of subjects as topic expressions in PF [predicate focus] sentence. (Lambrecht 2000: 624)

(18) **The Principle of Subject-Object Neutralization**

In a SF [sentence focus] construction, the subject tends to be grammatically coded with some or all of the prosodic and/or morphosyntactic features associated with the focal object in the corresponding PF [predicate focus] construction. (Lambrecht 2000: 626)

The principle in (17) says that sentence-focus marking crucially involves the absence (or loss) of features characterizing predicate-focus marking, especially the features typical of a subject (e.g. those of being unaccented and pronominal). Accordingly, the subject – which is still required by the syntax of the relevant languages – will shed typical subject properties and become more object-like. The distinction between subject and object is therefore blurred (cf. (18)).

We refer to Lambrecht's hypothesis as the 'global repulsion theory' because it assumes that subject properties are repelled by the postverbal NP (which presupposes that this NP must have had subject properties at some point), and because the principle is formulated in such a way that it is expected to apply universally, i.e. independently of the specific language and construction at hand.

Lambrecht's account is basically a diachronic one. He uses the Saussurean notion of 'motivation' to account for the instantiation of his principles in natural languages. With respect to the 'Principle of Detopicalization' (cf. (17)), he points out:

It goes without saying that the dynamic terms 'detopicalization' and 'cancellation' [...] are not meant to suggest a synchronic derivational relationship between a PF [predicate-focus] and a corresponding SF [sentence-focus] construction. The relevant explanatory concept is the Saussurean notion of MOTIVATION [...] What I am trying to capture here are natural paths of grammaticalization, not rules of sentence formation. Accordingly, the principles I am postulating have limited predictive power, since motivations can compete with each other [...]. (Lambrecht 2000: 624–5)

Lambrecht substantiates his argument with data from Germanic and Romance languages, but he also refers to other languages like Kinyarwanda and Russian. One example of a simultaneous loss of subject properties and the acquisition of object properties is provided by *there*-existentials in English. As pointed out in Section 3.1, in the spoken language the postverbal constituent – originally a subject – often does not agree in number with the copula. A similar lack of agreement can be observed in parallel examples from French (cf. (19)) and Italian (cf. (12a) above, repeated here as (20)). According to Lambrecht, these examples are instances of subjects becoming more object-like.

(19) French

*Il est/*sont venu trois femmes.*

it is/*are come three women

‘There came three women.’

(Lambrecht 2000: 643)

(20) Italian (spoken)

%C’-era dei contadini.

there-was INDEF farmers

‘There were farmers.’

(Koch 2003: 158)

While Lambrecht’s ‘global repulsion hypothesis’ seems to be compatible with a large amount of data, it also faces a serious problem: There are languages in which original (morphosyntactic) objects have acquired subject properties, rather than the other way around (cf. also Koch 2003). For example, in Mexican Spanish the existential predicate *hay* normally agrees with the postverbal constituent, unlike in (the more conservative construction of) Standard Iberian Spanish (cf. (21) vs. (22)). The same phenomenon can be observed in many other Romance languages, e.g. in (spoken) Iberian Portuguese, in Catalan and in some dialects of Italian (cf. Koch 2003 and below).

(21) Standard Mexican Spanish

Habían muchos problemas.

there.were many problems

‘There were many problems.’

(22) Standard Iberian Spanish

Había muchos problemas.

there.was many problems

‘There were many problems.’

Moreover, there is a second problem. Our data suggest that (original) subjects only lose subject properties when there is an expletive. This seems to indicate that subject properties are not *repelled* by postverbal NPs, but *attracted* by expletives taking a position that is canonically associated with subjecthood. The assumption that subject properties are attracted by specific constituents or positions will be called the ‘attraction hypothesis’ in the following.

4 A typology of formulaic presentationals

As has been pointed out, in our view generalizations concerning the distribution of subject properties in presentationals of Germanic and Romance languages need to be (i) based on a structural typology, and (ii) stated in historical terms.⁶ Sections 4.1 and 4.2 present a typology of presentationals that is historically motivated and that distinguishes three types of existential predicates and three types of expletives (for a recent synchronic comparative overview of existential constructions, see McNally forthcoming). Given that the morphosyntactic properties of presentationals depend, to a considerable extent, on more general syntactic properties of the languages concerned, Section 4.3 introduces a distinction between (i) languages with an obligatory preverbal slot (thetic-XV languages), and (ii) languages without such a slot (thetic-V1 languages).

4.1 *Types of existential predicates in formulaic presentationals of Germanic and Romance languages*

Formulaic presentationals by definition contain explicit existential formulas. The type of predicate forming part of the existential formula constitutes the first major parameter of variation in our typology of presentationals. Diagram 1 illustrates a sub-classification into three major types.

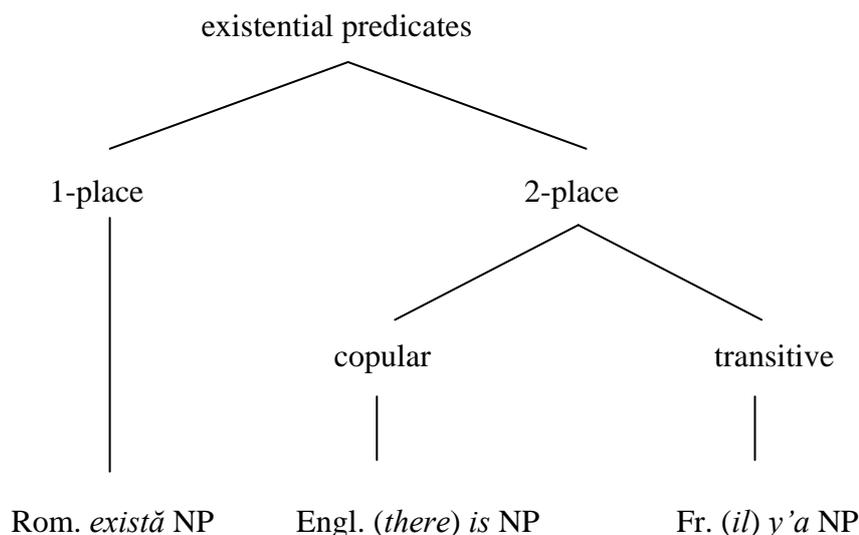


Diagram 1: Types of existential predicates

We can make a first distinction between one-place predicates and two-place predicates. One-place predicates – simple predicates of existence – are used relatively rarely in the existential formulas of European languages, with Rom. *există* and perhaps Port. and Span. *existe* being the most prominent representatives. Comparable existentials are also found in French (*il existe*) and English (*there exists*), where they have a more marginal status, however. An example of Rom. *există* is given in (23). Unlike Span. *existe* (pl. *existen*) and Port. *existe* (pl. *existem*), *există* is number invariant.

(23) Romanian

Există bărbați care să înțeleg femeile.

exist men who SBJ understand women

‘There are men who understand women.’

(Andreea Dumitrescu, p.c.)

Among the two-place predicates, two types can be distinguished, (i) those based on a copula, and (ii) those based on a (transitive) predicate, typically one of possession. Copulas form part of the existential formulas of Engl. (*[there] is*), Scandinavian languages (e.g. Norw. [*det*] *er*, Sw. [*det*] *är*, Dan. [*der*] *er*, Icel. [*það*] *er*) and Dutch (*[er] is*) and are also found in the Romance family (It. [*ci*] *è*, Sard. [*bi*] *est*). Romanian also uses the copula *fi* (3rd sg. *este*, 3rd pl. *sunt*) as an alternative to *există*.

The distinction between one-place predicates and copulas is of course not always clear-cut, as some Germanic and Romance languages use the same verb for both functions (e.g. Germ. *sein*, Engl. *be*). As will be seen, the differences between the two types of presentationals are also very minor, and the main division is between transitive presentationals, on the one hand, and the other two types, on the other. With respect to the question of what counts as a copula and what as an existential predicate, we have applied the criterion of frequency. For example, in the overwhelming majority of cases, Engl. *be* functions as a copula (*Hamlet is unhappy*), and existential uses of this verb are very rare and sometimes archaic (*to be or not to be*, *God is*).

Existential formulas deriving from predicates of possession are widespread among Romance languages, e.g. Span. *hay* (< *ha-y* < Lat. *ha[be]t i[bi]* ‘has there’), Port. *há*, French (*il y’-a* (‘[it there-]has’)) and Cat. (*(hi) ha*). There are also (more sporadic) instances of such transitive presentationals in Germanic languages, e.g. (Southern) German (*es hat* (‘[it] has’)).

In addition to the major types of predicates surveyed in Diagram 1 there are some minor ones. For example, Germ. (*es gibt* (lit. ‘it gives’)) appears to be derived from a

ditransitive verb. However, it seems likely that this use of *geben* goes back to a (dynamic) mono-transitive use of that verb, roughly meaning ‘give rise to’ (cf. Sect. 5.3.2). The argument structure of *es gibt* is thus basically identical to the one of Span. *hay* etc. Many Scandinavian languages have existential predicates whose valency is reduced by a middle marker. Some of these predicates are derived from a ditransitive verb meaning ‘give’, e.g. Dan. (*der*) *give-s*, Norw. (*det*) *gi-s*, Sw. (*det*) *ge-s* (‘give-MID/PSV’; 3→2-place). In other cases locative predicates are derived from transitive verbs, e.g. Sw. (*det*) *finn-s*, Dan. (*der*) *finde-s*, Norw. (*det*) *finne-s* (‘find-MID’). These predicates can be regarded as copulas with a restriction to locative predications.

4.2 Cross-classifying types of predicates and types of expletives

There are two major types of expletives in Germanic and Romance languages, i.e. (i) weak pronominal expletives, and (ii) locative expletives (cf. also Vikner 1995: Ch. 7 on discussion of the two types of expletive in Germanic languages). Weak pronominal expletives are typically third person neuter pronouns like Germ. *es*, Dt. *er* and Norwegian *det*. In French, which does not have separate neuter pronouns, the masculine (or unmarked) form *il* is used. Locative expletives are mostly derived from adverbials meaning ‘there’ (e.g. Dan. *der*) or ‘here’ (It. *ci* < *hicce*, the spoken form of Lat. *hic* ‘here’). There is one language that combines a weak pronominal expletive with a locative one, i.e. French (*il y-a* ‘it there-has’). In those cases where no overt expletive can be identified, we could assume a phonologically empty syntactic element. Given that expletives do not seem to have any semantic function, however, we will simply assume that there is no expletive at all in these cases.

We can now cross-classify the three types of existential predicates and the three types of expletives, thus distinguishing nine types of existential formulas. A sample of relevant constructions from various Germanic and Romance languages is given in Table 2. Note that French *il y’a* appears twice in the table because it contains two expletives, a locative and a weak pronominal one. Spanish *hay* contains a trace of a former expletive (the final glide [j] < Lat. *ibi* ‘there’), which is no longer recognizable as such, however. Note also that the past tense form *había* does not contain any such trace. We have therefore listed this formula under ‘no expletive’.

	no expletive	weak pronominal expletive	locative expletive
one-place	Romanian <i>există</i> NP Portuguese <i>existe</i> NP Spanish <i>existe</i> NP	French <i>il existe</i> NP	Engl. <i>there exists</i> NP
copular	Latin <i>est</i> NP Romanian <i>este</i> NP	Dutch <i>er is</i> NP Icelandic <i>það er</i> NP Norwegian <i>det er</i> NP Swedish <i>det är</i> NP	English <i>there is</i> NP Danish <i>der er</i> NP Italian <i>c(i) è</i> NP Sardinian <i>bi est</i> NP
transitive	Portuguese <i>há</i> NP Spanish <i>hay</i> NP	German <i>es hat</i> NP French <i>il (y')a</i> NP	Catalan <i>hi ha</i> NP French <i>(il) y'a</i> NP

Table 2: Existential formulas of selected Germanic and Romance languages

4.3 Thetic-VI and thetic-XV languages

As has repeatedly been pointed out, generalizations concerning the argument structure of presentationals – especially when approached from a diachronic point of view – can only be made if the ‘syntactic architecture’ of the relevant languages is taken into account. In this section we establish a parameter which plays an important role in the diachronic development of existential formulas. It concerns the (im)possibility for the languages in question to form verb-initial clauses for the encoding of thetic judgements. Most Romance languages allow this type of configuration (cf. Kato 1984, Hulk & Pollock 2001 and many others). An example from Spanish with an intransitive predicate was given in (4) above. (24) is an example with a transitive predicate.

(24) Spanish

Espero que te devuelva.SBJ el libro Juan.

I.hope that you.OBJ return the book Juan

‘I hope that Juan will return the book to you.’

(Ordoñez 2000: 26)

Italian likewise allows verb-initial order inthetic judgements, as is illustrated in (25).

(25) Italian

Capirà tutto Maria.

will.understand everything Maria

‘Maria will understand everything.’

(Belletti 2009: 184)

By contrast, all the Germanic languages under consideration as well as French do not have corresponding verb-initial structures. This is illustrated in (26) for German, and in (27) for French.⁷

(26) German

**Lebt ein Mann in dieser Stadt, der alles weiß.*

lives a man in this city who everything knows

int.: ‘There lives a man in this city who knows everything.’

(27) French

**Vive un homme en Paris qui sait tout.*

lives a man in paris whoknows everything

int.: ‘There lives a man in Paris who knows everything.’

Put differently, languages like German and French have an obligatory preverbal slot in their structural clause templates, while languages of the Spanish and Italian type do not have such a slot. The first type of language will be called ‘thetic-V1 languages’ – as verb-first order is allowed inthetic sentences – and the latter type ‘thetic-XV languages’ – where ‘X’ stands for the element occupying the obligatory preverbal slot.

5 Presentationals in Germanic and Romance languages

Having established a typology of presentationals and one structural parameter classifying the languages under investigation into two types, we now turn to the argument structure of each presentational by using examples from the sample of languages under investigation. The discussion is organized around the three types of existential predicates identified in Section

4.1, i.e. one-place predicates (Section 5.1), copulas (Section 5.2) and (transitive) predicates of possession (Section 5.3).

5.1 One-place presentationals

As pointed out in Section 4.1, one-place presentationals are found in some Romance languages. They are invariably based on the Latin verb *existere* < *ex-sistere*, which originally had a dynamic meaning ‘emerge, come into existence’ (*ex* ‘from, out’, *sistere* ‘stand’). An example from Romanian was given in (23) above. (28) illustrates the relevant construction of Portuguese.

(28) Portuguese

Existem mundos até agora desconhecidos.

exist.PL worlds until now unknown

‘There are worlds unknown so far.’

(Lazard 1994: 21)

In one-place presentationals of the type shown in (23) and (28), the novel NP is the only candidate for subject status and accordingly exhibits all of the relevant properties. Most importantly, it controls verbal agreement and also exhibits other ‘behavioural’ subject properties like the ability to undergo raising. Note, however, that even in raising configurations the subject occupies a postverbal position, as in the Mexican Spanish example (29).

(29) Mexican Spanish

Parecen existir muchos problemas en este país.

seem.PL exist many problems in this country

‘There seem to exist many problems in this country.’

Muchos problemas in (29) functions as a semantic argument of the existential verb *existir*, but it is the syntactic subject of the higher (epistemic) predicate *parecen*. This is the main criterion for a raising analysis, irrespective of its representation in a syntactic model. (30) provides a simplified representation of the mapping from semantic to syntactic argument structure (with *e* in the syntactic representation corresponding to the ‘missing’ locative argument of *existir*, i.e. *muchos problemas*).

A comparison of the one-place presentationals of Romanian, Spanish and Portuguese, on the one hand, and those of French and English, on the other, is instructive with respect to the status and role of what we have called ‘obligatory preverbal slots’. In the former group of (thetic-V1) languages, there is no expletive, and the postverbal NP has retained its status as a subject; in the latter (thetic-XV) languages French and English, subject properties have been transferred from the novel NP to the expletive. This suggests that it is only in languages with an obligatory preverbal slot (such as French and English) that expletives attract subject properties. As will be seen, the other constructions investigated below confirm this impression, and the parameter ‘thetic-V1 vs. thetic-XV’ is one of the most important determinants of the way subject properties are distributed over the arguments in a presentational construction.

The argument structure of presentationals based on one-place predicates without an expletive can be represented as shown in (34). Obviously, this structure is restricted to thetic-V1 languages. The single argument of the existential predicate – here classified as a Theme – takes up the only argument position in the sentence and is a genuine subject. The representation of argument structure used in the following is inspired by Functional Grammar (e.g. Dik 1997), but simplifies matters for convenience. In the (lexical-)semantic layer, predicates are written in small caps and arguments are indicated by variables with a subscript indicating their semantic role (‘TH’ stands for Theme). In the syntactic layer, either specific forms from the languages under consideration are indicated or syntactic category labels. Grammatical relations are indicated by subscripts. Note that we follow Croft (2001) in assuming that grammatical relations are defined relative to the constructions in which they occur. Still, specific relations (most notably the ones of predicate and subject) can be generalized across constructions. Strictly speaking, ‘NP_{SUBJ}’ in (34) thus means ‘NP with the grammatical relation of a subject within the relevant one-place presentational’. More loosely speaking, it stands for ‘NP with a sufficient number of properties characteristic of subjects across constructions’.

(34) One-place existential without an expletive

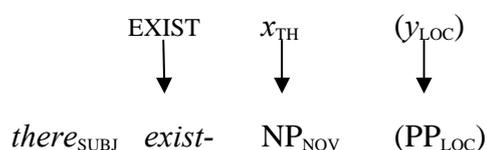
Semantic structure	EXIST	x_{TH}
	↓	↓
Syntactic realization	<i>exist-</i>	NP _{SUBJ}

In thetic-XV languages, subject properties are attracted by the expletive in the obligatory preverbal slot. The English case and the French case are slightly different. In English, the

argument in the semantic layer. The resulting presentational is impersonal, with an argument structure as shown in (38).

(38) One-place presentational with an expletive

Target construction

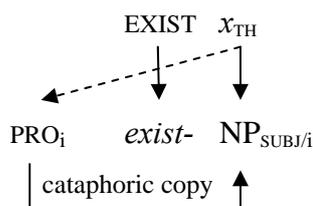


The syntactic function of the novel NP is not specified in (38). As was pointed out above, in keeping with basic assumptions of Radical Construction Grammar (Croft 2001) we assume that grammatical relations are basically functions of the constructions in which they occur. While specific grammatical relations can be generalized across constructions (e.g. subjects) – as they display specific ‘cross-constructional properties’ (cf. the criteria for subjecthood pointed out in Section 3.1) – other types of grammatical relations are largely construction-specific.

An argument structure parallel to the one shown in (38) can be assumed for French *il existe* NP. However, in French the historical development is of course different, as *il* cannot be analyzed as a former locative adjunct like Engl. *there* (for a comprehensive account of the historical development of expletives in French, cf. Zimmermann 2009). We will return to the development of such weak pronominal expletives in Section 5.2.4, where we will argue that they originate as cataphoric copies of the novel NP. Accordingly, the source construction of the French presentational can be represented as shown in (39). There is just one underlying Theme argument which is realized twice in surface syntax, once in the obligatory preverbal slot (in the form of a cataphoric copy), and once in the postverbal position taken by the novel NP (cf. Section 5.2.4 for more details concerning the relationship between a cataphoric copy and the novel NP).

(39) One-place presentational with a weak pronominal expletive

Source construction



5.2 Copular presentationals

5.2.1 ... without an expletive: Latin, Portuguese, Spanish, Romanian

A copular presentational without an expletive provided the most important presentational strategy of (classical) Latin (cf. (40)). The copula can be regarded as having a locative function in these cases, i.e. as taking as its arguments a Location and a Theme (recall from Section 4.1 that the copulas of most Indo-European languages also function as existential predicates).

(40) Latin

Est [puella]_{NOV} [in via]_{LOC}.

is girl in street

‘There is a girl in the street.’

(Ciconte 2009: 186)

In Latin, the novel NP clearly has subject status, and there is no other candidate for it. (41) is an example illustrating subject-to-object raising of *aliquos milites* (‘some soldiers’, the underlying subject of the infinitival clause and the syntactic object of the matrix verb).

(41) *Dixit mihi aliquis [esse [in exercitu]_{LOC} [aliquos milites,*

he.told me some be in army some soldiers

qui consultant, quid agendum sit]_{NOV}.

who debate what to.do is.SBJ

‘Someone told me that there are soldiers in the army who are debating what is to be done.’ (Livius XLIV 34)

The Latin construction has been preserved in Romanian, where it is used as an alternative to the existential predicate *există*. The copula agrees in number with the novel NP (infinitive *a fi*, 3rd sg. *este*, 3rd pl. *sînt/sunt*;⁹ cf. Cornilescu 2009).

(42) Romanian

Sînt [mulți țînțari]_{NOV} [aici]_{LOC}.

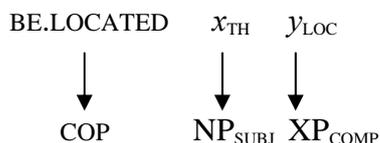
are many mosquitos here

‘There are many mosquitos here.’

(Lazard 1994: 22)

The argument structure of copular presentationals without an expletive can simply be represented as in (43). The copula is taken to have a locative function ('be located'), thus requiring two arguments, a Theme (syntactically, the subject) and a Location. The Location argument functions as a syntactic complement of the copula.

(43) Copular presentational without an expletive



5.2.2 ... with locative expletives: English and Danish

Copular presentationals with a locative expletive are closely related to the type of presentational considered in the previous section. They are found *inter alia* in English (*there is*), Danish (*der er*), Italian (*c[i] è*) and Sardinian (*bi est*). In spite of superficial similarities, the Germanic cases differ strikingly from the Romance ones. The two cases are therefore dealt with in separate sections. We will start with the Germanic languages. In English, *there*-existentials can be regarded as remnants of verb-second structure in English, very much like instances of locative inversion (cf. Breivik 1990: 181-249; Pfenninger 2009: 49-74; cf. also Section 5.1). An example of a presentational from Old English is given in (44).

(44) Old English

Þær is mid Estum an mæẏð.

there is with Estonians a girl

'There is a girl with the Estonians ...'

(Ælfred, Orosius I, i, 22; c893)

In this case, the locative pronoun *þær* can be regarded as a 'copy' of the Location *mid Estum* 'with the Estonians'. Such 'intra-clausal copies' are still commonly used in contemporary German, which has preserved verb-second syntax (cf. (45)).

(45) German

Da_i sitzt ein Spatz [auf dem Dach]_i.

there sits a sparrow on the roof

'A sparrow is sitting (there_i) [on the roof]_i.'

Accordingly, presentationals of the *there is*-type exhibit the same type of argument structure as copular presentationals without an expletive (cf. Section 5.2.1). The only difference is that there is a cataphoric copy of the Location argument. When English lost its verb-second structure, this element was gradually reanalyzed as a subject. As has been pointed out, the ‘increase’ in subject status of *there* (in Standard English) is reflected in some behavioural properties, e.g. in its ability to undergo raising, in its participating in subject-auxiliary inversion and in its use in question tags (cf. Milsark 1974: 14-15, Bolinger 1977, Lazard 1994).

(46) English

- a. *There seems to be a problem here.*
- b. *I believe there to be a problem.*
- c. *Is there a problem?*
- d. *There is a problem, isn't there?*

However, *there* is certainly not a ‘perfect subject’ in standard English, as it does not display agreement with either the main predicate (in simple clauses) or the raising verb in constructions like (46a). As has been mentioned, this is different in the spoken language, see the examples in (47).

(47) English (spoken)

- a. %*There's some students waiting outside.*
- b. %*There seems to be some students waiting outside.*

The situation in Danish seems to be largely parallel to the one found in English. As Jespersen (1924: 155) points out with respect to (48), “the verb was here put in the singular before a plural verb, even at a time when the distinction between sg. *er* and pl. *ere* was generally observed.” In other words, agreement between the predicate and the postverbal NP was suspended.

(48) Danish

- Der er dem som tror ...*
 there is those who believe
 lit.: ‘There is those who believe ...’
 (Jespersen 1924: 155)

Given that both Engl. *there* and Dan. *der* seem to have acquired subject properties, the copular presentationals of English and Danish provide clear examples of a ‘transfer’ of

subject properties from the novel NP to the expletive. In fact, both languages have been used to substantiate the ‘(global) repulsion hypothesis’ by Lambrecht (1986, 2000). However, the loss of subject properties by the novel NP can obviously just as well be explained in terms of what we have called the ‘attraction hypothesis’ (cf. Section 3.3). Given that this type of change can only be observed when there is an expletive, we will argue that the attraction hypothesis can explain the facts from the Germanic and Romance languages investigated in this study better than the repulsion hypothesis.

It should be noted that the two cases illustrated above – the copular presentationals of English and Danish – have probably resulted from slightly different historical developments. In English, any (nominal) constituent occupying the preverbal position *eo ipso* turns into a subject (with systematic exceptions like locative inversion). Danish, by contrast, is a verb-second language, so taking a clause-initial position does not, in itself, turn a constituent into a subject. As pointed out by Faarlund (1989: 63ff.), the clause-initial locative element was first reanalyzed as a ‘topic expletive’. The following example from 15th cent. Danish apparently is the first attested occurrence of the locative expletive *ther* in Scandinavian languages.

(49) Danish (15th cent.)

ther kom ey een tijl lande hiem
 there came not one to country home
 ‘No one came back home to his country.’

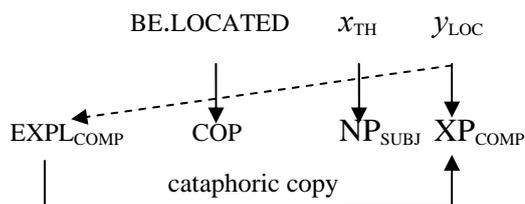
(Danish Chronicle, 1495; quoted from Faarlund 1989: 66)

Later, the ‘expletive topic’ was reanalyzed as an expletive subject: “When the time comes for the expletive topic to become an expletive subject, one feature of *þar* helps to promote the process. In Old Norse the adverbial *þar* would often occur immediately after the finite verb, probably cliticized to the verb. And as we have seen, this is also the position of the nonfronted subject” (Faarlund 1989: 71). Even though in Danish there is no one-to-one correspondence between structural positions and syntactic functions, the association between *ther* and subject properties was apparently strong enough for the originally locative element to acquire subject status.

The change in argument structure of English and Danish copular presentationals is summarized in (50) and (51). In the source construction (cf. (50)), the Theme functions as a subject and there is a Locative complement (required by the copula), which is (redundantly) replicated by a locative adverb (cf. also the German example (45)).

(50) Copular presentationals with locative expletives:

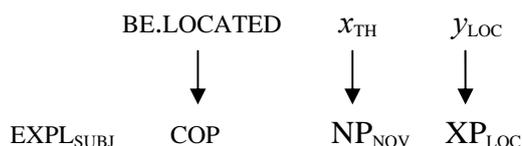
Source construction



In the target construction, the expletive functions as a (syntactic) subject without a semantic role. The construction is thus impersonal. The novel NP is realized as a non-subject constituent. Again, we will not take a stance with respect to its precise syntactic function (e.g. object, complement), as we follow Croft (2001) in assuming that grammatical relations are basically construction-specific.

(51) Copular presentationals with locative expletives:

Target construction



It should be noted that it is of course conceivable to regard the copulas of English and Danish as having the function of an existential predicate in the relevant constructions. In this case, their argument structure would be as described in Section 5.1, i.e. the Location argument would not be required by the predicate, but would function as an optional specification.

5.2.3 ... with locative expletives: Italian and Sardinian

As has been pointed out, Italian *c'è* and Sardinian *bi est* differ in important respects from the English and Danish existential formulas discussed in the previous section (cf. Remberger 2009 on Sard. *bi est*). In the present context, the main difference between English and Danish, on the one hand, and Italian and Sardinian, on the other, is that the former languages are thematic-XV while the latter are thematic-V1. Even though the constructions are superficially similar, they have, accordingly, different histories, as is also reflected in their synchronic behaviour.

Note first that existential constructions based on a copula and a locative adverb were widespread in (postclassical) Latin, as in the following example from Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.

(52) Latin

Quicquid fieri non potest ibi est.

whatever happen not kann there is

‘Whatever could not happen is there.’

(Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* II, 19, 2)

The underlying argument structure is thus basically identical to the one of the English and Danish copular presentationals, i.e. it is ‘BE.LOCATED (x_{TH} , y_{LOC})’. It seems to us that the motivation for the insertion of a locative expletive in (late) Latin is strikingly different, however. In English and Danish, the expletive was probably inserted for syntactic reasons, namely to fill the obligatory preverbal slot, i.e. the Forefield (in V2-syntax) or the subject position (when English had turned SVO). In Latin, by contrast, there was no such obligatory preverbal slot, and as is illustrated by the Romanian case (cf. Section 5.2.1), Italian could have preserved a presentational of the form ‘*est/sunt* NP’ (such forms were actually widespread in early Italo-Romance vernaculars, e.g. 13th cent. Tuscan; cf. Ciconte 2009). The expletive probably established itself as part of the existential formula for reasons of ambiguity avoidance, not as a result of syntactic pressure. In contemporary Italian, *ci* can block a referential interpretation of the (phonologically empty) subject. The contrast between copula sentences with and without expletive is illustrated in (53).

(53) Italian

a. *È un uomo che sa fare qualunque lavoro.*

is a man who knows do whatever work

‘He is a man who knows (how) to do any type of work.’

b. *C’-è un uomo che sa fare qualunque lavoro.*

there-is a man who knows do whatever work

‘There is a man who knows (how) to do any type of work.’

(Federica da Milano, p.c.)

In (53a), the absence of an overt subject is (by default) interpreted as the presence of a phonologically empty subject, which is necessarily topical and, hence, typically referential. In examples of the type of (53b), the presence of a locative adverbial (*ci*) triggers a locative (rather than equative or predicative) reading of the copula (‘*x* is located at *p*’ instead of ‘*x* = *y*’ or ‘ $x \in P$ ’). While this locative element may have been optional at a certain stage, it was later reanalyzed as an obligatory component of the existential formula of Italian.

The difference in the historical developments of locative expletives in Romance and Germanic languages is also reflected in their synchronic behaviour. We will discuss this point with respect to Italian *ci*, assuming that similar observations can be made about Sardinian *bi* (cf. Remberger 2009 for relevant data). *Ci* does not display as many subject properties as English *there*, and we will in fact argue that it is not a subject at all. Note first that Italian *ci* appears to be susceptible to raising, just like English *there*.

- (54) *Ci sembra essere un certo numero di problemi.*
 there seems to.be a certain number of problems
 ‘There seems to be a number of problems.’
 (Federica da Milano, p.c.)

However, (54) should probably not be analyzed as the result of raising *ci* from the lower clause to the higher clause. Unlike in (spoken) English, the raising verb *sembrare* obligatorily agrees with the novel NP (cf. (55)).

- (55) *Ci sembrano/*sembra essere molti studenti.*
 there seem.PL/seem.SG to.be many students
 ‘There seem to be many students.’
 (Federica da Milano, p.c.)

Given that Italian is a thetic-V1 language, (55) is thus best analyzed along the lines of the Mexican Spanish example (29) above, and *molti studenti* can be regarded as the (postverbal) raised subject of *sembrano*.

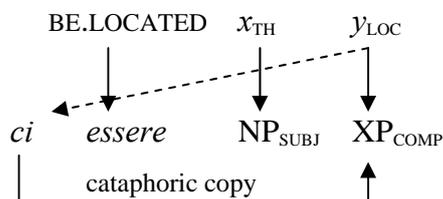
A second fact (presumably) showing that Italian *ci* has subject status is that the formula *c'è*, like Engl. *there's*, allows singular agreement in specific dialects/registers, as in (12b) above. However, in our view an analysis of *ci* as a subject is not very likely. As Koch (2003: 158) has pointed out, agreement and linear order are the only indicators pointing to a subject status of *ci*. The criterion of cliticization shows that the postverbal NP is certainly not an object, and that it is most probably a subject. The (indefinite) clitic *ne* can be used with both postverbal subjects and direct objects, whereas the *lo/la*-series is used only with objects. While *ne*-cliticization is possible for *contadini* in (56a+b), *lo/la* is ungrammatical in the relevant varieties (cf. (56c), from Koch 2003: 158–159; note that *ci* is realized as *ce* in this context). This shows that *contadini* is not treated as an object, as far as *ne*-cliticization is concerned.

- (56) a. *C'-era dei contadini* → *Ce n'-era*
 there-was INDEF.PL farmers there INDEF-was
- b. *C'-erano dei contadini* → *Ce n'erano.*
 there-were INDEF farmers there INDEF-were
- c. *C'-era i contadini* → **Non ce li era.*
 there-was the farmers not there them was

Given that we do not regard the postverbal position of the novel NP as an indicator of its status as a non-subject in thetic-V1 languages, the only (assumed) subject property of *ci* that remains thus is the singular inflection of the copula in specific varieties of Italian. This is not necessarily an indication that *ci* has become a subject, however. It seems more likely to us that (in the relevant varieties) the entire formula *c'è* has been reanalyzed as an existential (one-place) predicate, more or less like Romanian *există*. As many other existential predicates, it has become number invariant, i.e. it does not agree at all. Note that this explanation might seem somewhat *ad hoc*, given that we have regarded Engl. *there* (as well as Danish *der*) as a subject, and the two cases appear to be largely parallel. Remember, however, that there is a clear difference in the raising behaviour of *there* and *ci*: While *there* can control agreement in raising structures (in the relevant registers), *ci* cannot do so.

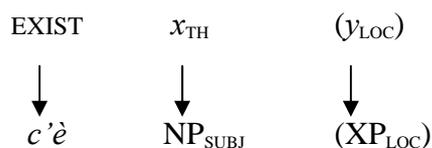
We consequently assume that in Italian it is the novel NP that functions as a subject. The expletive *ci* can be regarded as a cataphoric copy of the Location (cf. Schwarze 1995: 329) and is used for ambiguity avoidance. (57) shows the argument structure of the construction found in the standard language, where the copula agrees with the postverbal subject.

(57) Copular presentational with a locative expletive:



Once the combination of *ci* and *è* (i.e. *c'è*) is reanalyzed as a single existential formula, it acquires the argument structure of a one-place presentational (cf. Section 5.1). This is shown in (58).

(58) Copular presentational with a locative expletive reanalyzed as one-place presentational



5.2.4 ...with weak pronominal expletives: Scandinavian and Dutch

Copular existentials with weak pronominal expletives are found in some Germanic languages, most notably in Scandinavian ones (Icel. *það er*, Norw. *det er*, Swed. *det är*) and in Dutch (*er is*).¹⁰ We will consider the Scandinavian cases in some detail. Old Norse did not (obligatorily) employ expletives in existential constructions (cf. (59)) and used the copula (more or less) like Latin as an existential predicate.

(59) Old Norse

kastali var fyrir austan sundit
 castle.NOM was for east.of the.sound
 ‘There was a castle to the east of the sound.’
 (Faarlund 1989: 84)

In Modern Scandinavian languages, expletives have become obligatory and “behave like subjects syntactically” (Lødrup 1999: 206; but see Börjars & Vincent 2005: 9 for a qualification of this statement). They can be raised (cf. (60a)) and they are used in tag questions in a slot that is generally reserved for subjects (cf. (60b)).

(60) Norwegian

a. *Det synes å vaere mange tilhørere.*
 EXPL seem to be many hearers
 ‘There seem to be many listeners.’

b. *Det kom mange kundar, gjorde det ikkje?*
 it came many customers did it not
 ‘There came many customers, didn’t there?’
 (Faarlund et al. 1999: 833)

The novel NP, by contrast, has been claimed to “unequivocally” have the status of a direct object (Askedal 1986: 31; but see, again, Börjars & Vincent 2005). Or, as Faarlund (2001: 1158) puts it: “The NP argument is now in object position, following the non-finite verb. The only possible subject in the sentence is therefore *det*.”

We will follow Askedal (1986), Lødrup (1999) and Faarlund (1989, 2001) in assuming that the expletive functions as a subject (with respect to its syntactic properties). However, the syntactic function of the postverbal NP seems to be characterized basically in negative terms by these authors, i.e. it is primarily a non-subject rather than an object (see e.g. Lødrup 1999: 206–208). We will assume that the grammatical relation of the novel NP is construction-specific, but that does not prevent it from being similar to objects in common transitive clauses.

According to Faarlund (1989, 2001), Old Norse allowed verb-initial clause structure in declarative clauses. The first instances of weak pronominal expletives among the Scandinavian languages are attested in the 15th century (cf. Faarlund 2001: 1157, referring to Falk & Torp 1900). (61) is an example from 15th cent. Danish.

(61) Danish (15th cent.)

thet war een man, hwilkæn som haffdæ twenne sønær.

it was a man who REL had two sons

‘There was a man who had two sons.’

(Faarlund 2001: 1157, referring to Falk & Torp 1900)

It is possible that weak pronominal expletives were void of any meaning at the time they came to be used as expletives and merely had a syntactic function. However, they may also have had a cataphoric function, which is still recoverable in the relevant structures of Modern Scandinavian languages. Copular presentationals with weak pronominal expletives seem to be structurally parallel to nominal predicative constructions of the form ‘A_{SUBJ} is B_{PRED}’, with the expletive taking the subject slot. Consider (62).

(62) Norwegian

a. *Hvem er det?*

who is it

‘Who is it?’

b. *Det er Jan.*

it is Jan

‘It’s Jan.’

In (62b), *det* refers back to the pronoun from the question in (62a); but given its referential identity with the predicative nominal *Jan*, it can easily be reanalyzed as a cataphoric copy of the latter. The cataphoric nature of weak pronominal expletives in Scandinavian languages has also been noticed by Faarlund (2001: 1158), who points out that “[t]he use of the neuter

pronoun ‘it’ as an expletive subject may have been reinforced by its use in extraposition constructions, where it originally was an anticipating pronoun referring to the sentential argument” (cf. the Old Norse example (63)).

(63) Old Norse

er þat minn vili, at svá gøri vér allir

is it my will that so do we all

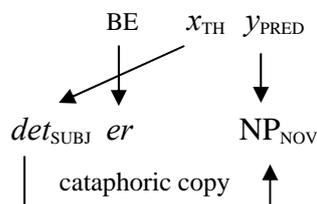
‘It is my wish that we all do so.’

(Faarlund 2001: 1158)

We will thus assume that at an earlier stage, *det* functioned as a cataphoric copy of the novel NP in presentationals, and that the argument structure of the construction corresponded to a nominal predication of the form (‘A_{SUBJ} is B_{PRED}’). The predicate of the construction is a copula with an equative function, represented as ‘BE’ in (64). There is, thus, a Theme NP which is stated to be (identical to) a (referential) noun phrase functioning as a complement of the copula (cf. as in (62) above).

(64) Copular presentationals with weak pronominal expletives:

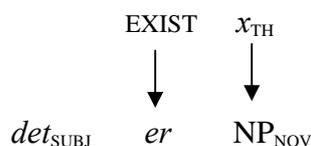
Source structure



In modern Scandinavian languages, the expletive probably does not perform any semantic function. It only has a syntactic function, and the construction qualifies as impersonal, according to the criteria adopted in the present study (cf. Siewierska & Malchukov this volume). The verb can be regarded as functioning as an existential predicate, taking only one (postverbal) argument. As pointed out above, we will assume that the grammatical relation of this argument is basically construction-specific.

(65) Copular presentationals with weak pronominal expletives:

Target structure



Assuming that the main presentational strategy of Old Norse was a copular one without an expletive where the postverbal NP functioned as a subject (cf. (59)), subject properties must have been transferred from the postverbal NP to the expletive in Modern Scandinavian languages. As far as we can tell, this change was causally related to the introduction of an expletive, which, in turn, acquired subject properties basically because it occupied the preverbal slot (cf. also Section 5.2.2 on Danish). There is thus, again, no evidence that the novel NP has shed subject properties, as is predicted by Lambrecht's (2000) '(global) repulsion hypothesis'. Rather, subject properties seem to have been attracted by the expletive (our 'attraction hypothesis').

5.3 *Transitive presentationals*

Transitive presentationals based on possessive predicates are attested from the earliest records of Indo-European onwards. Latin *habet* ('it has') – often accompanied by the deictic pronoun *ibi* 'there' – is the historical source of Span. *hay*, Fr. *il y'a* and Catalan *hi ha*, among other existential formulas. Possessive predicates obviously lend themselves to being used as existential predicates, considering that they can be analyzed as predicating existence at a specific location (cf. Lambrecht 1986, 2000, Freeze 1992, among others). In other words, '*x* has *y*' can be interpreted as '*y* is located at *x*'. The two arguments of a possessive predicate can thus be regarded as a Location (the first argument) and a Theme (the second argument). Given that the Theme functions as the second argument of a predicate, it will normally occur late in the sentence, thus complying with one of the requirements of presentative utterances pointed out in Section 3.2.

5.3.1 *... without an expletive*

Transitive presentationals without an expletive can be found in Portuguese (cf. (66)).

(66) Portuguese

Havía muitos problemas.

EX.PAST many problems

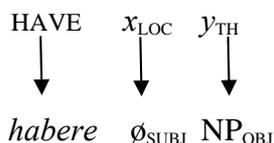
'There were many problems.'

The Portuguese construction corresponds quite closely to the underlying Latin construction, where the novel NP functioned as an object. The subject position can be assumed to have

been realized by an empty pronominal element with an impersonal or generic interpretation in Latin ('people had many problems'). The argument structure underlying this type of presentational can be represented as shown in (67).

(67) Transitive presentational without expletive

Source structure



Given that in Romance languages (unlike in Latin) empty pronominal elements are necessarily associated with highly topical and referential arguments, the generic interpretation of the empty subject must have been lost at some point, and the empty subject was reinterpreted as no subject at all. Accordingly, the originally transitive construction changed into an intransitive one. Given that there was only one argument left – a Theme argument – the predicate could be reanalyzed as a plain existential predicate. As a result, the postverbal argument could acquire subject status, as is witnessed by agreement between the postverbal NP and *haber* in specific varieties of Portuguese. Interestingly, agreeing postverbal NPs appear to be particularly widespread among educated speakers (S. Perreira, p.c.). This seems to point in the direction of normative influence. (68) is a relevant example.

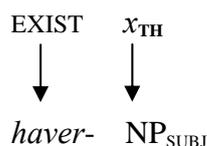
(68) Spoken Portuguese

%Háviam muitos problemas.
 EX.PAST.PL many problems
 'There were many problems.'

The argument structure of transitive presentationals that have been reanalyzed as one-place presentationals is thus identical to the one assumed for Romanian *există*. It is shown in (69).

(69) One-place presentational

Reanalysis of transitive presentational



We may note that the Spanish existential formula based on *haber* could also have been included in this section. In the past tense, this formula is completely parallel to the Portuguese case, being based on a plain predicate deriving from Lat. *habere* (sg. *había*, pl. *habían*).

However, as pointed out in Section 2.1, the (number invariant) present tense form *hay* incorporates remnants of a former locative element *ibi*. We will therefore treat *hay* as an instance of a transitive presentational with a locative expletive and return to it in Section 5.3.3.

5.3.2 ... with a weak pronominal expletive: German and French

Weak pronominal expletives are found in *es hat*-presentationals of (Southern) German as illustrated in (70):

(70) German

Es hat viele Menschen hier.
 it has many people here
 ‘There are many people here.’

As pointed out by Lazard (1994), German provides a particularly clear case of a language whose expletive has most or all of the properties commonly associated with subjecthood, whereas the novel NP is clearly an object. Note that, unlike in most other languages under consideration, in German the syntactic function of the constituents involved is also reflected in morphological case, especially on the object (the expletive *es* is case-invariant; cf. (15) above).

A weak pronominal expletive is also used in French, together with the locative element *y*. As pointed out in Section 5.1, *il* can *bona fide* be analyzed as a subject, as it displays most or all of the relevant properties. (71) illustrates that it undergoes subject-to-subject raising.

(71) French

Il semble y avoir beaucoup de problèmes.
 it seems there have many PART problems
 ‘There seem to be many problems.’

The French case is particularly interesting because it tells us something about the relationship between different types of expletives. It is the pronominal, not the locative, expletive that attracts subject properties. In fact, it seems to us that locative expletives may acquire subject status only under rather specific circumstances, e.g. in English, where weak pronominal expletives are not used in presentationals.

Transitive presentationals with weak pronominal expletives seem to have emerged from personal constructions in cases where coreference with a nearby referential element is possible but not compelling (cf. Behaghel 1923: 319; see also Wegener 2008). Such ambiguities often arise in combination with uncontrollable events or natural forces like weather conditions. Behaghel (1924: 137) provides the example in (72) to illustrate this type of ambiguity.

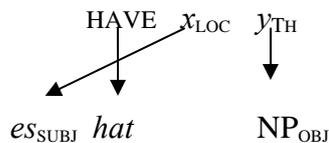
(72) German

Das Wetter ist sehr günstig: das / es gibt gute Ernte
 the weather is very favourable that / it gives good crop
 ‘The weather is very favourable: it will yield / there will be a large crop.’

Assuming that transitive presentationals have emerged from personal constructions, their original argument structure can be assumed to have been as shown in (73). There is a ‘genuine’ (morphosyntactic) subject *es* and also a ‘genuine’ object NP.

(73) Transitive presentationals with weak pronominal expletives:

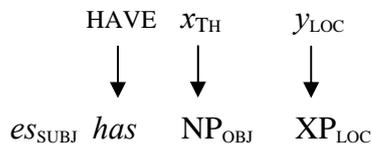
Source structure



In the target structure, the expletive is no longer interpreted as a Location argument and does not have any semantic role (cf. (74)). The construction has thus become impersonal. The novel NP retains its morphosyntactic status as an object.

(74) Transitive presentationals with weak pronominal expletives:

Target structure (impersonal)



5.3.3 ... with a locative expletive

A transitive presentational combining with a locative expletive can be found in Catalan (cf. (75)). Remember that Spanish *hay* originally also incorporated a locative element (*hay* < *habet ibi*), and thus belongs in the class of constructions dealt with in this section.

(75) Catalan

Hi hai aigua.

there has water.

‘There is water.’

(Alonso Capdevila & Suïls Subirà 1998: 7)

Just as in Spanish and Portuguese (but unlike in French), the Catalan construction is also used with plural agreement. A relevant example is given in (76).

(76) *Hi han dos homes.*

here have.PL two men

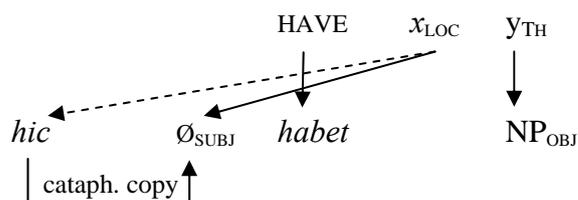
‘There are two men here.’

(Alonso Capdevila & Suïls Subirà 1998: 7)

The fact that the postverbal NP has attracted agreement confirms our hypothesis that subject properties are attracted by expletives only in thetic-XV languages. The use of a locative adverb in the Catalan presentational can be motivated just like the use of *ci* in Italian. In all likelihood, it was used to prevent a referential interpretation of the (empty) subject argument. Remember that the locative adverb *ibi* was added to transitive presentationals as early as in postclassical Latin, at that time probably being motivated pragmatically. The argument structure of the Latin source construction can be represented as in (77). The Location argument is realized twice, once in the empty subject and once overtly in the adverbial.

(77) Transitive presentationals with a locative expletive:

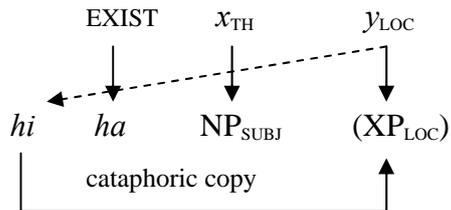
Source structure



In Catalan, the combination of a locative expletive with a predicate of possession seems to have been reanalyzed as an existential predicate, similar to It. *c'è*. As a result, the novel NP – formerly an object, now the only argument of the sentence – has acquired subject status. This is illustrated in (78).

(78) Transitive presentationals with a locative expletive:

Target structure



6 Summary

The major changes observed in the nine (diachronic) types of presentationals are summarized in Table 3 (forthetic-VX languages) and Table 4 (forthetic-VI languages). The first two columns represent the type of predicate and the type of expletive, respectively. In the third and fourth columns the argument structure of each source construction is indicated, and in the sixth and seventh columns changes in argument structure, if any, are shown. In those cases where no relevant change can be observed, the cells are shaded. The acquisition of subject properties is indicated by '+ subj' and the loss of subject properties by '- subj'. The rightmost column provides examples.

Let us first considerthetic-XV languages. In one-place and copular presentationals, there has been a shift of subject properties from the postverbal NP to the expletive. In German, however, the original argument structure has remained unchanged and seems to be stable. A transfer of subject properties in the other direction (towards the novel NP) cannot be observed. All constructions surveyed in Table 3 are impersonal, insofar as the subject does not have a referent or semantic role.

pred	expl	underlying arg struc		changes in arg struc		examples
		expl	novel NP	expl	novel NP	
one-place	weak pron	–	subj	+ subj	– subj	Fr. <i>il existe</i>
	loc expl	loc	subj	+ subj	– subj	Engl. <i>there exists</i>
copular	weak pron	–	subj	+ subj	– subj	Norw. <i>det er</i>
	loc expl	loc	subj	+ subj	– subj	Engl. <i>there is</i>
transitive	weak pron	subj	obj	–	–	Germ. <i>es hat</i>

Table 3: Historical changes inthetic-XV-languages

Table 4 represents the mirror image of Table 3. There is no case in which the novel NP has lost subject properties, but there are two cases where subject properties have been acquired by the postverbal NP (transitive presentationals without expletives and with locative expletives). All constructions surveyed in Table 4 are personal, insofar as the novel NP either is a subject in the source construction already, or else acquires subject properties in the course of its historical development.

pred	expl	underlying arg struc		changes in arg struc		examples
		expl	novel NP	expl	novel NP	
one-place	no expl	–	subj	–	–	Rom. <i>există</i>
copular	no expl	–	subj	–	–	Rom. <i>este</i>
	loc expl	loc	subj	–	–	It. <i>c'è</i> , Sard, <i>bi est</i>
transitive	no expl	adj	obj	–	+ subj	Port. <i>há</i>
	loc expl	adj	obj	–	+ subj	Cat. <i>hi ha</i>

Table 4: Historical changes in presentationals inthetic-V1 languages

The results of our study can be summarized in the form of the following generalizations:

- A loss of subject properties on the part of the novel NP can only be observed inthetic-XV languages. Moreover, this type of development invariably seems to be associated

with the simultaneous acquisition of subject properties by a copula. This strongly suggests that it is in fact the copula – or, to be more precise, the structural position occupied by the copula – that attracts subject properties. Given that copulas attract subject properties in the relevant constructions, the presentational ofthetic-XV languages show a strong tendency to be impersonal.

- The acquisition of subject properties by the novel NP can only be observed inthetic-V1 languages. It takes place when a transitive predicate of possession is reanalyzed as a predicate of existence due to the loss of the first (Locative) argument slot. Presentational ofthetic-V1 languages do not show a tendency towards ‘impersonalization’, insofar as the novel NP seems to function as a subject in the relevant constructions.

Another observation that has emerged concerns the role of expletives inthetic-XV as opposed tothetic-V1 languages: While in the former languages, expletives appear to be motivated syntactically – the obligatory preverbal slot must not be empty – inthetic-V1 languages there is no such syntactic pressure. On the basis of data from Italian, we have suggested that ambiguity avoidance might be the driving force behind the insertion of locative expletives in V1-languages. The function of the expletive is to block an equative or predicative function of the copula, thus leading to a locative or existential reading.

If our hypothesis is correct, we would expectthetic-V1 languages to invariably use locative, rather than weak pronominal, expletives. As far as we can see, this generalization is robust. While there are in fact pronominal elements in Romance languages that have been analyzed as expletives – most notably, (European) Portuguese *ele* – under closer scrutiny these elements turn out to perform a discourse-functional (e.g. cohesive), rather than purely syntactic, function (see Hinzelin 2009 for an overview and Carrilho 2005 specifically on European Portuguese). Given the very limited range of languages investigated in the present study this hypothesis is of course open to challenge.

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative
COMP	complement
COP	copula
EX	existential
EXPL	expletive
INDEF	indefinite
LOC	locative
MID	middle
NOM	nominative
NOV	novel NP
OBJ	object
PART	partitive
PAST	past tense
PL	plural
PRED	predicate
PRO	pronoun
PSV	passive
REL	relative pronoun/particle
SBJ	subjunctive
SUBJ	subject
SG	singular
TH	Theme

* This study reports on results obtained in a research project entitled ‘English-German contrasts – A comprehensive survey of major differences between English and German’, granted to E. König and V. Gast by the German Science Foundation. The financial support from this institution is gratefully acknowledged. We are indebted to Ruth Berman, Andrej Malchukov and Anna Siewierska for valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper. Moreover, we wish to thank Heide Wegener and Denis Creissels as well as all the participants of the workshop on ‘Impersonal constructions’ (Forlí, Sept. 2008) for helpful comments and discussion. Any remaining inaccuracies are our own.

¹ Cf. Hetzron (1975: 374), Bresnan (1994: 90) for similar definitions.

² The term ‘construction’ is used according to Croft (2001).

³ B. Birner and G. Ward have repeatedly pointed out that the main condition on inversion is that the preverbal NP must be more ‘discourse familiar’ than the postverbal one.

⁴ There is also a formulaic presentational *es war einmal* ‘there once was’, which is, however, only used in fairy tales, like Engl. *once upon a time* (cf. Berman & Slobin 1994: 74–75).

-
- ⁵ Note that Lambrecht (2000) does not restrict this claim to formulaic presentationals but also takes non-formulaic ones into consideration.
- ⁶ Cf. Lazard (1994: 26): “Il faudrait étudier les conditions dans lesquelles la construction à actant H s’est développée au cours de l’histoire”.
- ⁷ German allows verb-first order under very specific circumstances in narratives; cf. König & Gast (2009: 170).
- ⁸ Note that the ‘repulsion hypothesis’ runs into problems even if we assume that postverbal positioning is non-subject-like. In Latin, subjects were not tied to any particular syntactic position. The major syntactic change from Latin to Romance languages in this area consisted in fixing the (canonical) subject position to a preverbal slot. It is, accordingly, not the properties of (postverbal subjects in) presentational constructions that have changed in any way; what has changed is the criteria for subjecthood in Romanian and other Romance languages. While the presentational construction has remained the same, its status within the linguistic system has thus changed, and it has become ‘less canonical’ from a synchronic point of view. Still, it seems counterintuitive to us to say that postverbal subjects have shed subject properties (due to a ‘Principle of Paradigmatic Contrast’), given that they themselves have remained stable. Imagine a pair of twins one of which stops growing at the age of ten. When she is grown up, she is forty centimetres shorter than her sister – and, in a way, forty centimetres shorter than she is supposed to be – but does that mean that she has shrunk?
- ⁹ In contemporary Romanian the spelling *sunt* is much more common (Andreea Dumitrescu, p.c.).
- ¹⁰ Remember that German has a formula *es war einmal* ‘there once was’, which is typically used at the beginning of fairy tales.

References

- Alonso Capdevila, H. and J. Suïls Subirà. 1998. La no concordança dels verbs intransitius en català nord-occidental. *Cahiers d'Etudes Romanes (CERCLiD)* 10: 5-24.
- Askedal, John Ole. 1986. On ergativity in Modern Norwegian. *Journal of Nordic Linguistics* 9: 25–45.
- Behaghel, Otto. 1909. Beziehungen zwischen Umfang und Reihenfolge von Satzgliedern. *Indogermanische Forschungen* 25: 110-142.
- Behaghel, Otto. 1923. *Deutsche Syntax. Band 1. Die Wortklassen und ihre Wortformen. A. Nomen. Pronomen.* Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Behaghel, Otto. 1924. *Deutsche Syntax. Band 2. Die Wortklassen und ihre Wortformen. B. Adverbium. C. Verbum.* Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Belletti, Adriana. 2009. *Structures and Strategies.* London: Routledge.
- Berman, Ruth & Dan Slobin. 1994. *Relating Events in Narrative: A Crosslinguistic Development Study.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Birner, Betty. 1994. Information status and word order: an analysis of English inversion. *Language* 70: 233-289.
- Birner, Betty & Gregory Ward. 1998. *Information Status and Noncanonical Word Order in English.* Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Bolinger, Dwight. 1977. *Meaning and Form.* London: Longman.
- Börjars, Kersti & Nigel Vincent. 2005. Position vs. function in Scandinavian presentational constructions. In *Proceedings of the LFG05 Conference*, Butt, M. & T. Holloway King (eds.). Stanford: CSLI Publications.
- Breivik, Leiv Egil. 1990. *Existential there: a synchronic and diachronic study.* Oslo: Novus Press.
- Bresnan, Joan. 1994. Locative inversion and the architecture of universal grammar. *Language* 70: 72-131.
- Carrilho, Ernestina. 2005. Expletive *ele* in European Portuguese dialects. PhD dissertation, University of Lisbon.
- Ciconte, Francesco Maria. 2009. Pro-forms in existential constructions of early Italo-Romance vernaculars. In Kaiser & Remberger (eds.), 183-198.

- Cornilescu, Alexandra. 2009. Restructuring strategies of the Romanian verb *fi* 'be' and the analysis of existential sentences. In Kaiser & Remberger (eds.), 199-230.
- Croft, William. 2001. *Radical Construction Grammar. Syntactic Theory in Typological Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dik, Simon. 1997. *The Theory of Functional Grammar. Part 1*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Faarlund, Jan Terje. 1989. *Syntactic Change. Toward a Theory of Historical Syntax*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Faarlund, Jan-Terje. 2001. From Ancient Germanic to modern Germanic languages. In *Language Typology and Language Universals, Vol. II* (HSK 20.1), M. Haspelmath, E. König, W. Oesterreicher & W. Raible (eds.), 1706-1719. New York and Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Faarlund, Jan Terje, Svein Lie & Kjell Ivar Vannebo. 1999. *Norsk Referanse Grammatikk*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Falk, Hjalmar & Alf Torp. 1900. *Dansk-Norskens Syntax*. Kristiania: Aschehoug & co.
- Freeze, Ray. 1992. Existentials and other locatives. *Language* 68: 553-595.
- Hawkins, John. 1994. *A Performance Theory of Order and Constituency*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hetzron, Robert. 1975. The presentative movement, or why the ideal word order is VSOP. In *Word Order and Word Order Change*, Charles Li (ed.), 346-388. New York: Academic Press.
- Hinzelin, Marc-Olivier. 2009. Neuter pronouns in Ibero-Romance: Discourse reference, expletives and beyond. In Kaiser & Remberger (eds.), 1-25.
- Hulk, Aafke & Yves Pollock. 2001. *Subject Inversion in Romance and the Theory of Universal Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jespersen, Otto. 1924. *The Philosophy of Grammar*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Kaiser, Georg & Eva-Maria Remberger (eds.). 2009. *Proceedings of the Workshop "Null-subjects, expletives and locatives in Romance"*. Working paper no 123 of the Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft, University of Konstanz.
- Karttunen, Lauri. 1976. Discourse referents, In *Syntax and Semantics 7: Notes from the Linguistic Underground*, James D. McCawley (ed.), 363-386. New York: Academic Press.
- Kato, Mary A. 1984. Verb initial constructions in Portuguese and their counterpart constructions in English. *Poznań Studies in Contemporary Linguistics* 18: 71-79.

- Koch, Peter. 2003. From subject to object and from object to subject: (de)personalization, floating and reanalysis in presentative verbs. In *Romance Objects: Transitivity in Romance Languages*, Fiorentino, Giuliana (ed.), 153-185. New York and Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- König, Ekkehard & Volker Gast. 2009. *Understanding English-German Contrasts*. 2nd ed. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag.
- Lambrecht, Knud. 1986. Topic, focus and the grammar of spoken French. PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.
- Lambrecht, Knud. 1994. *Information Structure and Sentence Form*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Lambrecht, Knud. 2000. When subjects behave like objects: an analysis of the merging of S and O in Sentence-Focus constructions across languages. *Studies in Language* 24.3: 611-682.
- Lazard, Gilbert. 1994. L'actant H: Sujet ou objet? *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris* LXXXIX: 1-28.
- Levin, Beth. 1993. *English Verb Classes and Alternations*. Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lødrup, Helge. 1999. Linking and optimality in the Norwegian presentational focus construction. *Journal of Nordic Linguistics* 22: 205-230.
- Malchukov, Andrej and Anna Siewierska. this volume Introduction. This monograph, xxx-xxx.
- Malchukov, Andrej and Akio Ogawa. this volume. Towards a typology of impersonal constructions: A semantic map approach. This monograph, xxx-xxx.
- McNally, Louise. forthcoming. Existential sentences. In *Semantics: An International Handbook of Natural Language Meaning*, C. Maienborn, K. von Stechow & P. Portner (eds.). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Milsark, Gary L. 1974. Existential sentences in English. PhD dissertation, MIT.
- Ordoñez, Francisco. 2000. *The Clausal Structure of Spanish: A Comparative Study*. New York: Garland Publications.
- Pfenninger, Simone. 2009. *Grammaticalization Paths of English and High German Existential Constructions*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Remberger, Eva-Maria. 2009. Null-subjects, expletives and locatives in Sardinian. In Kaiser & Remberger (eds.), 231-261.
- Rupp, Laura. 2005. Constraints on nonstandard -s in expletive *there* sentences: a generative-variationist perspective. *English Language and Linguistics* 9.2: 255-288.

- Sasse, Hans-Jürgen. 1987. Thethetic/categorical distinction revisited. *Linguistics* 25: 511-580.
- Schwarze, Christoph. 1995. *Grammatik der italienischen Sprache*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Seefranz-Montag, Ariane von. 1983. *Syntaktische Theorien und Wortstellung*. München: Fink.
- Vikner, Sten. 1995. *Verb Movement and Expletive Subjects in Germanic Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ward, Gregory and Betty Birner. 2004. Information structure and non-canonical syntax. In *The Handbook of Pragmatics*, Lawrence Horn & Gregory Ward (eds.), 153-174. London: Blackwell.
- Wegener, Heide. 2008. Übergänge. Zur Grammatikalisierung der Hilfsverben. In *Kenntnis und Wandel der Sprachen*, T. Stehl (ed.), 109-125. Tübingen: Narr.
- Zimmermann, Michael. 2009. On the evolution of expletive subject pronouns in Old French. In Kaiser & Remberger (eds.), 63-92.