

Specificational copular sentences and pseudoclefts

A case study

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Specificational copular sentences and pseudoclefts

A case study

This is a case study on SPECIFICATIONAL COPULAR SENTENCES, including SPECIFICATIONAL PSEUDOCLEFTS. Before we can embark on a discussion of the specifics of these constructions, we first of all need to delineate a number of terminological domains. Section 1 will address the typology of copular sentences in some detail, laying out the various types of copular constructions identified in the literature and highlighting their properties and differences. Section 2 will repeat the typological exercise of section 1 with specific reference to a subtype of copular sentence referred to as the PSEUDOCLEFT construction. Sections 3 and 4 will subsequently home in on SPECIFICATIONAL copular sentences (pseudocleft and non-cleft alike) and discuss their characteristics, sections 5 and 6 addressing questions arising specifically in the context of specificational pseudoclefts and discussing the various analyses proposed in the literature.

1 Types of copular sentences

1.1 Copular sentences: Preliminaries

In this work, by COPULAR SENTENCE in the broad sense of the term we understand any sentence type of the general schema in (1).

- (1) *the general format of copular sentences*
XP *be* YP [where YP ≠ participial VP]

The schema in (1) gives us a variety of different types of copular sentences, some examples of which are given in (2)-(12) (see Blom & Daalder 1977:115, Safir 1983, Den Dikken 1987, Neeleman 1997:106-10 on examples of the type in (5)-(7), featuring what Safir has called ‘Honorary NPs’; Blom & Daalder and Den Dikken propose to analyse such subjects as elliptical NPs, but we will not take a stand on this matter, which is orthogonal to our concerns in this work):

(2)	my colleagues are nice people	XP=NP	YP=NP
(3)	my colleagues are nice	XP=NP	YP=AP
(4)	my colleagues are at the office	XP=NP	YP=PP
(5)	under the bed is a good hiding place	XP=PP	YP=NP
(6)	down the hill is easier than up the hill	XP=PP	YP=AP
(7)	bashful is a terrible thing to be	XP=AP	YP=NP
(8)	that they lost is an unfortunate thing	XP=CP	YP=NP
(9)	that they lost is unfortunate	XP=CP	YP=AP
(10)	what happened was they lost the game	XP=CP/NP	YP=IP
(11)	what they did was lose the game	XP=CP/NP	YP=VP
(12)	lose the game is what they did	XP=VP	YP=CP/NP

Exemplification is not exhaustive here, and certain non-trivial questions are raised already at this elementary stage — for instance, concerning the analysis of constructions like (10)–(12), particular types of pseudocleft construction; and about the accidental or principled non-existence of certain XP/YP combinations in some or all languages. (In particular, we need to exempt from the schema in (1) constructions in which YP is a participial VP — these are either passives (if the V-head is a past participle) or progressives (where the V-head is a gerund or present participle), neither ‘auxiliary construction’ generally being included in the set of copular sentences; we will follow standard practice here.)

At this elementary stage in the discussion these questions will not need to concern us. We will return to the former question (sections 3 and 6); the latter will not play a role in the discussion to follow at all.

Note that although the schema in (1) is presented as a linear string, we make no *a priori* claims here about the word order of copular sentences. Indeed, one of the things we will have occasion to discuss in great detail in this work is the fact that a specific subtype of copular sentence, the SPECIFICATIONAL COPULAR SENTENCE, allows its major constituents to ‘change places’: one often finds that in such sentences each can be on either side of the copula.

Specificational copular sentences are just one of a variety of copular sentence types distinguished in the literature on copular sentences. Before we will be able to properly address the specifics of these specificational constructions, we will first of all need to outline the typology of copular sentences, which will serve as a backdrop to the discussion to follow. Thus, in sections 1.2 and 1.3 we will go through increasingly more detailed typologies of (largely double-NP) copular sentences, then proceeding to attempts at reducing the fine-grained typologies to a simpler pattern (section 1.4), and finally (section 1.5) raising the question of whether the typology of copular sentences (however coarse- or fine-grained) should be given shape: in terms of properties of the copula or in terms of properties of the structure/derivation/major constituents of the constructions in question.

1.2 *Types of copular sentences (I): A basic two-way split*

That not all copular constructions are of the same type is not a contentious claim. There is a general consensus that at least two types need to be distinguished. Basing themselves typically on the REFERENTIALITY of the second, or post-copular noun phrase in a ‘straight’ or ‘canonical’ double-NP copular sentence of the general format NP_1 is NP_2 (cf. (13) for an example), scholars have made a general distinction between double-NP copular sentences in which NP_2 is non-referential and ones in which NP_2 is referential. Even when it comes to this simple two-way split, however, terminological proliferation is rampant. The overview in (14), which aims to be representative rather than exhaustive, gives the reader a glimpse of the kinds of labels assigned to the two types of copular sentence, with references to their inventors in the right-hand margin. In what follows we will use the boldface labels PREDICATIONAL (*food for the dog* in (13) predicates a property of *his supper*) and SPECIFICATIONAL (*food for the dog* specifies what *his supper* consists of), due to Akmajian (1979).

- (13) his supper is food for the dog
- a. predicational: ‘his supper serves as food for the dog’
- b. specificational: ‘he eats food for the dog for his supper’
- (14) *a basic two-way split*
- | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------------------|----|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. | NP ₂ = non-referential
classifying | b. | NP ₂ = referential
identifying | [Kruisinga &
Erades 1953] |
| | intensive | | extensive/equative | [Halliday 1967,
Huddleston 1971] |
| | non-equational | | equational | [Bolinger 1972] |
| | ascriptive | | equative | [Lyons 1977] |
| | attributive | | identificational | [Gundel 1977] |
| | predicational | | specificational | [Akmajian 1979] |
| | predicational | | specificational(ly
identifying) | [Declerck 1988] |

All scholars referred to in (14) essentially agree that the difference between the two types of copular sentences in (14a,b) turns on the referentiality of the post-copular noun phrase, though individual authors disagree on the precise notion of referentiality that they avail themselves of (see Keizer 1992:chapter 2 for a detailed précis).

1.3 *Types of copular sentences (II): More fine-grained typologies*

While the Greek philosophers of classical antiquity (Aristotle, Plato) already recognised the versatility of the copula and the many sides of ‘being’, it was not until Higgins (1979) that the linguistics literature was introduced to syntactic and semantic grounds for distinguishing more than just the two basic types of copular sentence in (14). Higgins (1979) proposed a four-way distinction in the realm of copular sentences, adopting the basic split in (14) and enriching it with two additional types (of which the fourth is often referred to as the EQUATIVE construction as well). In his reappraisal of Higgins’s seminal work on copular sentences, Declerck (1988) once again recognises four basic types (though the criteria used for distinguishing them differ from those employed by Higgins, and concomitantly the definitions of the various types are not exactly the same either). Declerck also considers the possibility that there might be even more types of copular sentences, highlighting in particular the ‘definitional copular sentence’ in (16e).

(15)	a.	predicational	NP ₁ referential	NP ₂ predicational	(Higgins 1979)
	b.	specificational	superscriptional	specificational	
	c.	identificational	referential	identificational	
	d.	identity statement	referential	referential	
(16)	a.	predicational	referring	non-referring	(Declerck 1988)
	b.	specificational(ally identifying)	weakly referring (attributive)	strongly referring	
	c.	descriptively identifying	strongly referring	strongly referring or non-referring	
	d.	identity statement	referring	referring	
	e.	definitional	non-referring	?	

For both Higgins and Declerck, the typology of double-NP copular sentences is in large measure a function of the REFERENTIALITY of the two noun phrases that constitute them, as well as the DISCOURSE FUNCTION of the various copular sentences (usable as answers to questions, list readings, focus/presupposition), their SYNTACTIC PROPERTIES (reversibility etc.; see section 4) and their INTONATIONAL properties. Higgins and Declerck disagree on the proper definition of ‘referential’, however. Higgins follows Strawson (1950) and Geach (1970) in taking ‘referentiality’ to be about ‘what a proposition is about’. Declerck, on the other hand, avails himself of a subtler approach to referentiality, making distinctions not just between referring and non-referring NPs but also, within the set of referring NPs, between weakly and strongly referring NPs (the former corresponding to Donnellan’s 1966 ‘attributive’). (Declerck does not make the referential status of NP₂ in definitional copular sentences explicit.)

Higgins explicitly rejects a classification of the NP₁ of specificational copular sentences (his ‘superscriptional’ NP) as ‘attributive’ in Donnellan’s sense (but see Declerck 1988:48–49 for a repartee of Higgins’s counterarguments). For Higgins neither NP₁ nor NP₂ of a specificational copular sentence can be referential (since specificational copular sentences are not ‘about’ either of the two NPs); he therefore needs to introduce additional terminology to label the constituents of specificational sentences (as

‘superscriptional’ [defining the heading of a list] and ‘specificational’ [specifying the content of the list]). Apart from drawing a connection with lists (or ‘colon constructions’; cf. *the winner is: John Johnson* or *the winners are: John Johnson, Jack Jackson, Dick Dixon, ...*), however, Higgins never makes it entirely clear what it means for an NP to be ‘superscriptional’.

Examples of the various types of copular sentences distinguished in (15) and (16) are given in (17)–(21), along with a summary of their most important characteristics (largely adapted from Declerck 1988, to whose work the page references in (17)–(21) refer; cf. also Keizer 1992:chapter 2).

- (17) *predicational double-NP copular sentences*
- a. John is a teacher
 - b. Mary is a pretty girl
 - ‘not felt to answer a question asking for specificational (identifying) information’; in fact, ‘not felt to answer a question at all’ (p. 55, *q.v.* for further discussion)
 - do not alternate with *it*-clefts (**it is a teacher that John is*), which are ‘always specificational’ (p. 69)
 - are not reversible (**a teacher is John*)
- (18) *specificational(ly identifying) double-NP copular sentences*
- a. the bank robber is John Thomas
 - b. the only people that can help you are the Prime Minister and the Queen herself
 - exhaustively specify the candidates (‘values’) for the ‘variable’ (*the bank robber* in (18a)); ‘list reading’, ‘exhaustivity’ — section 3.2.2
 - alternate with *it*-clefts (*it is John Thomas that is the bank robber*) and put focus on the ‘value’ NP (*John Thomas* in (18a))
 - are reversible (*John Thomas is the bank robber*)
- (19) *identificational/descriptionally identifying double-NP copular sentences*
- a. that (man) is John’s brother
 - b. that (place) is Boston
 - are not meant to specify a value for a variable (p. 95) and are not exhaustive or contrastive
 - do not alternate with *it*-clefts (**it is that (man) that is John’s brother*, **it is John’s brother that is that (man)*)
 - are not reversible (**John’s brother is that (man)*)
- (20) *identity statements*
- a. the Morning Star is the Evening Star
 - b. Dr Jekyll is Mr Hyde
 - are typically used to correct the hearer’s assumption that two different descriptions apply to two different referents
 - do not alternate with *it*-clefts (**it is the Morning Star that is the Evening Star*)
 - are reversible (*the Evening Star is the Morning Star*)
- (21) *definitions*
- a. a motor car is a vehicle that has four wheels and is propelled by an internal combustion engine
 - b. a pyramid is what the Egyptians built to bury their pharaohs in

- though a paraphrase of the form ‘NP₁ is the following: NP₂’ (‘list’) is possible, definitions lack the exhaustivity typical of specificational sentences
- do not alternate with *it*-clefts (**it is a vehicle that has four wheels and is propelled by an internal combustion engine that a motor car is*)
- are not reversible (‘That is to say, switching the places of the subject NP and the predicate nominal in [(21a,b)] results in a sentence that is not ungrammatical, but which no longer counts as an example of a definition’ — p. 113)

Copular sentences are often several ways ambiguous on paper. Thus, Higgins (1979:266–67) presents the example in (22) as a three-ways ambiguous copular construction:

- (22) the girl who helps us on Friday is my sister
- predicational* answers the question of how the referent of NP₁ is related to the speaker; no exhaustivity implied
 - specificational* provides an exhaustive list in answer to the question *who is the girl who helps you on Friday?*
 - identificational* identifies the referent of NP₁ as the speaker’s sister (cf. *that is my sister*)

1.4 Reducing the typology

Higgins (1979) notes that his identity statements and identificational copular sentences are potentially reducible to one single type, depending on one’s interpretation of ‘referentiality’: if one insists ‘that referentiality is a property of expressions, not of the use of expressions, then one might also want to insist that [an identificational copular sentence] is an identity statement’ (p. 263). (He himself uses ‘referentiality’ with reference to the use of expressions, however, so he keeps the two types of copular sentence distinct.)

Taking Higgins’s typology as her starting point, Verheugd (1990) has attempted to reduce the four types of copular sentence in (15) to the two basic ones in (14), once again making crucial use of the notion ‘referentiality’. Verheugd’s objective is to reduce Higgins’s five NP types (referential, specificational, superscriptional, predicational, identificational) to just two: referential and non-referential. With particular reference to specificational copular sentences and Higgins’s notion of superscriptional NPs, she argues that such NPs can be treated as underlying predicates. She thus treats specificational sentences like *the culprit is John* as INVERSE COPULAR SENTENCES: copular sentences with a surface word order derived via inversion of the underlying subject–predicate order (see sections 4.2 and 4.3, below, for details concerning the properties of copular inversion).

In their studies of the syntax of copular sentences, Heggie (1988) and Moro (1997) take the same tack, treating specificational sentences as inverse copular constructions. Heggie and Moro present a variety of syntactic arguments to support a transformational derivation of such inverse copular sentences — though they differ with respect to the way they implement the analysis. We will return to the details in the discussion of INVERSION (once again, see sections 4.2 and 4.3, below).

By analysing specificational copular sentences as inverse copular constructions, the principles-and-parameters analyses by Verheugd, Heggie and Moro continue the line of thought initiated by Blom & Daalder (1977), who likewise claim that there are just two types of copular sentence (the predicational and specificational types) and that as far as the underlying relationship between two NPs in predicational and specificational copular sentences is concerned there is no difference between the two sentence types: in both, one of the two NPs is the predicate of the other; underlyingly, then, both types of copular construction are predicational. Blom & Daalder take their cue from the intonational contour of copular sentences (focal stress in particular), and give the following characterisations of specificational and predicational copular sentences:

- (23) a. in a *specificational* copular sentence, the *focused* element is contained in the *hyponym* = *Theme* = *deep structure subject*
 b. in a *predicational* copular sentence, the *focused* element is **not** contained in the *hyponym* = *Theme* = *deep structure subject*

Of these two claims, the former is undisputed; that predicational copular sentences demand that the focus not be on/in the subject is a controversial claim, however (see Heycock 1994, 1998).

Blom & Daalder (1977) (who express their indebtedness to Den Hertog 1903) are perhaps the most rigid and explicit champions of the idea that all copular sentences are underlyingly represented as predications, with one of the two NPs functioning as the HYPERONYM (Lyons’s 1977 ‘superordinate’; cf. ‘predicate’) of the other (the HYPONYM). They even extend their hyponym/hyperonym (or subject/predicate) approach to identity statements of the type in (20), saying that the post-copular noun phrase in such constructions is the hyponym of the pre-copular NP. They argue as follows (p. 76; my somewhat liberal translation):

In an example such as [(20a)], [*the Morning Star*] is presented as the more narrowly described element, while [*the Evening Star*] is a non-directly-identifying expression. Put differently, ‘being the evening star’ is a property which is ascribed to something, in this case to what is referred to as [*the Morning Star*].

Since this treatment of identity statements entails that of the two NPs in (20) only the pre-copular one is referential, they add (p. 77, translation mine; original italics):

The necessary ‘referential’ knowledge, the knowledge that we are dealing here with what are called ‘‘definite descriptions’’, can be taken to be of a different nature than knowledge of the content of a grammatical construction. We would therefore like to claim that the referential knowledge in the case of an interpretation which goes beyond the grammatical interpretation is *added* to the hyperonym relationship expressed in the grammatical construction.

For Blom & Daalder, in other words, ‘referentiality’ is less basic when it comes to the *grammatical* classification of copular sentences than it is for the other scholars referred to in the foregoing: a predicate nominal, while quintessentially non-referential, can nonetheless be interpreted referentially on the basis of the language user’s non/extra-grammatical knowledge.

Blom & Daalder’s predicational approach to equative copular sentences/identity statements is controversial;¹ and since, as far as their syntactic properties are concerned, identity statements have more in common with (inverse) specificational copular sentences than with their predicational counterparts (cf. esp. Heycock & Kroch 1999, also Guéron 2000; cf. e.g. section 4.3.2, below), it may be better (if one wants to treat them as underlyingly predicational in the first place) to try to analyse equatives along the lines of inverse specificational constructions. Be that as it may, even when we confine our attention to specificational copular sentences (for which inversion accounts have been proposed not just by Blom & Daalder but by Heggie, Moro and Verheugd as well) the idea that the relationship between the two NPs is one of hyponym/hyperonym or subject/predicate is controversial.

¹ Blom & Daalder (1977:77) seek to support their approach with reference to the claim that the post-copular noun phrase of such constructions is *pronominalised* with *it* rather than (*s*)*he* — a claim which they illustrate for Dutch with the aid of (i), which, however, is not an unequivocal case of an identity statement. The argument fails to be convincing, therefore.

(i) is hij de burgemeester van Amsterdam? — nee, maar hij wordt *het/*hij/*hem*
 is he the mayor of Amsterdam no but he becomes *it/he/him*

Thus, Declerck (1988:93) dismisses the approach, stressing that ‘[s]pecificational sentences do not express a hyponymy relation’. In defence of his position, Declerck draws on Higgins (1979) and Halliday (1967, 1968): Higgins points out that the essence of the specificational relationship is that the contents of the concept expressed by the superscriptional NP are specified, which ‘naturally means that the NP denoting the concept and the NP specifying its contents cannot differ in generality or specificity’ (Declerck 1988: 92–93); and Halliday argues that the two NPs of specificational sentences have ‘the same degree of specificity, and that this is precisely the reason why such sentences are reversible’ (Declerck 1988:93, fn. 98).²

In what follows, we will not take a stand on the question of whether the four or five types of copular sentences enumerated in (15)/(16) qualify as primitives or whether they are instantiations of two or even just one ‘macro-category’ of copular constructions, noting simply that if one wants to reduce the various types of copular sentence to one underlying structure, this will be the structure most directly represented by copular sentences of the *predicational* type: a subject–predicate structure (cf. Blom & Daalder 1977, Heggie 1988, Verheugd 1990, Moro 1997 for representatives of this general perspective).

1.5 *A typology of copulas?*

In sections 1.2 and 1.3 we have seen that there is good reason, at least descriptively (for the possibility of reducing the typology from a theoretical perspective, see section 1.4), to distinguish between a number of different types of copular construction (cf. (14)–(16)). There are two ways, in principle, of thinking of such a typology of copular constructions (cf. (24)). We refer to Keizer (1992:section 2.1) and Moro (1997:Appendix) for careful discussion, which we will summarise briefly in this section.

- (24) a. *one ‘be’, different structures/derivations*
 [e.g. Montague 1973, Dik 1983, Stowell 1981, Partee 1986, 1998, Heggie 1988, Moro 1997]
 b. *multiple ‘be’s*
 [e.g. Huddleston 1971, Akmajian 1979, Seuren 1985, Rapoport 1987, Higginbotham 1987, Safir 1985, Zaring 1996]

The ‘classical’ position in this debate is the one represented by Aristotle and Plato — the idea that ‘be’ is a polysemous lexical item with a variety of different meanings (corresponding to the different types of copular sentence enumerated in the foregoing). Modern philosophers have generally followed this venerable tradition in assigning *be* a variety of different meanings (cf. e.g. Mill 1856:86, Russell 1903:64).

In early generative work, the multiplicity of the copula seems to have been assumed more or less as a matter of course: thus, Huddleston (1971:241), in making a distinction between predicational and specificational pseudoclefts, refers to the dichotomy in terms of the different types of *be* used in them: ‘intensive *be*’ versus ‘equative *be*’; elsewhere in the book he also distinguishes an identificational *be*. In making this three-way distinction among types of *be*, Huddleston follows Halliday’s (1967:66) typology of copulas. Likewise, Bolinger (1972:98) casts his typology of copular constructions in terms of a typology of *be*’s, recognising an equational *be*, a locational *be* and a non-equational *be*. Akmajian (1979) similarly talks in terms of two species of *be*, as does Higgins (1979:191) (‘the verb *be* is the identity’); but Higgins (1979:161–63) also takes care to point out that ‘other verbs that permit a meaning relation similar to specification’, like *lie in*, *consist in*, *constitute*, *amount to*, *entail*, *involve*, *have to do with* (also *justify*) behave the same way when it comes to one of the key properties of specificational sentences: connectivity.

² Declerck also claims that the Blom & Daalder type approach to specificational sentences (which treats them as predicational underlyingly) is incompatible with Givón’s (1973:119) universal that ‘a predicate may never be less general than its subject’ – but this is a mistake on Declerck’s part: for advocates of the inversion approach to specificational copular sentences, the pre-copular NP₁ (the hyperonym) is indeed the predicate underlyingly, with the post-copular NP₂ (the hyponym) being its subject.

More recently, Seuren (1985:299) has also felt the need to ‘begin by distinguishing a separate verb *be*, distinct from the ordinary predicative *be* ... and distinct also from the *be* of identity’ — a type of *be* that he labels ‘specifying *be*’, used in specificational pseudoclefts. And in the principles-and-parameters framework, Safir (1985:116) stands out as an example of the multiple-*be* approach, distinguishing at least two lexical entries for *be*: an identificational and a predicational one. In a rather different vein, Guéron (1992) argues that, while otherwise meaningless, the copula is an ‘identificational operator’ in inverse (specificational) copular sentences at the level of *commentaire*.³ For a recent principles-and-parameters study of copular constructions (with special reference to Hebrew), the use of *be* in predicative and identity sentences in English, and the meaning of ‘the verb *be*’, see Rothstein (2000).

The generative literature has generally tended, however, to the one-*be* approach, ascribing the semantic variability of copular sentences to the structures involved, not to the semantics of *be*.⁴ In fact, most authors in this framework agree that a key property of *be* is that it has no meaning at all — it is a functional element, linking the major constituents of copular sentences (cf. Stowell 1981, Heggie 1988, Moro 1997, Den Dikken 1995). Even generativists who believe in the existence of a separate category of equative copular sentences alongside predicative copular constructions (cf. Heycock & Kroch 1999 for a recent defence of this position; see also Adger & Ramchand 2001 and Pereltsvaig 2001 for discussion) routinely hasten to add that they do not take this to imply the existence of a separate ‘equative *be*’: there is only one copula, a ‘linker’, as its name suggests; the difference between equative and predicational copular sentences lies in the structures of the constructions (for Heycock & Kroch 1999, the internal structure of the small clause in the complement of *be* — see section 4.1.1 for brief discussion; for Pereltsvaig 2001, the distinction between *be* as a realisation of I or *v*).

In denying the copula a meaning of its own and assigning it the status of a semantically void functional category (Partee’s 1998 ‘non-lexical *be*’), the generative work referred to in the previous paragraph is in perfect agreement with Dik (1983), which represents a Functional Grammar perspective (for more FG-based studies on copular sentences, see Hengeveld 1992 and Keizer 1992; we will not address these further here).

In what follows we will follow (25a), the one-*be* approach to copular constructions — in the light of Higgins’s (1979:161–63) point about equivalents of *be*, and the fact that in the absence of an explicit demonstration of the polysemy (or, in fact, the ‘semy’, i.e. the meaningfulness) of the copula, one should proceed on the assumption that all of the semantics of copular sentences derives from (i) its major constituents and (ii) their syntactic structure and derivation.

3 Guéron (1992) makes a difference between the *récit* and the *commentaire*, two levels of interpretation (a distinction which does not correspond to that between overt syntax and LF). In the *récit* of an inverse (specificational) copular sentence like *the culprit is John*, the copula is a part of the predicate, along with the non-verbal part; in the *commentaire* (a ‘metalinguistic’ level, according to Guéron) it is an identificational operator.

4 As Partee (1998) points out, ‘[i]n the Slavic literature, it has long been noted that insofar as differences in the semantics of different copular sentences can be predicted from differences in the semantics of the “arguments” of the copula, it should not be necessary to posit ambiguities in the copula itself’; she refers to Chvany (1975) and Padučeva & Uspenskij (1979) in this context.

Irrelevant in the context of specificational copular sentences and pseudoclefts but significant in the broader context of copular sentences in general is the fact that languages may use different linker elements in copular sentences with an individual-level predicate (like *intelligent*) and ones with a stage-level predicate (like *sick*). Spanish and Portuguese are such languages (cf. the *ser/estar* distinction, where *estar* goes back to the Latin verb *stare* ‘stand’). We will not be concerned with this question here. See Schmitt (1996) and references cited there for discussion of the distribution of *ser* and *estar*.

2 Types of pseudocleft sentences

2.1 Pseudocleft sentences: Preliminaries

A particular kind of copular sentence which has attracted a great deal of specific attention in the generative linguistic literature is the so-called PSEUDO(-)CLEFT CONSTRUCTION.⁵ Quintessential representatives of the class of pseudoclefts are copular sentences featuring a *wh*-clause, typically with *what* (less often *where*, *when*, *why*, *how*; even more rarely *who*), as one of their major constituents. Examples of such pseudoclefts are given in (25)–(33) (cf. esp. Akmajian 1979:18–19).⁶

- (25) what John does not eat is food for the dog
- (26) what John is is a good teacher
- (27) what John is is tall
- (28) what we need is Jerry drunk
- (29) where John finally ended up was in Berkeley
- (30) when John arrived was at five o'clock
- (31) why John went to the bookstore was to buy a book about pseudoclefts
- (32) how John did it was by using a decoder
- (33) %who John visited was Bill

Not all types of specificational pseudocleft illustrated in (25)–(33) are found in all languages (Ross 1999 notes, for instance, that Japanese and Kitchangana (Bantu) seem not to have the counterpart of (27)). Even in English, as Akmajian (1979:83, fn. 1) notes, '[m]any speakers find sentences such as [(33)] unacceptable (or less acceptable than sentences [(25)–(32)]) but judge as acceptable sentences [(25)–(32)]'. In his corpus-based study, Collins (1991) found not a single example of a *who*-cleft, while of all the tokens of pseudoclefts with *wh*-words other than *what*, only one had the order illustrated in the examples above (with the *wh*-clause preceding the copula — see also Geluykens's 1984 corpus-based study for the rarity of this type, attested just once in his corpus as well; cf. also Heggie 1988:352–53), all other cases involving the reverse order — but even then, their total incidence is not anywhere near that of *what*-clefts. Higgins (1979:2) explicitly sets aside all pseudoclefts with *wh*-elements other than *what*; we will not, though most of our examples will indeed be of the *what* type.

The unbalanced distribution of *what* vs. pseudoclefts with other *wh*-words disappears once we include in the class of pseudocleft constructions examples featuring a headed relative instead of a *wh*-clause, illustrated in (35)–(39). All examples on this list are equally acceptable.

- (34) the things John does not eat are food for the dog
- (35) the place where John finally ended up was in Berkeley
- (36) the time at which John arrived was at five o'clock
- (37) the reason why John went to the bookstore was to buy a book about pseudoclefts
- (38) the way John did it was by using a decoder
- (39) the { %one/✓person } who John visited was Bill

5 The term is spelled variably as 'pseudo-cleft' (cf. e.g. Huddleston 1971, Akmajian 1979, Higgins 1979) or 'pseudocleft' (cf. more recent work); we will use the non-hyphenated spelling in what follows.

6 (28) is taken from Ross (1999), where the 'nouniness' of *Jerry drunk* is noted (cf. Safir's 1983 'Honorary NPs').

Most scholars agree that ‘*th*-clefts’ (to borrow Collins’s 1991 term; see also his ‘*all*-clefts’: *all John ever eats is food for the dog*) should be treated on a par with ‘*wh*-clefts’ (an alternative for the term ‘pseudoclefts’) — but Hankamer (1974) warns that the two, though similar, should not be identified (on account of the fact that ‘the allowable subjects of [*th*-clefts] are very restricted’; Hankamer 1974:fn. 9); see also (175)–(176)). In this work, we follow the general trend of assimilating ‘*th*-clefts’ to ‘*wh*-clefts’.

The term ‘pseudocleft’ seems to be a terminological innovation that we have generative linguistics to thank for — as Higgins (1979:1) puts it, ‘[t]his term is relatively new and seems to have arisen within the transformational-generative tradition, its formation emphasizing the formal and semantic kinship of the construction concerned to what Jespersen termed the “cleft” construction’. Jespersen’s (1961) term CLEFT SENTENCE applies to such constructions as *it was Bill that John visited yesterday*, featuring the pronoun *it* in pre-copular position and a relative clause to the right of the copula. In early work on ‘*wh*-clefts’, they occasionally were referred to simply as ‘clefts’ (cf. Jacobs & Rosenbaum 1968:39). The parallels and differences between *it*-clefts and pseudoclefts will not be discussed here in any detail; that the two cannot be identified is clear, for instance, from the fact that there is no *it*-cleft counterpart to our earlier example in (28) (cf. **it is Jerry drunk that we need*).⁷

2.2 *Types of pseudocleft (I): A basic two-way split*

Just like there are several types of copular sentence, the literature has also found occasion to distinguish different kinds of pseudocleft construction — where ‘pseudocleft’ is understood in the sense of section 2.1: as a copular sentence featuring a *wh*-clause or a corresponding (light-)headed relative clause construction as one of its major constituents (on a substantially narrower interpretation of the term ‘pseudocleft’, see section 2.4). Thus, Higgins (1979) distinguishes between two types, as in (40) (cf. the typology of copular sentences in (14)). The difference between the two can be illustrated with the aid of the ambiguity of the example in (26) (adapted from Clifton 1969; cf. (13), above): here *food for the dog* may be taken to denote a property ascribed to the referent of *what John does not eat* (‘the things that John does not eat serve as food for the dog’), in which case we are dealing with a predicational pseudocleft; alternatively, we can take *food for the dog* to be a specification of what it is that John does not eat (‘John does not eat the following: food for the dog’), in which case we are confronted with a specificational pseudocleft.

- (40) *a basic two-way split* (Higgins 1979)
- a. predicational
 (26): ‘the things John does not eat serve as food for the dog’
- b. specificational
 (26): ‘John does not eat (the following:) food for the dog’

2.3 *Types of pseudocleft (II): More fine-grained typologies*

In section 1.3 we have seen that a more microscopic investigation of copular sentences has turned up a number of additional types of such constructions (cf. (15) and (16)). In the light of the proliferation of copular sentences in general and the fact that pseudoclefts are unquestionably copular sentences themselves, one might therefore reasonably expect there to exist more than just two types of pseudocleft construction. And indeed, a more elaborate typology of pseudoclefts has been argued to exist. The one in (41) is due to Declerck (1988:70).

⁷ Cleft constructions are the subject of a separate case study as part of *The Syntax Companion*; we will not dwell on them here except in contexts in which a comparison of clefts and pseudoclefts will be fruitful. On the scope of the term ‘pseudocleft’ (or ‘*wh*-cleft’), see section 2.4, below.

- (41) *a more refined typology of pseudoclefts*
- a. predicational
 - b. specificational
 - c. identity
 - d. definitional

(41a,b) are familiar from the foregoing discussion; examples of pseudoclefts identity statements and definitional pseudoclefts are given in (42) and (43), respectively (from Declerck 1988).

- (42) *pseudocleft identity statements*
- a. what I did WAS what you told me to do
 - b. the one who is drinking the martini IS Mr Brown
- (43) *definitional pseudocleft sentences*
- a pyramid is what the Egyptians built to bury their pharaohs in (cf. (21b))

Declerck's (1988) typology of double-NP copular sentences in (16) raises the expectation that a fifth type of pseudocleft construction might exist: descriptively identifying pseudoclefts (cf. (16c); or Higgins's 1979 identificational pseudoclefts, (15c)). Though Declerck does not discuss this, it does indeed seem possible to find pseudocleft counterparts to examples of the type in (19), above: sentences of the type in (44) would appear to instantiate this type.

- (44) *identificational/descriptively identifying pseudoclefts*
- a. that is what I need
 - b. this is how I did it

The examples in (44) seem parallel to the examples of identificational/descriptively identifying double-NP copular sentences given in (19) — a parallelism which extends to the fact that reversal of the word order of (44b) is impossible (**how I did it is this*).⁸ Collins (1991) includes (44) type examples in his set of specificational pseudoclefts and consequently finds overwhelmingly more XP<*wh* orders than *wh*<XP cases in his corpus.

For constructions of the type shown in (44b), with proximal *this* rather than distal *that*, it does not seem generally impossible, however, to reverse word order: with 'colon intonation' following *this* and a following specification, examples like *what I'm looking for is this: a crowbar and a wrench* are perfectly acceptable. Constructions such as this are most certainly specificational (as is revealed by their characteristic 'colon intonation' and their 'list reading'; cf. Higgins 1979 on the latter as a defining property of specificational sentences). One might actually go so far as to hypothesise that this *this* is a quintessential ingredient of specificational copular sentences: one might suggest that it is this *this* (which would have a null incarnation in all specificational sentences in which it does not surface overtly) that functions as the predicate of specificational sentences, with the other two major constituents functioning as subject and 'specifier' of this predicate.

The typology in (41)/(44) mimics the typology of copular sentences presented in section 1.3. A more microscopic typology (developed in Declerck 1988:220ff.) zooms in on SPECIFICATIONAL 'clefted sentences' (a cover term for *it*-clefts and specificational pseudoclefts), and primarily uses the information-structural properties (for more on these, see section 3.2.2, below) and concomitant intonational characteristics of the constructions as diagnostics:

⁸ Reversal of the order of (44a) is not ungrammatical, however; but when reversed (*what I need is that*) it takes on the guise of a specificational pseudocleft, and is not identificational/descriptively identifying anymore.

- (45) *a typology of **specificational** pseudoclefts*
- a. contrastive pseudoclefts (or ‘stressed-focus’) (cf. (46))
 - b. unaccented-anaphoric-focus pseudoclefts (cf. (47))
 - c. discontinuous pseudoclefts (cf. (48))⁹
- (46) a. who broke the window? — the one who did it was John
 b. who broke the window? — John was the one who did it
- (47) a. it turns out that there is interesting independent evidence for that rule, and that evidence is what we must now turn to
 b. why is everybody so interested in uranium? — because uranium is what you need to produce atomic power
- (48) a. my dear friends, what we have always wanted to know but what the government has never wanted to tell us, is what exactly happens at secret conferences like the one you have been reading about in the papers this week; there is one man, however, ...
 b. those apples are good, aren’t they? — so they are! what keeps me from eating all of them is that mother would be furious if I left none for the others

These three types of specificational clefted sentences have the following key properties (cf. Declerck 1988:224):

(49)		(45a)	(45b)	(45c)
	<i>new/old info</i>	focus new; clause old	focus old; clause new but represented as old	both focus and clause new
	<i>accent</i>	focus: heavy; clause: weak	focus: weak; clause: normal	both focus and clause normal
	<i>contrast focus</i>	strongly	not strongly	not strongly
	<i>word order</i>	both orders good	<i>wh</i> -clause post-copular	both orders good

As far as word order is concerned, Declerck’s (1988) ‘unaccented-anaphoric-focus’ pseudoclefts (45b) are special in that they allow only the XP<*wh* order — cf. the ‘identificational/descriptionally identifying pseudoclefts’ of (44); see also Collins (1991) on the differences between pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP word order and their congeners with XP<*wh* orders. What this shows is that, when one is talking about pseudoclefts, one should be careful to keep an eye on their word order.

The role of word order is also emphasised by Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000), who make a distinction, within the class of specificational pseudoclefts, between ‘Type A’ and ‘Type B’ constructions:

- (50) *Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000)*
- a. ‘Type A’ specificational pseudoclefts
 - feature as their major constituents a *wh*-clause and a **full IP** (which is subject to optional ellipsis)
 - have *wh*<XP orders only
 - exhibit connectivity effects for negative polarity

⁹ The term ‘discontinuous pseudocleft’ is adapted from Declerck (1988:222), who uses ‘discontinuous cleft’; the adjective ‘discontinuous’ does not refer to discontinuous constituency; though Declerck does not elaborate on the rationale for using this adjective to define pseudoclefts of the type in (48), what seems to be behind this term is the fact that in these constructions *both* the focus *and* the *wh*-clause are accented and represent new information, as indicated in (49).

- b. ‘Type B’ specificational pseudoclefts
- feature as their major constituents a *wh*-clause and some XP (X≠I)
 - have XP<*wh* orders only
 - do not exhibit connectivity effects for negative polarity

As the characterisations of the two types in (50) suggest, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder’s (2000) two-way split within the class of specificational pseudoclefts is based largely on the behaviour of pseudoclefts with full-IP ‘value-XP’s¹⁰ (cf. (51); see e.g. Ross 1972 for discussion) and pseudoclefts featuring connectivity effects with respect to the licensing of negative polarity items in the ‘counterweight’ of the *wh*-clause (cf. (52)).

- (51) a. what John bought was he bought some wine
 b. *he bought some wine was what John bought
- (52) a. what John didn’t buy was (he didn’t buy) *any* wine
 b. **any* wine was what John didn’t buy

We will have occasion to discuss these two properties of (‘Type A’) specificational pseudoclefts in more detail further below. (See especially section 3.4 for discussion of the role of word order in the domain of specificational pseudoclefts.)

In what follows, we will not be concerned in any detail (except when it comes to contrastive analyses) with pseudoclefts of any type other than the specificational ones.

2.4 *The scope of the term ‘pseudocleft’*

There is considerable confusion and disagreement in the literature on pseudocleft constructions concerning the meaning and scope of the term ‘pseudocleft’. To quote Higgins (1979:1–2) on this point:

Unfortunately, the domain of application of the term is not completely clear, and there is much confusion in the literature. There are two features of the pseudo-cleft construction which are by many authors taken as defining features: (i) a semantic kinship to cleft sentences, and a consequent semi-formal requirement that pseudo-cleft sentences should have a bipartite form, looking like a broken-up form of a simple sentence, with a ‘focal’ constituent which in some sense is being emphasized, and a remainder; (ii) a formal requirement that the sentence is a copular sentence having a subject that consists of a clause introduced by a *Wh*-item, usually *what*, this subject clause constituting the remainder of the simple sentence, and a portion which follows the copula and constitutes the focal constituent, the constituent which is being emphasized.

While some scholars use ‘pseudocleft’ as a cover term (in the way we did in section 2.1; cf. also Declerck 1988), others confine its reference in one or more of the following ways:

- to distinguish between examples with a *wh*-clause and examples featuring a headed relative (with *the one/thing/reason/time/way/...* [cf. (33)–(39)], or *all*, as in *all John eats is food for the dog*; cf. Prince 1978, who uses the term ‘WH-cleft’ in this narrow sense)
- to single out one particular type of pseudocleft construction: the specificational pseudocleft (see e.g. Akmajian 1979, who uses the term ‘pseudocleft’ in this narrow sense)
- to single out pseudocleft constructions with *wh*<XP word orders (see the above quote from Higgins 1979 — these are Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder’s ‘Type A’ pseudoclefts)

10 For the meaning of this term and other names for the relevant constituent, see (53) and the text immediately below it.

Following, for instance, Akmajian (1979) and Collins (1991), we will include in this study not just (i) those pseudoclefts featuring a *wh*-clause (*'wh*-clefts') but also what Collins (1991) calls (ii) *'th*-clefts' and (iii) *'all*-clefts'. Unlike Akmajian (1979) but instead following, for instance, Higgins (1979) and Declerck (1988), we will not confine the term 'pseudocleft' to specificational constructions; to refer to such pseudoclefts we will use the term 'specificational pseudoclefts'. Though the emphasis will be on specificational pseudoclefts in what follows, we will contrast these with their predicational congeners in various places to properly delineate the set of specificational pseudoclefts.

3 Specificational copular sentences and pseudoclefts: An inventory of properties

3.1 Characterising specificational pseudoclefts

What unites the examples in (25)–(39) (with (25) read specifically) and sets them apart from other copular sentences is (as Akmajian 1979:19 puts it) 'that the initial clause of the pseudo-cleft contains what is essentially a semantic variable, a semantic "gap" which must be "filled" or specified by the focus item'. Even pseudoclefts with a headed relative as NP₁ are different from specificational copular sentences of the type discussed in section 1: they 'contain relative clauses whose heads function as variables ranging over given semantic classes'. We may therefore rephrase our characterisation of specificational pseudoclefts as follows:

- (53) *specificational pseudoclefts* consist of
- a constituent containing a VARIABLE (also called IDENTIFIED (Huddleston 1971))
 - a constituent (exhaustively) specifying the VALUE for that variable (also called IDENTIFIER (Huddleston 1971), FOCUS (Akmajian 1979, Higgins 1979), HIGHLIGHTED CONSTITUENT (Collins 1991), COUNTERWEIGHT (Heycock & Kroch 1999))
 - a form of the COPULA linking the two major constituents

In what follows, we will refer to the constituent containing the variable simply as 'the variable' (or 'the *wh*-clause', in the discussion of pseudoclefts), and to the constituent specifying the value as 'the value-XP'.

The recipe in (53) is advantageous in two respects. First of all, it allows us to see the

- (i) connection between specificational PSEUDOCLEFTS and QUESTION-ANSWER PAIRS (cf. (54))¹¹

In both we find a constituent containing a variable (the *wh*-clause in (54i)) and a constituent (exhaustively) specifying the value for that variable (the focus of the post-copular constituent/answer in (54ii)); the two construction types are obviously different in that the copula is obligatorily present in the former, but absent from the latter.

- | | | | | | |
|------|----|-------------------|-----|---------------------------|--|
| | | (i) | | (ii) | |
| (54) | a. | what John did | was | (John) read the newspaper | |
| | b. | what did John do? | — | (John) read the newspaper | |

11 Note in this context that it is precisely the link between specificational pseudoclefts and question-answer pairs that has led Declerck 1988:8 to call the answer clause of a question-answer pair such as *who opened the door? — John opened the door* a 'specificational sentence' (i.e., for Declerck, the scope of the term 'specificational sentence' includes non-copular answers to questions; see also Akmajian 1979:178–80 for a wider application of the term 'specificational' than the one used here). Declerck's extension of the term 'specificational' mistakes the 'value'-XP (the answer) for an entire 'variable-value' pair — *John opened the door* is **not** a specificational sentence *per se*: it is the 'value' of a specificational question-answer pair.

The links between specificational pseudoclefts and question–answer pairs are stressed in many works on pseudocleft constructions (cf. e.g. Clifton 1969, Faraci 1970, Huddleston 1971, Ross 1972, 1997, Akmajian 1979, Higgins 1979, Seuren 1985, Declerck 1988, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000). We will return to it in detail in section 5.

3.2 *Properties distinguishing specificational from predicational copular sentences*

3.2.1 *Syntactic properties*

The second respect in which the recipe in (53) is beneficial is that it makes no reference to word order. And indeed, a key property which specificational pseudoclefts share with specificational copular sentences (cf. section 1.3) is their

(ii) REVERSIBILITY (cf. (55)–(56))

- (55) a. what John contributed to the conference was his best speech ever
[ambiguous: predicational or specificational]
b. his best speech ever was what John contributed to the conference
[specificational only]
- (56) a. John’s contribution to the conference was his best speech ever
[ambiguous: predicational or specificational]
b. his best speech ever was John’s contribution to the conference
[specificational only]

While the a–examples in (55) and (56) allow a reading for *his best speech ever* according to which it predicates a property of the pre-copular constituent alongside a specificational reading which says that John contributed his best speech ever to the conference, only the latter reading survives in the b–examples.

It should be borne in mind that reversibility is not a foolproof diagnostic for specificational status — there are specificational copular sentences that are not reversible. The restrictions on reversal are largely of a categorial nature:

- if the value is an adverbial, the value<variable order is typically poor (though not entirely impossible); cf. (57) (Declerck 1988:40, Heggie 1988:371, Collins 1991)
- (57) a. the usual method of solving this problem is by firing the coach
b. ??by firing the coach is the usual method of solving this problem
- if the value is not an expression containing an iota operator, a variable and a domain of individuals, it cannot precede the variable; cf. (58) (Guéron 1992 has the most explicit discussion of this constraint)¹²
- (58) a. Bill is {captain of the team/a doctor/a friend of mine/the best doctor in town/my best friend}
b. {*captain of the team/*a doctor/*a friend of mine/the best doctor in town/my best friend} is Bill

¹² A problem arises here only for specificational readings of (58a); predicational and identificational copular sentences never invert to begin with (cf. (17) and (19) above). Declerck treats (58a) with *captain of the team* as a specificational copular sentence and has no answer to the question of why (58b) is ungrammatical; Higgins (1979) analyses the same sentence as an *identificational* copular sentence; a third (and plausible) option is to treat it as a garden-variety predicational copular sentence.

- if the value is a full IP (possible only in pseudoclefts), it cannot precede the variable if the verb in the *wh*-clause is substantive (rather than *do*); cf. (59) (Ross 1999, 2000, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000)¹³
- (59) a. what John {did/bought} was he bought some wine
 b. he bought some wine was what John {did/*bought}
- if the value is an AP and the verb in the *wh*-clause (of pseudoclefts) is not the copula, it must precede the variable; cf. (60) (Heggie 1988:352–53)¹⁴
- (60) a. *how John likes his women is rather plump
 b. rather plump is how John likes his women

Most of these constraints on reversal are not very well understood. These constraints aside, the general rule is that specificational sentences are reversible.¹⁵ This seems to lead to a paradox when combined with the parallel between specificational sentences and question–answer pairs highlighted under (i), above. After all, question–answer pairs are not reversible (i.e., the answer does not normally precede the question). Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) address this question and distinguish two types of specificational pseudocleft, ‘Type A’ and ‘Type B’ constructions (cf. (50), above): it is only the ‘Type A’ cases that (thanks to their full-IP ‘value’) are on a par with question–answer pairs; and concomitantly, a hallmark of ‘Type A’ constructions is that they are not reversible (cf. (59b)).

With these caveats in place, we will now continue down the list of definitional properties of specificational copular sentences (see Akmajian 1979, Higgins 1979 and Declerck 1988 for the provenance of many of the following arguments, acknowledged wherever distinctive).

A property of specificational constructions which has preoccupied much of the discussion of these sentences in the generative literature is the fact that they exhibit

- (iii) CONNECTIVITY/CONNECTEDNESS EFFECTS (cf. (61) for initial illustration)
 [the terms ‘connectivity’ and ‘connectedness’ are used interchangeably, the latter being the older term (cf. Akmajian, Higgins); however, to avoid confusion with the technical term ‘connectedness’ introduced by Kayne (1984), in what follows we will avail ourselves of the label ‘connectivity’]
- (61) a. what *John* treasures most is a book about *himself*/**him*
 b. *John*’s greatest treasure is a book about *himself*/**him*

13 Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) give XP<*wh* pseudoclefts with full-clausal ‘values’ a * uniformly (though they do not mention cases with *do* in this context). Ross (1999, 2000) notes the contrast between *bought* and *did* in (59b), and points out furthermore that not all speakers seem to reject (59b) even with *bought* (though it does seem to be substantially worse than both (59b) with *did* and (59a)). Ross (1999) makes the further observation that, for those speakers for whom (59b) with *bought* is good, the construction can be input to Sluicing as well, yielding sentences like (i), which are ‘used only in colloquial spoken English’.

(i) %he bought some wine, is what

14 The contrast in (60) is due to Heggie (1988). Not all speakers find this contrast equally strong, however — some, in fact, find it very weak at most. Pseudoclefts with *how* are usually not very good to begin with; for many speakers the choice of word order does not seem add further complications above and beyond the use of *ahow*-pseudocleft.

15 When reversed, specificational copular sentences (double-NP and pseudocleft alike) resist deletion of the pre-copular constituent (Ross 1999): **even if* __ *tofu*, *what he likes is interesting*; **even if* __ *John*, *the best candidate is not very intelligent*.

As (61) shows, connectivity (here with respect to anaphor–antecedent relationships) is a property of specificational sentences in general, not just specificational pseudoclefts. Indeed, ‘[s]pecificational sentences are the only type of copular sentences that show “connectedness”’ (Declerck 1988:51) — as a consequence, connectivity effects can be used as a disambiguator of otherwise ambiguous pseudoclefts, as Higgins shows: while (62) is ambiguous between a specificational and a predicational reading, (63a) with anaphor connectivity is unambiguously specificational and (63b) is predicational only.

- (62) what John is is important
 a. specificational: ‘John is important’
 b. predicational: ‘what John stands for is important’
- (63) a. what *John* is is important to *himself* [specificational] (Higgins)
 b. what *John* is is important to *him* [predicational]

Connectivity effects come in a variety of subtypes, listed and briefly discussed here.

- (iii.a) REFLEXIVE CONNECTIVITY (see (63); cf. Higgins 1979)
 - (iii.b) RECIPROCAL CONNECTIVITY (see (64); cf. Declerck 1988:52))
- (64) a. what *they* did was kiss *each other* [specificational]
 b. *what *they* did was surprising to *each other* [*predicational]

Reflexive and reciprocal connectivity, taken together, have served from the very beginning of the theoretical discussion of pseudocleft constructions as a key argument for somehow relating the specificational pseudocleft to the simple clause that paraphrases it (for (64a): *they kissed EACH OTHER*, with *in situ* focus). The argument is simple and clear: specificational pseudoclefts reproduce ‘across the copula’ the binding properties characteristic of simple clauses.

The argument has never been water-tight, however. As Blom & Daalder (1977:54) points out (cf. (65)), anaphor connectivity breaks down in Dutch when the anaphor is itself the post-copular constituent of the pseudocleft (rather than being contained in it); note, though, that English examples rendering things like (65a) are generally judged grammatical in the literature — see e.g. Akmajian’s 1979:125 *the one that I shaved was myself* and *the one that you cheated was yourself*, and below on emphatic reflexives in English; we are not aware of any reported English counterparts to Dutch (65b), featuring the reciprocal, but they seem perfectly grammatical: *what they most detested was each other* (Caroline Heycock, p.c.).

- (65) a. ?*wie *hij* op het oog heeft is *zichzelf*
 who he on the eye has is SE-self
 ‘who is *he* thinking of is *himself*’
 b. *wie *zij* tartten was/waren *elkaar*
 who they pestered was/were each other

Note also that pseudoclefts (and *it*-clefts as well) behave ‘anomalously’, from the simple clause perspective, in a number of contexts, as noted by Akmajian (1979:125) and Hankamer (1974:231–32, fn. 6) (cf. also Sharvit 1997, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000:74, fn. 29) — see (66a), from Akmajian, and (66b), adapted from an example of Hankamer’s attributed to Stephen Anderson. Akmajian points out in a footnote (fn. 10 on p. 153) that the reflexives used in examples of this kind ‘cannot be interpreted as normal reflexives, since they form the *foci* of their containing sentences’ (original emphasis); this is certainly true, but the fact remains that the non-cleft counterparts of example like (66a,b) remain unacceptable even with heavy focal stress on the reflexive; cf. (67).

- (66) a. the one who *John* claimed had been cheated was *himself*
 b. what was staring up at *John* out of his soup was *himself*
 (67) a. **John* claimed that *himself* had been cheated
 b. **himself* was staring up at *John* out of his soup

The status of anaphor connectivity as an argument for a transformational relationship of some sort between specificational pseudoclefts and their corresponding non-cleft paraphrases is less than crystal clear, therefore.

We note here that anaphor connectivity is unaffected by the linear word order of specificational sentences: that is, (63a) and (64a) remain grammatical with the relative order of variable and value inverted, as in (63a') and (64a'):

- (68a') important to *himself* is what *John* is
 (64a') kiss *each other* is what *they* did

In this respect, anaphor connectivity effects in specificational sentences are different from a third case of binding connectivity attested by specificational constructions:

- (iii.c) PRINCIPLE C CONNECTIVITY ('ANTI-RECONSTRUCTION') (see (69); cf. Heycock & Kroch 1999, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000:84, fn. 35)

- (69) a. *what *he* had said to Mary was that she had been lying to *John* [specificational]
 b. what *he* had said to Mary was an embarrassment to *John* [predicational]

The facts in (69) are as expected, in the light of the anaphor connectivity effects noted above. Interestingly, however (cf. Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000:84, fn. 35), (70), which has XP<wh order, is grammatical, in contradistinction to the wh<XP case in (69a):

- (70) *Peter's* picture of Mary is what *he* covets most

Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder suggest that perhaps 'such sentences are not SPCs [specificational pseudoclefts, MD] at all, or are ambiguous between an SPC and some other sentence type, e.g. an equative sentence'.

- (iii.d) NEGATIVE POLARITY ITEM CONNECTIVITY (see (71); cf. Ross 1972, Akmajian 1979, Halvorsen 1978)¹⁶

- (71) a. what I have *never* noticed is *any* signs of dissatisfaction [specificational]
 b. *what I had *never* noticed was noticed by *any* of us [*predicational]
 (72) a. what John hasn't done is leave *yet*/**already*
 b. what I doubt is that *anyone*/**someone* needs this money
 (cf. what I don't doubt is that **anyone*/*someone* needs this money)
 c. what John doesn't want is *ever* to be left alone

¹⁶ The data in (71)–(72) are from the published sources mentioned; many speakers find (72b) with *someone* grammatical, on a par with *I doubt that someone needs this money* — positive polarity items like *someone* are generally allowed to scope below extraclassical NPI-licensors like *doubt* (cf. Von Stechow 1999). The key fact in (72b), however, is the grammaticality of *anyone*.

Higgins (1979:23–24) acknowledges the NPI connectivity effect noted by Ross and Akmajian (along with a number of other connectivity effects listed here) but decides not to address it, saying that of the connectivity effects canvassed by Akmajian ‘[t]he only one ... that carries any great weight is the reflexive pronoun case’. His rationale is as follows: ‘the rule is more clearly defined and the phenomenon better understood than, for instance, that governing *some/any* alternations’. Heggie (1988:325, fn. 5) also explicitly sets aside NPI connectivity in her otherwise detailed discussion of specificational pseudoclefts. As Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) argue in detail, however, the distribution of NPI connectivity effects does indeed give us clear insights into the analysis of (a subtype of) specificational pseudoclefts.

We note in the context of negative polarity connectivity in specificational pseudoclefts that Blom & Daalder (1977:24–25) present two types of example, from Dutch, in which such connectivity breaks down in these constructions. (They in fact draw the general conclusion that specificational pseudoclefts exhibit no NPI connectivity effect (in Dutch), but this is too strong a claim: Dutch counterparts to examples of the type in (71a) are grammatical, as shown in (73).)

- (73) wat ik nog *nooit* opgemerkt heb is *ook maar enig* teken van ontevredenheid
 what I yet never noticed have is also but any sign of dissatisfaction
 ‘what I have never noticed is any sign of dissatisfaction’

The first type of example discussed by Blom & Daalder is illustrated by the pair in (74). Blom & Daalder note (with a reference to the discussion of *any* in Klima 1964) that (74a) allows for a (salient) reading in which *ieder* behaves like English *any*: what (74a) then says is that he refused and would refuse any medicine at all that one offered or would offer him. That reading (which we may call the polarity reading of (74a)¹⁷), Blom & Daalder point out, is unavailable for the pseudocleft in (74b); the example in fact has no reading at all: it is unacceptable as a reflex of a general ban on QPs as the post-copular constituent of pseudoclefts (be they predicational or specificational; see also the text accompanying (115) below for discussion).

- (74) a. hij weigerde ieder geneesmiddel
 he refused every medicine
 b. *wat hij weigerde was ieder geneesmiddel
 what he refused was every medicine

The lack of connectivity in (74b) is paralleled by the unavailability in (75b) of the inference which presents itself in (75a): that he gets upset about *any* joke at all (cf. Fauconnier 1975; like (74), we present this under the rubric of ‘negative polarity’ — cf. fn. 16). We share Blom & Daalder’s judgement; though we are not aware of any discussion of this phenomenon in the literature on English pseudoclefts, the facts seem transposable to English, with the same net result: a lack of parallelism/connectivity between specificational pseudoclefts and their simple clause counterparts.

- (75) a. hij trekt zich het onschuldigste grapje aan
 he pulls SE the most-innocent joke PRT
 ‘he gets upset about (even) the most innocent of jokes’
 b. wat hij zich aantrekt is het onschuldigste grapje
 what he SE PRT-pulls is the most-innocent joke
 ‘what gets him upset about is the most innocent of jokes’

17 Though more like a ‘free choice item’ (FCI) than like an NPI, this reading qualifies as a polarity reading on the understanding (see Giannakidou 1998) that FCIs are polarity items.

The failure of polarity connectivity in examples of the type in (75b) is presumably connected to the fact that, systematically, NPI connectivity breaks down in specificational pseudoclefts whenever special NPIs (like *not ... until*; Clifton 1969, Higgins 1979:44, Sternefeld 1997) and idiom chunks are involved:

- (76) a. *what John didn't do was (he didn't) leave *until 6 p.m.*
 b. *what didn't John do? — (he didn't) leave *until 6 p.m.*
 (77) a. *what John didn't have was (he didn't have) *a red cent*
 b. *what didn't John have? — (he didn't have) *a red cent*

Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000:80) address this point and observe (i) that the ban on special NPIs and negatively polar idiom chunks as the 'value'-XP of specificational pseudoclefts rears its head in question-answer pairs as well (cf. the b-examples in (76) and (77)), and (ii) that this ban manifests itself even when the 'value'-XP or answer is a full IP containing a local licenser for the negative polarity item. The deviance of the examples in (76) and (77) (and presumably that of (75) on its idiomatic reading as well) should be sought, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder suggest, in the lack of interpretive parallelism between the *wh*-clause and the 'value'/answer (manifest also in the oddity of a question-answer pair such as *what did John take? —^{??}he took a picture*): while the 'value'/answer is idiomatic, there is no choice but to read the *wh*-clause literally, which yields a clash.

- (iii.e) QUANTIFIER CONNECTIVITY (see (78); cf. Hankamer 1974:223)

- (78) a. what *the little bastards* did was *all* get in the tub at the same time
 b. *what *the little bastards* did was *all* surprising to us

This once again highlights the parallel between specificational pseudoclefts and their simple clause paraphrases (cf. *the little bastards all got in the tub at the same time*). If 'floating quantifiers' (like *all* in (78a)) are taken to be stranded by movement of the quantified noun phrase (cf. Sportiche 1988), the distribution of *all* in (78) might be construed as an argument for a transformational analysis of specificational pseudoclefts (cf. section 6 for discussion of transformational approaches). The stranding analysis of floating quantifiers is controversial, however (see Bobaljik 1998 for a critical assessment).

- (iii.f) SCOPE CONNECTIVITY (see (79); cf. Declerck 1988:53; Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000)

- (79) a. ?what I *want* to marry is *a Swedish girl*
 b. what he *wanted* to find was *a nice Swedish girl* to marry

An example of the type in (79) allows a reading of *a Swedish girl* on which it is in the scope of the intensional verb *want*, but such a reading is available only on the specificational reading of the sentence, not on the predicational one.

Scope connectivity also comes to the fore in the examples in (80), which show that the 'value'-XP of a specificational pseudocleft allows for the same *de dicto/de re* ambiguity (customarily treated in terms of scope) as does the object of the corresponding simple clause.

- (80) a. what John seeks is a unicorn [de dicto or de re]
 b. John seeks a unicorn [de dicto or de re]

- (iii.g) SELECTIONAL CONNECTIVITY (see (81)–(82); cf. Peters & Bach 1968, Hankamer 1974, Heggie 1988)
- (81) what John counted was the pigeons/*the pigeon
cf. John counted the pigeons/*the pigeon
- (82) a. what John wondered was whether/*that it was raining
cf. John wondered whether/*that it was raining
- b. what he’s { asking/not saying/*saying } is whether there will be any beer
- c. what { that depends/*John counts } on is whether there is enough beer
- d. what she wouldn’t say (*to me) was why she ate them all at once¹⁸

For reasons inherent in the lexical selectional properties of the verb *count*, a plural countable object (or a mass term, not illustrated here) is needed in combination with this verb. As (81) shows, this selectional restriction imposed by *count* carries over into specificational pseudoclefts featuring this verb in the *wh*-clause. Likewise, the fact that *wonder* selects a *wh*-clause complement asserts itself in the pseudocleft in (82a) as well. (Of course, (82) involves specificational pseudoclefts for trivial reasons, *wh*-questions not being construable as predicates.)

- (iii.h) EMOTIVE *SHOULD* CONNECTIVITY (see (83)–(84); cf. Higgins 1979:139–40, Bošković 1997, Heycock & Kroch 1999)

Another reflex of selection which we may mention here under the general rubric of connectivity effects is what we will call ‘emotive *should* connectivity’:

- (83) a. the *odd* thing is that he *should* have managed to do this all by himself
b. what is *odd* is that he *should* have managed to do this all by himself
- (84) it is *odd* that he *should* have managed to do this all by himself

As Higgins (1979:139–40) first noted, the ‘value’-XP of a specificational copular sentence may contain so-called ‘emotive *should*’ as a reflex of a selectional property of a subconstituent of the ‘variable’ constituent. Predicates like *odd* can trigger the use of *should* in the clause that they select (cf. (84)); this selectional property of the predicates in question is preserved in specificational copular sentences, despite the fact that a direct link between *odd* and the clause containing *should* is not establishable in (83).

We add in the context of ‘emotive *should*’ (even though this does not obviously have anything to do with connectivity) that the presence of ‘emotive *should*’ in specificational pseudoclefts may also be triggered by a predicate outside the pseudocleft construction altogether — and that, when this happens, ‘emotive *should*’ will show up either in the root clause or in the *wh*-clause if the word order of the pseudocleft is XP<*wh* but may surface only in the *wh*-clause if the order is *wh*<XP (see Higgins 1979, also Bošković 1997:271, Heycock & Kroch 1999):

- (85) a. it is a pity [that [proud of himself] *should* be [what John is]]
b. it is a pity [that [proud of himself] is [what John *should* be]]
- (86) a. *it is a pity [that [what John is] *should* be [proud of himself]]
b. it is a pity [that [what John *should* be] is [proud of himself]]

¹⁸ The contrast between *say* and *say to me* is reported in Hankamer (1974); not all speakers share this judgement, many finding the example perfectly acceptable with *to me* included. It remains unclear how to account for the contrast if it is real.

For Bošković (1997) and Heycock & Kroch (1999) the facts in (86) are an indication that specificational pseudoclefts of this type are ‘reconstructed’ into their simple clause counterparts in the semantic component of the grammar. See especially Bošković (1997:271) for careful discussion, as well as for the observation that the distribution of ‘emotive *should*’ is a diagnostic for distinguishing specificational and predicational pseudoclefts: in the latter, ‘emotive *should*’ never shows up in the *wh*-clause in such contexts as (87):

- (87) a. it is a pity [that [what John is] *should* be [worthwhile]]
 b. *it is a pity [that [what John *should* be] is [worthwhile]]

- (iii.i) CASE CONNECTIVITY (see (88)–(90); cf. Iatridou & Varlokosta 1998, Bošković 1997)

One last connectivity effect that we will discuss here involves Case. Iatridou & Varlokosta (1998) point out that the ‘value’-XP of specificational pseudoclefts is Case-dependent on the verb in the *wh*-clause; that of predicational pseudoclefts is not. The German pair in (88) shows this most clearly, thanks to the morphology on the post-copular noun phrase:

- (88) a. was Hans essen wollte war *einen* Apfel [specificational]
 what Hans eat wanted was na(ACC) apple
 b. was Hans essen wollte war *ein* Apfel [predicational]
 what Hans eat wanted was an(NOM) apple

Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000:73, fn. 27) point out that Iatridou & Varlokosta have overstated the case: (88b) is not unambiguously predicational; it allows a specificational interpretation as well (as is shown by connectivity effects, which are reproducible in these kinds of sentences; see Sharvit 1997 for a similar observation about Hebrew). Be that as it may, (88a) is certainly unambiguously specificational (moreover, it is grammatical only with a *wh*<XP word order, a ‘Type A’ diagnostic; see Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000 for discussion). It shows that the ‘value’-XP can get its Case from the verb in the *wh*-clause: a case of Case connectivity.

That the ‘value’-XP is Case-dependent on the verb in the *wh*-clause is shown also by facts presented by Bošković (1997:250). While *ask* and *wonder* both semantically select a question, it is only *ask* which allows this question to take the form of a noun phrase; this follows from the fact that only *ask* is a Case assigner. The distribution of CP and DP complements seen in the simple clauses in (89) is mimicked perfectly in the corresponding specificational pseudoclefts in (90).

- (89) a. I asked {what the time was/the time}
 b. I wondered {what the time was/*the time}
 (90) a. what I asked was {what the time was/the time}
 b. what I wondered was {what the time was/[?]*the time}

(Bošković 1997:253 presents similar facts for *hope* and *inquire*.)

The examples in (91) and (92) (both taken from corpus-based studies: Geluykens 1984:Appendix and Collins 1991:45, respectively) make a similar point. In both cases, the fact that the post-copular ‘value’-XP does not want Case seems to be responsible for the absence of the preposition which the verbs in the *wh*-clauses would select in the presence of a Case-dependent DP. Bošković’s (1997:253, fn. 20) constructed examples in (93) (which he calls ‘degraded’ yet better than the corresponding *wh*-questions: **what is John afraid?*, **what does it seem?*) fit into this general picture as well. (See Bošković 1997:253, fn. 20 for discussion of why his examples in (93) are degraded.)

- (91) what I am convinced is that we shall not do anything unless departments cooperate
 (92) now what I'm fascinated is to know that communists and fascists are such bad shots
 (93) a. ??what John is afraid is that Mary will leave
 b. ??what it seems is that Mary will leave

For Bošković, the above examples show, in addition, that the *what* inside the *wh*-clause apparently is not Case-dependent. This seems to be contradicted, however, by familiar facts of the type in (94)–(96) (cf. Heggie 1988:340, 343). Here, the distribution of *of* indicates that *what* does indeed demand Case — the *what* of specificational pseudoclefts imposes the exact same restrictions on the complement of the verbs in these examples which unmistakable DPs also impose.

- (94) a. what did you persuade him *(of)?
 b. you persuaded him (*of) [that he should try harder]/[to try harder]
 c. what you persuaded him *(of) was [that he should try harder]/[to try harder]
 (95) a. what did he agree *(to)?
 b. he agreed *(to) [that he would work harder]
 c. what he agreed *(to) was [that he would work harder]
 (96) a. what are you wondering (about)?
 b. John is wondering *(about) DP
 c. what John wonders (about) is [whether he can succeed]

Notice that these data seem to confirm the parallelism between specificational pseudoclefts and question–answer pairs (cf. (i), above; also see section 5, below), while the ones in (91)–(93) seem to pose a problem for such a connection.

The whole battery of connectivity effects reviewed in the foregoing as a group sets apart specificational sentences (double–NP as well as pseudocleft varieties) from predicational copular sentences. Similar in spirit and effect are the

(iv) AGREEMENT EFFECTS

These come in three types, the third of which deserves comment here (on (iv.a) see section 4.2).

- (iv.a) PHI-FEATURE AGREEMENT (see (97); cf. Declerck 1988:79)
- (97) a. what you have bought *is* fake jewels [specificational]
 b. what you have bought *are* fake jewels [predicational]
- (iv.b) ASPECTUAL AGREEMENT (see (98); cf. Declerck 1988:52)
- (98) a. what he was *doing* was *working* in the garden
 b. *what he was *doing* was *work* in the garden
 c. *what he did was *working* in the garden
- (iv.c) TEMPORAL AGREEMENT/CONGRUENCE (see (99); cf. Akmajian 1979:168–69)
- (99) a. what you are holding in your hand *is* a small brown butterfly [pred/spec]
 b. what you are holding in your hand *was* a small brown butterfly [predicational]
 c. what you are holding in your hand *will be* a small brown butterfly [predicational]

As Akmajian points out (p. 169), of the examples in (99) only the a-sentence has a specificational reading; the other two are unambiguously predicational. In concert with this observation, Akmajian also shows that of these three examples only the a-example is reversible (cf. (100); see property (ii)).

- (100) a. a small brown butterfly *is* what you are holding in your hand
 b. *a small brown butterfly *was* what you are holding in your hand
 c. *a small brown butterfly *will be* what you are holding in your hand¹⁹

Akmajian 1979:169–70 points out that ‘while the phenomenon illustrated by the sentences of [(99)] has been viewed in terms of tense agreement, it is in fact part of a deeper phenomenon’, characterisable as ‘temporal congruence’: cf. the fact that it rears its head also in non-cleft specificational copular sentences of the type in (101), conditioned by the adjective *old* in the pre-copular NP.²⁰

- (101) a. his old job *was* building radars at Lincoln Labs
 b. *his old job *is* building radars at Lincoln Labs
 c. *his old job *will be* building radars at Lincoln Labs

This once again confirms the intimate connection between specificational pseudoclefts and specificational copular sentences in general.

While the preceding examples suggest that tense agreement/congruence is obligatory in specificational pseudoclefts, we should note that Declerck (1988:81–82) points out that tense in specificational pseudoclefts is ‘determined by two different and independent systems’: (i) ‘the tense depends on the relation between the chosen deictic centre and the time implied by the variable NP’, or (ii) ‘the tense of the copula is neutralized’ (with the copula systematically occurring in the present tense). We have come across examples illustrating (i) in the foregoing; examples of the second type are given in (102) (from Declerck 1988:82), which are grammatical only ‘if there is ‘present tense relevance’, i.e., if the past act of specification is still felt to be relevant’ (p. 83).

- (102) a. the reason he did it *is* that he is a coward
 b. what he would not say *is* when it will happen

We note also that there may be an effect of word order on the temporal agreement facts: though this does not seem to have been discussed in detail in the literature, Heggie’s (1988) pairs in (103)–(104) suggest that it is only specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP order which are subject to strict tense agreement restrictions:

- (103) a. where John met Mary *was* in the park
 b. in the park *is* where John met Mary
 (104) a. who I gave the book to *was* John
 b. John *is* who I gave the book to

19 In Akmajian (1979:169), the asterisk on (100c) has inadvertently been omitted.

20 The a- and b-examples in (101) are taken from Akmajian (1979); (101c) was added here, for completeness’ sake.

Under the rubric of temporal agreement/congruence, we may also draw attention to a number of restrictions on specificational sentences in general, and specificational pseudoclefts in particular, when it comes to tense. The reader familiar with Higgins (1979) may have assumed that Akmajian's examples reproduced here as (99c) and (100c) are ungrammatical (as specificational pseudoclefts) regardless of tense agreement/congruence — after all, Higgins (1979:310) claims that the tense of the copula in specificational pseudoclefts may only be simple present or past tense (see also Heggie's 1988:315 statement that 'sentences like *The boss must be Joe Horn* are always equative'). Declerck (1988:81) takes issue with Higgins's claim, however, pointing out that a specificational pseudocleft of the type in (105a) is grammatical. Ross (1999) gives additional examples (cf. (105b–d)) that contradict Higgins' claim in this domain, and help further emphasise the requirement of temporal agreement. The facts in (105c,d) are complicated, and will not be dissected in detail here; what (105c) shows particularly clearly, however, is that the agreement requirement refers to tense, not aspect: the perfect in the *wh*-clause need not be matched in the copular main clause, but the present tense form of *has* in the *wh*-clause *must* be matched by a present tense form in the matrix.

- (105) a. the one who *will* win *will be* one of us
 b. what Sandy *might have been* reading {*might have been/might be/*has been*} Tolstoy
 c. what Sandy *has been* reading {**might have been/*might be/has been/is/*was*} Tolstoy
 d. what *could have been* happening {*could have been/could be/*was/is*} that she {**has been/could have been/was/is*} working at home

Declerck (1988:85) also dismisses Higgins's (1979:242) statement that *used to be* can replace *be* in predicational sentences only (a statement which is apparently correct for sentences like (106)) with reference to the grammatical examples in (107).

- (106) (the one who was) the murderer of Tom *was/*used to be* John
 (107) a. the colour that she preferred *used to be* blue
 b. the one who did most of the work *used to be* John

Declerck (1988:85) concludes that (107) is grammatical since 'the variable NP is such that different values can be assigned to it at different times', while such is impossible in (106). Even with this correction to Higgins (1979) in place, though, it remains true that with respect to the restrictions on tense (including *used to*), all specificational copular sentences (cleft and non-cleft alike) behave on a par and are to be distinguished from their predicational counterparts.

Another important property covering the entire spectrum of specificational sentences is

- (v) EXTRACTION RESTRICTIONS (see (108)–(109); cf. practically all of the literature on specificational sentences — in particular, Heggie 1988, Moro 1997, Heycock & Kroch 1999)
- (108) a. I believe that the cause of the riot was a picture of the wall
 b. **which picture do you believe that the cause of the riot was *ec*?*
 c. **which wall do you believe that the cause of the riot a picture of *ec*?*
 d. **which riot do you believe that the cause of *ec* was a picture of the wall?*
 e. **the cause of which riot do you believe *ec* was a picture of the wall?*
- (109) a. I believe that what caused the riot was a picture of the wall
 b. **what do you believe that what caused the riot was *ec*?*
 c. **what do you believe that what caused the riot was a picture of *ec*?*
 d. **what do you believe that what caused *ec* was a picture of the wall?*

Grosu (1972) presents the opacity of the post-copular ‘value’ constituent of specificational pseudoclefts as an argument for the so-called extraction analysis of these constructions (see section 6.2, below); however, the fact (which he notes himself) that specificational copular sentences generally have this property makes it highly unlikely that the extraction restrictions in (109) constitute an argument for an analysis of specificational pseudoclefts that derives them from their corresponding simple clause counterparts (or vice versa; on the latter, see Bošković 1997, and the discussion in section 6.4.1). What is needed is an account of the data in (108) and (109) which generalises over all specificational copular sentences and sets them apart from predicational copular sentences (which do allow extraction from and of the post-copular constituent; cf. (110)):

- (110) a. I believe that the cause of the riot was a big surprise to us all
 b. how big a surprise do you believe the cause of the riot was *ec*?
 c. who do you believe that the cause of the riot was the biggest surprise to *ec*?
 d. *what do you believe that the cause of *ec* was a big surprise to us all?

The above five traits of specificational copular sentences (including specificational pseudoclefts) are the most important syntactic distinctive features of these constructions (on interpretive hallmarks of these constructions, see section 3.2.2, below). In addition to these, we may mention a number of somewhat more microscopic ways in which predicational and specificational copular sentences differ. The first of these concerns

(vi) NEGATION (see (111); Higgins 1979:321, Declerck 1988:166)

- (111) a. what John is isn’t important to him [predicational]
 b. *what John is isn’t important to himself [specificational]
 c. *Smith’s murderer isn’t John

As Higgins (1976:321) points out, ‘the copula in a Specificational pseudo-cleft cannot have a “straight” negation of the predicate, but at best only some kind of contradiction negation’ — that is, (111b), while bad in isolation, could be salvaged by contrasting *important to himself* with some other value of the variable in the *wh*-clause (cf. *what you need is not a doctor but a wife*; see also Ross’s 2000 *though what I like is not pizza, what he likes is*, which is likewise contrastive, though not with respect to the value). Declerck (1988:166) broadens the scope of Higgins’s observation to include specificational copular sentences in general; cf. (111c), which likewise is good only on a ‘contradiction reading’. (On restrictions on adverbial modification other than negation, see (xx), below; this is a domain in which the facts are substantially less clear, and where, moreover, specificational pseudoclefts diverge from other specificational copular sentences.)

Another domain in which all specificational copular sentences differ *en bloc* from their predicational pendants is

(vii) COPULA CONTRACTION (see (112); cf. Kaisse 1979:708–9)

- (112) a. what I eat’s important to me [predicational]
 b. *what I want’s an avocado [specificational]
 c. *the culprit’s Chuzzlewit
 cf. Chuzzlewit’s the culprit

As (112) shows, only predicational copular sentences allow the copula to contract onto the pre-copular constituent. Predicational copular sentences are also singled out by restrictions on

(viii) DEGREE MODIFICATION of the post-copular term (cf. (113); Akmajian 1979:164, Heggie 1988)²¹

(113) what *John* is is **somewhat/very/more** important to *him*/**himself* (than ...)

For both Akmajian and Heggie, the impossibility of this kind of construction counts as evidence that the post-copular AP in specificational pseudoclefts like this is not a predicate — modification is a property limited to predicates.

A further peculiarity of pseudoclefts which has been made out to be reducible to a property of predicates (predicate nominals, to be more specific) concerns

(ix) -EVER AND QUANTIFICATIONAL RESTRICTIONS (Huddleston 1971:242, Heggie 1988, Declerck 1988)

(114) whatever she wrote was a novel [pred/*spec]

(115) a. *John is every teacher

b. *Bill's tie is whatever Mary hates

The example in (114), from Bolinger (1971), is unambiguously predicational, whereas its counterpart without *-ever* is perfectly ambiguous between a predicational and a specificational interpretation.²²

Heggie links the unavailability of a specificational reading for (114) and the ungrammaticality of her (115b) to a general ban on predicate nominals: they resist universal quantification, as is shown by Williams's (1983) example in (115a). Iatridou & Varlokosta (1998) take essentially the same tack, analysing the ungrammaticality of examples like (115b) by analysing the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts as a free relative functioning as a predicate nominal. Heggie and Iatridou & Varlokosta thus construe the facts in (114) and (115) as an argument for an analysis of the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts as an underlying predicate.

Their point is not well taken, however. For in specificational sentences *both* major constituents are in fact subject to quantificational restrictions — not just the *wh*-clause (as the *-ever* facts show) but the 'value' NP as well (cf. Gundel 1977, Seuren 1985:297, Declerck 1988:87–88, Moro 1997, Heycock & Kroch 1999); cf. also Blom & Daalder's 1977:24–25 discussion of (74), above), as (116) and (117) show.²³

21 The examples and judgements here are taken from the sources given; not all speakers seem to agree.

22 Dayal (1997) presents the grammaticality of [?]*whatever she bought was not Barriers* to refute the claim that the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts does not allow *-ever*. Her example does not seem to instantiate a specificational pseudocleft, however: (i) it features sentential negation, which is otherwise impossible in specificational pseudoclefts (cf. (111)), (ii) it is irreversible (cf. **Barriers was not whatever she bought*), and (iii) it is uniformly deemed unembeddable under ECM-verbs taking *to*-infinitival complements (cf. **I consider whatever she bought not to be Barriers*, to be contrasted with [%]*I consider what John is to be important to himself*, which, though judgements vary substantially, is acceptable to at least some speakers; see item (xix) in section 3.4, below.

23 See Seuren (1985:297) for the observation that the same quantificational restrictions hold of *in situ* foci: *Henry sold* (**FEW*) *POSTCARDS*; and see Declerck (1988:87–88) for contexts in which these restrictions on specificational sentences can be alleviated.

- (116) what Henry sold was
- a. a postcard
 - b. a few postcards
 - c. *few postcards
 - d. *many postcards
 - e. *most postcards
 - f. *every postcard
- (117) the problem/cause of the riot was
- a. English hooligans
 - b. a few English hooligans
 - c. *few English hooligans
 - d. *many English hooligans
 - e. *most English hooligans
 - f. *every English hooligan

If Heggie’s and Iatridou & Varlokosta’s interpretation of (115) were correct, the facts in (116)–(117) would imply (in combination with their conclusion based on (115)) that specificational copular sentences have *two* predicative constituents — and that would not make any sense. We therefore refrain from drawing hasty conclusions concerning predicativity on the basis of quantificational restrictions of the type just illustrated.

3.2.2 Interpretive properties

Two interpretive properties of specificational constructions, closely related to one another, are worth drawing special attention to in a separate subsection — information structure (x) and exhaustivity (xi).

(x) INFORMATION STRUCTURE

There is a strong tendency for the ‘value’-XP of a specificational sentence to be the FOCUS of the construction, and to convey NEW INFORMATION. Blom & Daalder (1977) effectively use this fact as the key distinguisher between specificational and predicational copular sentences. The following definitions have been adapted from Blom & Daalder’s work (‘value’-XP replaces their ‘hyponym’; see (23), section 1.4):

- (118) a. in a *specificational* copular sentence, the focused element is contained in the ‘value’-XP
 b. in a *predicational* copular sentence, the focused element is **not** contained in the ‘value’-XP

To illustrate, in a specificational pseudocleft such as (119), the information structure (or THEME-RHEME structure) of the sentence is partitioned in such a way that the *wh*-clause expresses OLD INFORMATION while the ‘value’, which specifies the variable in the *wh*-clause, supplies NEW INFORMATION. Concomitantly, the ‘value’-XP in examples of this sort receives FOCAL STRESS.

- (119) what John bought was a BOOK

However, while there is indeed a strong tendency for the variable to merely express old information and for all the new information to be packaged into the value, one cannot strictly correlate the variable/value (or identified/identifier) dichotomy with the new/given information split, as Halliday (1967:226) already pointed out. As Collins (1991:82–83) puts it, ‘[t]he two are independent variables; the association of new information with the highlighted element may be overridden by marked focus’. An example of such an override is Collins’s (120):

- (120) a. Tom offered Sue a sherry
 b. no, the one who **POURED** the sherry was Tom²⁴

Although, therefore, ‘in the majority of basic pseudo-clefts the relative clause/theme [i.e., variable] contains (at least some) new information ... there are several factors which work together to attenuate the newness of the item or items so marked intonationally’ (Collins 1991:119).

Declerck (1998:13) makes a more general point of the same general nature, observing that there are essentially four ways of focusing in specificational sentences:

- focus can be on the value as a whole (the ‘standard’ case)
- focus can be on a subpart of the value
- focus can be on the entire pseudocleft (in which case information in the *wh*-clause is also new; cf. Erades 1962, Prince 1978)
- focus can be on two value parts, one of which appears in the *wh*-clause (cf. (121), adapted from Declerck’s cleft example)

- (121) (why did you hit Mary? — I beg your pardon!) SHE was the one who hit ME!

(We refer the reader to Collins 1991:133, 145 for lucid summaries of the information-structural properties of pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP and XP<*wh* orders.)

(xi) EXHAUSTIVITY

Exhaustivity (or exclusivity or uniqueness, as it has also been called) is another interpretive property peculiar to specificational copular sentences, closely related to the information structural properties of these constructions. It is an implicature (cancellable by ‘particularisers’ like *not only*, *mainly*, *especially*, *primarily*), not overly robust at that — as Collins (1991:32) points out, ‘the types of sentences one may construct to test the exclusiveness implicature elicit variable responses when submitted to the judgment of native speakers’: examples of the type in (121c,d), while ‘rejected by many’ once the parenthesised material is included, apparently are not deemed as awkward as the relevant variants of (121b,e,f).

- (122) a. the car needs a new battery (amongst other things/and it needs a new alternator too)
 b. the car only needs a new battery (*amongst other things/and it needs a new alternator too)
 c. it is a new battery that the car needs (?amongst other things/and it needs a new alternator too)
 d. what/the thing the car needs is a new battery (?amongst other things/and it needs a new alternator too)
 e. all/the only thing the car needs is a new battery (*amongst other things/and it needs a new alternator too)
 f. it is only a new battery that the car needs (*amongst other things/and it needs a new alternator too)

Still, the fact that many speakers do indeed reject (121c,d) with the parenthesised material included ‘can only be attributable to the exclusiveness implicature associated with cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions’ (Collins 1991:33).

24 Collins capitalises both *poured* and *Tom*, but this reflects an intonation contour which seems very awkward for (120b). We assume the capitalisation of *Tom* was an error and have taken the liberty to correct it here.

This implicature is a sufficient but not a necessary condition for specificationality — that is, any copular construction that has an exhaustiveness implicature is specificational; but not every specificational copular sentence necessarily has this exhaustiveness implicature. As Declerck (1988) points out, this implicature ‘can only arise if the variable is uniquely defined’ (i.e., if the variable is *definite*, which it is when it is a definite noun phrase or the *wh*-clause of a specificational pseudocleft). As a consequence, in cases in which the variable happens not to be ‘uniquely defined’, no uniqueness/exhaustiveness implicature presents itself (see Declerck’s examples on p. 31, reproduced here):

- (123) a. an example of this kind is World War II
 b. typical instances of this are Julius Caesar and Napoleon
 c. something that I don’t understand is how the thief managed to get in

There are cases in which exhaustiveness is not merely an implicature but actually an ENTAILMENT of the singularity and definiteness of the variable.²⁵ In such cases, adding *only* to the focus will block the specificational reading (Declerck 1988:32): (124b) can only receive a predicational reading (‘Smith’s murderer is not someone with whom I have close relations’).

- (124) a. the one who murdered Smith is my neighbour [ambiguous]
 b. the one who murdered Smith is *only* my neighbour [predicational only]

In a similar vein, Seuren (1985) points out that there are contexts in which the interpretive difference between (pseudo)cleft sentences and their simple counterparts is not merely pragmatic but in fact truth-conditional (cf. (125), (126)): ‘if in a situation where nobody laughed [(125a)] is uttered it will simply be (minimally) false and its negation [(125b)] will be true, but if [(126a)] is uttered it will be (radically) false and its negation [(126b)] will still fail to be true’.²⁶

- (125) a. Harry laughed
 b. Harry didn’t laugh
 (126) a. the one who laughed was Harry
 b. the one who laughed wasn’t Harry

3.3 *Properties peculiar to specificational pseudoclefts*

Now that we have essentially covered the list of syntactic and interpretive properties which unite all specificational copular sentences and set them apart from their predicational congeners, let us make a list of a number of characteristics peculiar to specificational PSEUDOCLEFTS.

25 The text discussion reproduces Declerck (1988:32), where the definiteness and singularity of the variable is capitalised on. Notice, however, that adding *only* to the examples in (123), which do not have definite singular variables, is equally bad with the word order given there (**an example of this kind is only World War II*). When reversed, (123) does allow the addition of *only* to the ‘value’ (cf. *only World War II is an example of this kind*). Here is where a difference between (123) and (124) continues to manifest itself: **only my neighbour is the one who murdered Smith* is impossible.

26 Note, however, that Seuren’s (126b) is a marked construction: as Higgins (1979:321) points out, root negation in specificational pseudoclefts triggers a ‘contradiction negation’ reading; it is this which may be responsible for the truth-conditional effect noted by Seuren with reference to negated pseudoclefts. See item (vi), example (111), above.

(xii) THE FORM OF THE VALUE-XP (Bolinger 1972:98–100, Hankamer 1974, Heggie 1988:371, Declerck 1988)

- (127) a. the way he spoke to me was flatteringly [specificational]
 b. the way he spoke to me was flattering [predicational]
 (128) the best way to categorize them in fact is historically (Geluykens 1984)
 (129) a. when/the day they're coming for the box is Friday (Hankamer 1974)
 b. when she waters them is weekends

Given that (127a) and (128)–(129) (the latter due to Hankamer 1974; these are good in certain dialects only) are unambiguously specificational, one expects (cf. property (ii), above) that this kind of pseudocleft should be reversible — and indeed, grammatical and somewhat marginal cases of this kind have been reported in the literature (cf. (130a), due to Radford 1981, and (130b,c), from Heggie 1988:371). As Heggie points out, ‘it appears that to the extent that an adverb may be easily predicated of a human subject (i.e., PRO), the sentence is grammatical’ (while ‘[t]hose adverbs which must be predicated of a clause are completely ungrammatical’; cf. **apparently is how John left early*).

- (130) a. a little too casually seems to have been how he addressed the judge
 b. [?]very quickly seems to be how she ran the race
 c. [?]very reluctantly is how we all left

(xiii) PP PIED PIPING (cf. esp. Heggie 1988:360–63)

- (131) a. **with whom he goes to the cinema is with Mary/important to himself* [specificational]
 b. [?]*with whom he goes to the cinema is important to him* [predicational]

In English it is generally impossible to perform PP pied piping in a specificational pseudocleft (though pied piping is possible in predicational pseudoclefts, to the same extent that PP pied piping is ever felicitous in English). Notice, however, that Heggie (1988:360–63) has found that pied piping of a dative or *of*-PP does not seem impossible in specificational pseudoclefts: the examples in (132) and (133) are ‘simply awkward’, not ungrammatical, according to her.

- (132) a. [?]*to whom I gave the book was John*
 b. [?]*John is to whom I gave the book*
 (133) a. [?]*of what Mary was convinced was that Bill would succeed*
 b. [?]*that Bill would succeed is of what Mary was convinced*
 (134) a. [?]*a person to whom I sent a report without notifying pg*
 b. [?]*a person to whom I spoke without kneeling in front of pg*
 c. [?]*to whom did John speak without being able to see pg?*

She notes in this connection that *to whom* can also (marginally) license an NP parasitic gap (as in (134)), which suggests that the PPs in (132) and (133) can exhibit ‘NP-like’ behaviour. If so, (132) and (133) are not genuine exceptions to the generalisation that English specificational pseudoclefts disallow PP pied piping.

Languages differ on this point, however: Higgins (1979:41) notes Spanish examples of specificational pseudoclefts with PP pied piping (due to Jespersen 1969:78–79) which are grammatical (cf. (135)).

- (135) a. de un rey es de quién hablamos²⁷
of a king is of whom we speak
b. con quién hablaba es contigo
with whom I/he was talking is with you

Similarly, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000:72) report that Dutch and German allow PP pied piping in specificational pseudoclefts as well; but see Blom & Daalder (1977:9) for an example of PP pied piping in Dutch which they judge to be unacceptable (?**waar Jan op wacht is op de uitslag* ‘what Jan is waiting for is for the result’; to our ear, this example does not sound crashingly bad). See also section 5.2, below.

(xiv) ‘P-DROP’ (Higgins 1979:303–4)

- (136) a. where John is going *to* is a nice place [pred/spec]
b. where John is going is a nice place [predicational]

Higgins claims that not realising the preposition *to* delivers an exclusively predicational interpretation of the pseudocleft in (136). It is unclear what should explain this fact²⁸ — especially from the perspective of the parallels between the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts and *wh*-questions in question–answer pairs, one might have expected non-realisation of *to* to be perfectly compatible with a specificational interpretation of the pseudocleft: the question *where is John going (to)?* is perfect both with and without *to*.

(xv) TAG QUESTIONS (Higgins 1979:Chapter 6, exx. (85)/(87); Bošković 1997:272)

- (137) a. *what John is is proud, isn’t it? [specificational]
b. ?what John is is proud, isn’t he?
(138) a. what John is is lucrative, isn’t it? [predicational]
b. *what John is is lucrative, isn’t he?

Bošković (1997:272) notes that, while in predicational pseudoclefts the choice of pronoun and verb in a tag question is determined wholly at the root level (a copular sentence with a free relative subject, resulting in *is* and *it*), in specificational pseudoclefts (at least the ones with *wh*<XP word order; we are not familiar with facts of this nature reported for XP<*wh* pseudoclefts) such is entirely impossible (see (137a)). Instead, the tag may marginally skip the copular root clause altogether and relate itself to the clause contained in the *wh*-constituent.

Sentences of the type in (137b) are certainly not brilliant (Bošković actually assigns (137b) two question marks), but they are attested in spontaneous speech — Geluykens (1984) found (139) in a corpus of spoken English (from the *Survey of English Usage*):

- (139) what you’re meaning, Joey, is what caused the bolus, aren’t you?

The following are two restrictions on the *wh*-clause constituent of pseudoclefts:

27 One might question the status of these Spanish examples as genuine pseudoclefts. An alternative analysis of them as cleft sentences (with a null counterpart of *it*; Spanish is a *pro*-drop language) is readily conceivable; cf. Higgins’s translations in terms of *it*-clefts.

28 If indeed it is a fact — the specificational reading, while perhaps dispreferred, does seem to be available for (136b): cf. *where John is going is that city over there*, which seems acceptable, features P-drop, but cannot be predicational.

(xvi) PREDICATION RESTRICTIONS (Akmajian 1979:165, Heggie 1988:351)

- | | | | |
|-------|----|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| (140) | a. | he is tall | [predicational] |
| | b. | he is the man who robbed the bank yesterday | [specificational] |
| (141) | a. | what he is is tall | |
| | b. | *what he is is the man who robbed the bank yesterday | |

In a *wh*-cleft whose *wh*-clause has the form *what X is*, the ‘value’-XP must correspond to the *predicate* of the copular *wh*-clause: specificational copular sentences do not serve as input to specificational pseudoclefts whose *wh*-clause has a postcopular gap (cf. (141b), due to Akmajian 1979:165).

This is clearly not a case of matching across the matrix copula — that is, it is not the case that the gap in the copular *wh*-clause must be a predicate in order to match the predicativity of the postcopular constituent in the matrix: after all, the latter is *not* a predicate. This is shown most directly, perhaps, by the fact that *though*-movement (an operation singling out predicates) fails in specificational pseudoclefts (as Ross 2000 has pointed out):

- | | | |
|-------|------|------------------------------------------------------|
| (142) | a. | harmless old duffer though Al was, he won |
| | b. | *harmless old duffer though what Al was is, he won |
| | (cf. | though what Al was is a harmless old duffer, he won) |

While (141a) is grammatical (with *tall* functioning as a predicate inside the *wh*-clause), specificational pseudoclefts with a ‘value’-AP ‘obtain freely only when the verb of the CP-predicate is the copula’ (Heggie 1988:351) — the examples in (143) and (144) are ungrammatical. Contrast these with the grammatical example in (145) (= (60b); see fn. 14 on speaker variation with respect to the reverse order of (147), irrelevant here).

- | | | |
|-------|----|------------------------------------------|
| (143) | a. | *how Mary shook John was awake |
| | b. | *awake is how Mary shook John |
| (144) | a. | *how Tom hammered the nail was flat |
| | b. | *flat is how Tom hammered the nail |
| (145) | | rather plump is how John likes his women |

The same problems found in (141b) and (143)–(144) rear their heads in question–answer pairs: while the *wh*-questions in (146a–c) are good in isolation, they cannot receive the answers provided on the right. (146d) (corresponding to (145)) once again behaves differently.

- | | | | | |
|-------|----|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------|
| (146) | a. | what is he? | — | *the man who robbed the bank yesterday |
| | b. | how did Mary shake John? | — | *awake |
| | c. | how did Tom hammer the nail? | — | *flat |
| | d. | how does John like his women? | — | rather plump |

This enhances the parallel between specificational pseudoclefts and question–answer pairs (see section 5; cf. Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000 for an analysis of specificational pseudoclefts exploiting this parallel).

(xvii) COMBINING CLEFTS AND PSEUDOCLEFTS (I) (Blom & Daalder 1977, Akmajian 1979:89, Declerck 1988)

- (147) a. whatever it was that he got from her was expensive
 b. *what it was that he got from her was expensive
- (148) a. ik weet niet wie (het is die) daar staat
 I know not who it is that there stands
 b. ik doe wat (*het is dat) de directeur mij opdraagt
 I do what it is that the manager me assigns
 c. wat (*het is dat) hij eet is een banaan
- (149) *the thing that it was that was in the car was my hat

Declerck (1988:73) points out that clefting inside the *wh*-clause of a predicational pseudocleft is possible (as in (147a)), though only if *wh-ever* is used (cf. (147b)), for reasons unclear. Blom & Daalder (1977) make the converse claim: clefting inside the *wh*-clause of a specificational pseudocleft is impossible (cf. (148)). Similarly, Akmajian (1979:89, fn. 11) draws attention to the ill-formedness of his (149).

We should point out immediately, however, that the claim that the *wh*-clause of a specificational pseudocleft may not contain a cleft is not uncontroversial. Thus, Faraci (1970) points out that (at least in his variety of English) (150) is grammatical. Akmajian (1979:74), who includes this example in his discussion, adds that ‘for my own speech sentences such as [(150)] are more or less marginal’.

(150) %what it was that John bought was a car

(xviii) COMBINING CLEFTS AND PSEUDOCLEFTS (II) (Heggie 1988)

A second way in which combining clefting and pseudoclefting is restricted was first noted by Heggie (1988), who draws attention to the paradigm in (151):

- | | | | | |
|-------|----|---------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|
| (151) | a. | it’s coconut that is what Mary hates | cf. | it’s John that is the teacher |
| | b. | *it’s what Mary hates that coconut is | | *it’s the teacher that John is |
| | c. | *it’s what Mary hates that is coconut | | *it’s the teacher that is John |
| | d. | *it’s coconut that what Mary hates is | | *it’s John that the teacher is |

As the parallelism between the left-hand and right-hand paradigms shows, specificational pseudoclefts behave like double-NP specificational copular sentences in this respect; (151) is strictly speaking out of place in this subsection, therefore, but we included it here for presentational purposes. We will return to this restriction in section 4.1.2, in the discussion of the arguments for a predicational approach to the underlying representation of specificational sentences.

3.4 *Properties peculiar to specificational pseudoclefts with wh<XP word orders*

So far we have found that specificational pseudoclefts show a superset of the restrictions on specificational copular sentences *per se*. All cases in which specificational pseudoclefts exhibited properties of their own involved peculiarities of their *wh*-clause, not reproducible in double-NP specificational copular sentences for obvious reasons. What we have not found yet is cases in which properties which *are* in principle reproducible throughout the class of specificational constructions are nonetheless specific to pseudoclefts. Such cases do exist, however — and systematically, whenever we find such cases, it is specificational pseudoclefts with a word order in which the *wh*-clause precedes the ‘value’-XP which are subject to the constraints in question; their *XP<wh* counterparts are immune to them.

One such case involves the distribution of specificational pseudoclefts in

(xix) RAISING/ECM CONSTRUCTIONS (Higgins 1979, Hankamer 1974, Williams 1983, Heggie 1988)

- (152) a. ?I consider important to *himself* what *John* is [specificational; XP<*wh*]
 b. *I consider what *John* is important to *himself* [*specificational; *wh*<XP]

The minimal pair in (152) (taken from Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000:86, who refer to Williams 1983) emphasises the sensitivity to word order of ECM constructions embedding specificational pseudoclefts. In this respect, specificational pseudoclefts are like specificational copular sentences in general: no such construction with ‘variable<value’ order is ever embeddable under ECM and raising verbs (cf. Moro 1997 for extensive discussion; see also section 4.3.1, below):

- (153) a. I consider John the best candidate
 b. *I consider the best candidate John

Declerck writes in connection with the examples in (154): ‘In a copular sentence in which *to be* is preceded by *seem*, the copula can never be deleted on a specificational reading’ (cf. Moro 1997, Den Dikken 1995); he then goes on to point out that ‘WH-clefts like [(154a,b)] are not ambiguous between a predicational and a specificational reading but can only be interpreted predicationally’.

- (154) a. what you are working on seems an interesting subject [predicational only]
 b. what he suggested seemed a difficult thing to do [predicational only]

The way Declerck presents this observation, one gets the impression that once *to be* is added to the examples in (154), they will allow a specificational reading — on a par with the grammatical specificational copular sentences in (155). Declerck never makes this explicit; and as a matter of fact, the empirical status of specificational pseudoclefts of the type in (156) (from Higgins 1979), (157) (all from Hankamer 1974), (158a) (from Halvorsen 1978:34) and (158b,c) (from Ross 1999, 2000) is a contentious issue in the literature.

- (155) a. the best candidate seems *(to be) John
 b. the cause of the riot seems *(to be) a picture of the wall
 (156) a. what John is tends to be boring [predicational only]
 b. what he is pointing at seems to be a kangaroo [predicational only]
 (157) a. *what he was doing turned out to be washing himself
 b. *what they were doing seems likely to be claimed to be washing each other
 c. *what the little buggars did happens to have been (to) all get in the tub at the same time
 d. *what she never wants to hear again appears to be any more WH Cleft sentences
 (158) a. what John wants seems to be never to be left alone
 b. what he likes seems *(to be) tofu
 c. what Al is seems *(to be) a harmless old duffer

Most authors seem to agree that specificational pseudoclefts cannot participate in the raising-to-subject construction; but Hankamer (1974:231–32, fn. 6) points out that ‘there are some speakers who do not find all of these sentences [i.e., all of (157)] ungrammatical, particularly the ones involving reflexivization’. Hankamer suggests linking this case of speaker variation to that surrounding (66b), repeated here.

(66b) what was staring up at *John* out of his soup was *himself*

This suggestion will not cover the entire range of speaker variation, however: no peculiarities of reflexives could be at issue in (the relevant variants of) the examples in (158).

Like raising-to-subject, raising-to-object (or ECM) seems to give rise to variable judgements in the domain of *wh*<XP specificational pseudocleft constructions — though, once again, there is no variation on this point when it comes to double-NP inverse specificational copular sentences:

- (159) a. I believe the best candidate *(to be) John
 b. I believe the cause of the riot *(to be) a picture of the wall
- (160) a. *we believe what he likes to do to be (to) kiss monkeys
 b. *we believe what he is to be proud
 c. *we found what the theory depends on to be how Clefts work
 d. *I believe when she waters them to be weekends (cf. (129))
- (161) a. we believe what John wants to be never to be left alone
 b. I consider what he likes *(to be) tofu

The examples in (160) are once again due to Hankamer (1974), the one in (161a) to Halvorsen (1978) (as quoted in Declerck 1988:91), and (161b) is from Ross (1999). The scope of Hankamer’s acknowledgement of speaker variation (see above) includes these examples as well. (Blom & Daalder 1977 present grammatical Dutch examples of specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP orders embedded under ECM verbs — but these require a special ‘colon intonation’; we address this in section 4.1.2, below.)

Whatever the ultimate fate of specificational pseudoclefts in raising-to-subject and ECM constructions, and notwithstanding Declerck’s (1988:91) observation that the acceptability of *the murderer seems/is unlikely to be JOHN* is ‘more doubtful’ than that of their congeners without raising, it seems clear enough that fewer people will gladly accept examples of the type in (158) and (161) than the ones who find the variants of (155) and (159) featuring *to be* acceptable. This, then, is one context in which *wh*<XP specificational pseudoclefts differ from inverse copular sentences, fellow instantiators of the class of specificational copular sentences.²⁹

This turns out not to be the only context in which *wh*<XP specificational pseudoclefts behave in a special way. There are three further restrictions on *wh*<XP specificational pseudoclefts not shared with their reverse or double-NP relatives. We sum them up below, and comment on them briefly.

(xx) RESTRICTIONS ON ADVERBIAL MODIFICATION (see (162); Higgins 1979:318–20, Declerck 1988, Bošković 1997)

- (162) a. *what John is is probably angry with himself
 b. ??what John is probably is angry with himself

29 Ross (1999) mentions in the context of (158) and (161) the impossibility copula-drop in absolutive constructions with *wh*<XP pseudoclefts (cf. (i)). Double-NP specificational copular sentences seem to be grammatical with copula-drop in these contexts only on their canonical order (cf. (ii)). This potentially enhances a parallel treatment of *wh*<XP specificational pseudoclefts and inverse specificational copular sentences (cf. Heggie 1988).

- (i) a. with what he likes *(being) tofu, I doubt that he’ll pass
 b. *what he likes tofu?!
- (ii) a. with John (being) the murderer, ... with the murderer *(being) John, ...
 b. John the murderer?! *the murderer John?!

- (163) a. angry with himself is probably what John is
 b. angry with himself probably is what John is

Higgins was the first to point out that specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP orders permit no adverbial modifier to the right of the copula. (Higgins makes the same point with reference to the adverb *also*; see Declerck 1988:33–34 for critical discussion.) Bošković (1997:268, fn. 35) adds that placing the adverbial modifier in pre-copular position delivers a ‘slightly better’ result. In this respect, specificational pseudoclefts differ not just from XP<*wh* specificational pseudoclefts (cf. (163)) but also from double-NP specificational sentences with ‘variable<value’ orders:

- (164) a. the cause of the riot was probably a picture of the wall
 b. the cause of the riot probably was a picture of the wall

The robustness of Higgins’s observations is not crystal clear, however. Thus, Huddleston (1971:341) presents (165a) as an example (culled from a corpus of scientific English) of a specificational pseudocleft; if indeed that is what it is,³⁰ it flatly contradicts (162a). Another such example taken from a corpus is (165b) (Geluykens 1984). Similarly, Declerck (1988:91) offers (165c), featuring *perhaps* in post-copular position, as a perfectly well-formed specificational pseudocleft. Since the facts in the general area of adverbial insertion often tend to be somewhat less than clear-cut, we will not dwell on these data in any further detail here.

- (165) a. what happens at the anode is probably the conversion of chloride ions into hypochlorite and hydrogen ions
 b. the thing to do is obviously to swing the PhD subject ‘round to something nearer what I’m being paid to do
 c. what they need is perhaps a HAMMER

(xxi) RESTRICTIONS ON GAPPING/ELLIPSIS (see (166)–(171); Higgins 1979:305, Williams 1983:249, Heycock & Kroch 1996:32, Ross 1999, 2000, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000:67–70)

- (166) a. what Bill is is important to himself, and what Sue is is important to herself
 b. *what Bill is is important to himself, and what Sue is __ important to herself
 (167) a. important to himself is what Bill is, and important to herself is what Sue is
 b. important to himself is what Bill is, and important to herself __ what Sue is
 (168) a. what Bill is is important to him, and what Sue is is important to her
 b. what Bill is is important to him, and what Sue is __ important to her
 (169) a. the best candidate is John, and the runner-up is Bill
 b. the best candidate is John, and the runner-up __ Bill

Higgins (1979) has noted that specificational pseudoclefts with a word order in which the *wh*-clause precedes the copula and the constituent specifying the ‘value’, it is impossible to gap the copula linking the *wh*-clause to the ‘value’ constituent — (166b) is ungrammatical. In this respect, constructions of the type in (166) differ strikingly from all other English copular sentences, including predicational pseudoclefts (168), double-NP specificational copular sentences with ‘variable<value’ orders (169), and specificational pseudoclefts with XP<*wh* orders (167).

30 Notice, though, that inserting *only* in front of *the conversion of chloride ions into hypochlorite and hydrogen ions* is grammatical. In the light of the discussion under item (xi), above, this would seem to indicate that (165a) is not (necessarily) a specificational pseudocleft.

The contrast between (166) and (167) shows that the ban on gapping of the root copula in the second conjunct of a specificational pseudocleft is a property peculiar to constructions with the word order *wh*<XP. Once the order of the two major constituents is reversed, gapping is perfectly possible (cf. (167b); see Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000:69). Not surprisingly, gapping continues to be possible once the order in (170) is reversed; and since reversibility is not a property of predicational pseudoclefts to begin with, there are no grammatical counterparts to (168) at all in which the *wh*-clause follows the AP.)

- (170) a. John is the best candidate, and Bill is the runner-up
 b. John is the best candidate, and Bill ___ the runner-up

Ross (1999) notes that, in the domain of specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP word order, ellipsis ('VP deletion' in Ross's terms: with the copula analysed as a verb raising, when finite, from V to I, the ellipsis in (171) is a case of deletion of the beheaded VP) succeeds marginally when the postcopular constituent is nominal but fails completely when it is clausal; cf. (171).³¹ We add that such ellipsis comes out uniformly ungrammatical when specificational pseudoclefts have a XP<*wh* order (cf. the primed examples in (171)).³² Note also that ellipsis is grammatical in reverse specificational sentences that are a precopular NP (cf. (172)).

- (171) a. ?what Bill made was popcorn, and what Terry made was too
 a'. *popcorn was what Bill made, and fudge was too
 b. *what Mary thinks is that Mars is a star, and what Sue thinks is too
 b'. *that Mars is a star is what Mary thinks, and that Venus is a planet is too
 (172) a. Bill's biggest desire was popcorn, and Terry's was too
 a'. *popcorn was Bill's biggest desire, and fudge was too
 b. Mary's opinion is that Mars is a star, and Sue's is too
 b'. *that Mars is a star is Mary's opinion, and that Venus is a planet is too

The same grouping of subcases of copular sentences seen in (166)–(172) is attested another area of the grammar in which reference is made to the copular element in the root of the construction:

- (xxii) SUBJECT–AUXILIARY INVERSION (see (173) vs (174); cf. Ross 1999, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000:62–63)

- (173) a. what John didn't buy was any wine
 b. ?I don't know whether what John didn't buy was any wine
 c. *was what John didn't buy any wine?
 (174) a. the cause of the riot was a picture of the wall
 b. I don't know whether the cause of the riot was a picture of the wall
 c. was the cause of the riot a picture of the wall?

31 Related to this case is the one in (ib), also from Ross (1999), involving comparative ellipsis. Ross also mentions the ungrammaticality of subject deletion (**even if ___ tofu, what he likes is interesting; *though ___ a drunk, what he was is well-known*); this is common to reverse specificational copular sentences as a class (**though ___ John, the best candidate is intelligent*); fn. 15.

- (i) a. Barbara is more often a sadist than Bartholomew is
 b. *what he writes is more often that he is brilliant than what he says is

32 The ungrammaticality of the primed examples in (170) and (171) is not surprising in the light of the exhaustiveness reading which characterises specificational sentences; see item (xi), above.

The example in (173a) is unambiguously a specificational pseudocleft — it exhibits NPI connectivity. Embedding such a pseudocleft in an embedded yes/no-question with *whether* is possible; but performing subject–auxiliary inversion in the root question in (173c) results in ungrammaticality. No such ungrammaticality results, however, in the example in (174c), involving an inverse specificational copular sentence with two NPs.³³

Once again it should be noted that the ban on subject–auxiliary inversion is at least to some degree specific to specificational pseudoclefts with variable<value–XP word order. Examples of the type in (175a) do allow the formation of a root question with subject–auxiliary inversion (cf. Declerck 1988:45, fn. 44):

- (175) a. boring is something John has always been
 b. I was wondering whether boring is something John has always been
 c. is boring something John has always been?
 (cf. *is something John has always been boring?)

It should be pointed out in this context, however, that this triplet involves a *th*-cleft, not a *wh*-cleft; that this may be important is suggested by Ross’s (1999) observation that (176c) is entirely impossible (and substantially worse than *was beans what he ate?* or *?was in Londen where they lived?*). For true *wh*-clefts, therefore, the category of the value–XP seems to matter when it comes to subject–auxiliary inversion.

- (176) a. afraid of colons is what Jeremy has been for many years
 b. I was wondering whether afraid of colons is what Jeremy has always been
 c. *is afraid of colons what Jeremy has been for many years?

The facts discussed in this subsection are a clear indication that we should be careful to look at the word order of specificational pseudoclefts — while it is generally true that specificational sentences (including specificational pseudoclefts) are reversible (cf. property (ii), above), we should not therefore assume that the properties of specificational pseudoclefts with ‘*wh*-clause *be* XP’ word order are necessarily identical with those of their counterparts with ‘XP *be wh*-clause’ order (see section 2.3, above: Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder’s 2000 split between ‘Type A’ and ‘Type B’ specificational pseudoclefts). We will address this issue in more detail in the next section, which takes a closer look at REVERSIBILITY (property (ii), above). (See also section 5.2 and the beginning of section 5.3 for further divergences of specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP and XP<*wh* orders.)

4 Reversibility

The question as to how to best analyse the reversibility of specificational sentences, and the restrictions on this reversibility, is intimately related to the question of what the underlying representation of specificational sentences should be assumed to be. In abstract terms, when it comes to the question of how to analyse the word order alternation exhibited in (177), one has three options, *a priori*. These are summed up in (178a–c).

- (177) a. XP *be* YP
 b. YP *be* XP

33 The status of *?is your best friend John?* seems to be somewhat degraded, however (Jacqueline Guéron, p.c.; she suggests that the difference between (174c) and the example just mentioned may have to do with the animacy of the first of the two NPs).

- (178) *theoretical possibilities*
- a. (177a) and (177b) are unrelated, each having a different underlying structure
 - b. (177a) is basic, (177b) being transformationally derived from it
 - c. (177b) is basic, (177a) being transformationally derived from it

And once the score has been settled for one particular type of instantiation of the pattern in (177), one should repeat this exercise for each additional instantiation. That is, if we were to decide, for instance, that the alternation in double-NP specificational sentences is an instance of (178b), this need not entail that the apparently similar alternation in specificational pseudocleft constructions should necessarily be analysed along the same lines. In addition, any analysis will also need to take a decision on the question (related to the ones raised above) of whether one of the two major constituents, XP and YP, is a predicate of the other in the underlying representation of the construction at hand, and if so, which.

This said, a wealth of theoretical possibilities presents themselves. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are quite a number of different proposals available in the literature — and that there is a substantial amount of confusion around in this domain as well. In what follows we will endeavour to elucidate the issues and the positions taken in the literature.

4.1 *Predicational and non-predicational approaches*

In our discussion of approaches to the underlying structure and derivation of specificational sentences, we will make a basic split between two types of accounts: predicational and non-predicational approaches. The non-predicational approaches assume there to be no underlying relationship of predication between the two major constituents of specificational sentences; predicational approaches, on the other hand, do assume such an initial predicational structure.

- *non-predicational* approaches (cf. e.g. Akmajian 1979, Heycock & Kroch 1999)
- *predicational* approaches (cf. e.g. Blom & Daalder 1977, Higgins 1979, Heggie 1988, Declerck 1988, Moro 1997)

Non-predicational approaches are most strongly represented in the traditional analyses of specificational pseudoclefts and other specificational copular sentences; recently, Heycock & Kroch (1999) have reinvigorated this kind of approach. The principles-and-parameters literature has brought forth a number of detailed analyses of specificational sentences which treat them as underlyingly predicational — an analysis that has an important precursor in the pre-GB era in Blom & Daalder's (1977) analysis of specificational sentences.

Largely for presentational efficacy, we will first go through the non-predicational approaches to specificational sentences (section 4.1.1), addressing the predicational approaches in section 4.1.2.

4.1.1 *Non-predicational approaches*

The most explicitly non-predicational approach to specificational sentences (which in their account form a subgroup of the class of 'equative' constructions; cf. 'identity statements' in sections 1 and 2) is Heycock & Kroch (1999). They treat the relationship between the major constituents of specificational and equative sentences in terms of *equation*. One of the claims of their work, therefore, is that the theory should recognise 'equation as distinct from predication' (p. 375).

With specific reference to specificational pseudoclefts (one of the foci of this case study), Heycock & Kroch draw attention to the fact that if one denies that there is a grammatical (‘deep’) distinction between equation and predication and treats specificational pseudoclefts as underlyingly predicative, one needs to allow free relatives (which is what they take the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts to be; see section 5) to be ambiguous with respect to their semantic type: in *honest is what I want a man to be*, the free relative would have to be of type $\langle\langle e,t\rangle,t\rangle$ (denoting as it does a second-order property: a property of properties), while in *John is what I want a man to be (i.e., he’s honest)*, the free relative should be of type $\langle e,t\rangle$. Moreover, in order to be able to handle tautologies like (*when it comes down to it,*) *honest is honest*, a predicational approach would need to both type-raise *honest* from $\langle e,t\rangle$ to $\langle\langle e,t\rangle,t\rangle$ and attach a change in meaning to this type raising operation: *honest(x)* changes into *be identical to honest(x)*. Heycock & Kroch conclude, therefore, that ‘[i]n other words, if equation is removed from the syntax, it has to be put back into the semantics’ (p. 375). An equative approach to specificational sentences, by contrast, will be able to characterise free relatives as being of type $\langle e,t\rangle$, and will not need to resort to type raising operations and concomitant meaning changes.

Heycock & Kroch’s approach to specificational copular sentences thus treats these as equivalent to equative constructions — or ‘identity statements’, in the terminology of Higgins (1979) and Declerck (1988). There certainly are parallels between equative and specificational copular sentences — for example, both behave identically when it comes to embedding under ECM verbs like *consider*, *believe*, in the absence of a copula: both (179) and (180) are ungrammatical (cf. Heycock & Kroch 1999:374 for the equative cases; cf. Moro 1997 for the original observation concerning specificational or ‘inverse copular’ sentences):

- | | | | |
|-------|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| (179) | a. | I consider John the best candidate | [predicational] |
| | b. | *I consider the best candidate John | [specificational] |
| (180) | a. | *I consider your attitude towards Jones my attitude towards Davies | [equative] |
| | b. | *I consider my attitude towards Davies your attitude towards Jones | [equative] |

In equative constructions, both orders of the two NPs deliver ungrammaticality in the complement of *consider* (180); neither order hence seems to be syntactically representable as predicational (cf. the grammaticality of (179a); recall, however, Blom & Daalder 1977:76 — discussed in section 1.4, above). It does not seem unreasonable, therefore, to deny predicate status to *both* NPs of an equative construction — equative constructions would be radically non-predicational from such a perspective. Whatever the merits of such an analysis of equatives, however, it has no logical implications when it comes to the analysis of specificational copular sentences: typologies of copular sentences routinely distinguish between identity statements and specificational copular sentences on account of the fact that their properties are not identical (see section 1.3). Heycock & Kroch’s (1999:375) remarks about tautologies like *honest is honest*, which instantiate equatives, not specificational constructions, therefore are strictly speaking beside the point when it comes to the analysis of specificational copular sentences.

Their objection to an underlyingly predicational approach to a pseudocleft like *honest is what I want a man to be* (cf. above) is more to the point, in the present context — we are dealing here with a specificational copular sentence. But this objection of Heycock & Kroch’s is based entirely on the premise that the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts like this is the same as that of the *wh*-clause of *John is what I want a man to be (i.e., honest)* (which is presumably not a pseudocleft construction to begin with): a free relative. This is by no means an uncontroversial point, however: several scholars have sought to analyse the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts as a *wh*-question instead (see section 5 for discussion). Heycock & Kroch’s objection will be valid only to the extent that one accepts a free relative approach to the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts; as soon as one denies this, their point is entirely moot.

Heycock & Kroch (1999:381–82) stress that their recognition of a separate class of equative copular sentences (alongside predicative ones) need not imply the recognition of (at least) two separate types of copular *be* — one may, instead, encode the difference between the two types of copular sentence entirely in the syntactic structure of the small clauses participating in them: there are two types of small clause, equative and predicative ones (the former involving ‘some functional head’, the latter not); the copula *be* can take either as its complement.

(The fact that Heycock & Kroch assume that equative constructions feature a small clause, and that they say explicitly that the only difference between a predicative and an equative small clause lies in the presence in the latter of an additional functional head of sorts, may suggest that Heycock & Kroch do, after all, adopt a type of predicational approach to specificational/equative sentences — if the only difference between equative and predicative small clauses lies in a functional (i.e., non-lexical, non-predicating) head, and if — as is clear — predicative small clauses involve predication, then how can equative small clauses *not* involve predication? The answer to this question is not given by Heycock & Kroch. They do stress, however, that in equative constructions it is impossible ‘to interpret one of the noun phrases as less referential/more predicative than the other’ (p. 374). This is why we have classified the Heycock & Kroch approach to specificational sentences (which they subsume under their rubric of ‘equatives’) as a representative of the group of non-predicational analyses.)

By not making a distinction between different types of *be*, Heycock & Kroch’s ‘one *be* but more than one type of copular sentence’ approach differs from Akmajian’s (1979) account of specificational sentences (pseudoclefts in particular). Akmajian (1979:162) draws a distinction between ‘two fundamental senses of the copula, namely, the *specificational* sense as opposed to the *predicational* sense’ (original emphasis); the former he later calls a ‘specification operator [=]’ and the latter a ‘predicational operator [is]’ (p. 217) — and it is the former that establishes the relationship between the two major constituents of specificational copular sentences.³⁴ The constituent harbouring the variable and the value-XP are both referential (cf. chapter 3, section 2.2); neither functions as a predicate of the other.³⁵ In essence, then, in Akmajian’s analysis the ‘specification operator [=]’ serves as a two-place predicate in specificational sentences — though Akmajian never spells this out in detail, [=] may be taken to take the two major constituents of a specificational sentence as its arguments. The syntactic structure of base generated specificational sentences is simple: the pre-copular *wh*-clause (treated as a free relative) occupies the subject position of the clause, the ‘specification operator [=]’ projects a VP and takes the post-copular ‘value’-XP as its complement, as in (181).

(181) [_S [_{NP} *what there was in the car*] [_{VP} [=] [_{NP} *the jack you gave me/my hat*]]]

(Akmajian actually assigns the same syntactic structure (*modulo* the nature of the linking operator) to predicational pseudoclefts, saying that the ambiguity of a sentence like *what John does not eat is food for the dog* is ‘not associated with the specific derivation of clefted sentences ... but rather ... is a function of the general phenomena of referentiality of nominal expressions’ (p. 178). We take it, though, that Akmajian would assume that *food for the dog* on its non-referential interpretation functions as a predicate of the pre-copular constituent, and that the ‘predicational operator [is]’ is not a two-place predicate in its own right.)

34 Akmajian points out, though, that his ‘predicational operator [is]’ occasionally links the variable and the focal material of specificational pseudoclefts as well.

35 It should be noted, however, that in the tree structures in his first chapter Akmajian does systematically label the post-copular node ‘Pred’ — cf. e.g. pp. 27, 40.

Akmajian (1979) argues for a DUAL approach to specificational pseudoclefts: one analysis generates the specificational pseudocleft in the base, the other deriving them transformationally from their simple clause counterparts (via extraction; see section 6.2 for discussion). We have focused here on the base generation analysis (though for the extraction derivation Akmajian assumes a structure that is underlyingly almost identical, once again featuring the ‘specification operator [=]’). As Akmajian stresses several times, ‘there is no non-ad hoc way of preventing’ this duality of sources (p. 32; also cf. p. 38). In a similar vein, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) also argue for a dual analysis of specificational pseudoclefts — but this time, the two structures are radically different, one involving predication, the other not.

The non-predicational analysis is proposed by Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder for a *subset* of specificational pseudoclefts — in particular, those specificational pseudoclefts which feature a word order in which the *wh*-clause precedes the copula and the ‘value’-XP, and in which we find connectivity effects involving negative polarity items (their so-called ‘Type A’ specificational pseudoclefts). For pseudoclefts of this type, Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder propose a ‘topic–comment’ structure of the type schematised in (182), where the *wh*-clause is a *wh*-question finding itself in a left-peripheral topic position, and the ‘value’-XP is represented as a full IP (from which material may be elided, subject to general restrictions on ellipsis) which functions as the root clause:

(182) [TopP [CP *wh*-clause = *wh*-question] [TopP *be* [IP ‘value’, either full or elliptical]]]

The structure in (182) straightforwardly captures the connection between specificational pseudoclefts and question–answer pairs (see section 5, below) and topic–comment constructions (cf. also Seuren 1985:303), the ban on subject–auxiliary inversion, and the possibility of including a negative polarity item in the ‘value’, apparently licensed by a negation in the *wh*-clause — in actual fact, what happens in examples of this type is that the negative polarity item is licensed *within its own clause* by the negation in the elliptical root–IP:

(183) a. what he didn’t read was any book about clefts
 b. [TopP [CP *what he didn’t read*] [TopP *be* [IP ~~he didn’t read~~ any book about clefts]]]

The topic–comment structure in (182) is available only for specificational pseudoclefts with a word order in which the *wh*-clause (the comment) precedes the ‘value’ — inversion of topic and comment is impossible, given the general impossibility of extraction across a topic (the ‘topic island effect’). For specificational pseudoclefts with NPI connectivity, the analysis hence — correctly — predicts that they will feature only *wh*<XP orders. For the alternative XP<*wh* order of specificational pseudoclefts, a different analysis needs to be proposed: these cannot be derived from (182) via some transformation. Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) thus propose an analysis of the two word order variants of the specificational pseudocleft in which they are structurally unrelated.

Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) assume that specificational pseudoclefts with XP<*wh* order, as well as double–NP specificational sentences, feature a small clause structure that includes the ‘value’-XP as the subject. Discussion of this kind of structure properly belongs in section 4.1.2, on predicational approaches — to which we now turn.

4.1.2 *Predicational approaches*

In Higgins's (1979) characterisation of specificational sentences, neither of the two constituent NPs receives the qualification 'referential' or 'non-referential'; instead, Higgins assigns NP₁ the label 'superscriptional' (paraphrasable as 'providing the heading of a list') and NP₂ the label 'specificational' (i.e., 'specifying the contents of the list'). Translating these labels into the familiar syntactic functions 'subject' and 'predicate' is not straightforward: Higgins is the only one to use these terms, and he himself is not particularly explicit when it comes to their mapping to underlying syntactic relationships. He does say, however, that the *wh*-clause of a pseudocleft is the subject of the pseudocleft. And in his discussion of the semantic representation of specificational pseudoclefts like *what we saw in the park was a man and a woman* (unambiguously specificational unless reference is being made to a hermaphrodite), he writes that whereas 'the subject clause specifies a set in terms of a property, the predicate expression constitutes an explicit listing of the members of the same set, and the verb *be* is the identity' (p. 118). Thus, Higgins seems to partition the specificational pseudocleft into a subject, a predicate and a copula of identity (annotated as '=', as in Akmajian's 1979 treatment of specificational sentences); cf. the semantic representation in (184b).

- (184) a. what we saw in the park was a man and a woman
 b. {x: we saw x in the park} = {a man, a woman}

Yet, elsewhere in his discussion of the underlying syntactic representation of specificational pseudoclefts, Higgins (1979:226ff.) brings up a number of syntactic tests (mostly concerning word order in questions) which lead Declerck (1988:46) to conclude 'there appears to be ample evidence that in specificational sentences it is the NP representing the focus [i.e., the 'value'-XP] that is the (underlying) subject'. For Declerck, therefore, in a specificational sentence like *the best candidate is John* the post-copular NP *John* (the 'value'; cf. Huddleston's 1971 'identifier'), which is referential (either weakly or strongly), functions as the underlying subject of the construction. The pre-copular constituent (the 'identified' in Huddleston's 1971 terms), which is 'weakly referring' ('attributive' in the sense of Donnellan 1966), is the 'subject complement' (a term largely equivalent to 'predicate') in the underlying representation.

On the *surface*, however, things are governed (in Declerck's analysis) by a principle which says that 'the initial NP of a specificational copular sentence is always interpreted as the theme and therefore as the syntactic subject of the clause' (p. 201), regardless of the order of the two NPs. On the surface, then, whichever of the major constituents of a specificational sentence occupies the pre-copular position (in declarative sentences not involving topicalisation, that is) is the subject.

Even though Declerck (1988) explicitly does not avail himself of any particular theoretical framework (so that the precise theoretical status of terms like 'underlying', used by Declerck in various places, remains rather difficult to determine), it seems reasonable, in the light of the foregoing, to summarise Declerck's perspective on the underlying syntax of specificational sentences as in (185). Declerck identifies the variable (the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts) as the 'subject complement' in the underlying representation. With 'subject complement' read as 'predicate', Declerck's approach matches that of Moreau (1971), Blom & Daalder (1977), Heggie (1988), Verheugd (1990), Moro (1997), Heycock (1994) and Den Dikken (1995) (see also Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000 for 'Type B' specificational pseudoclefts) when it comes to the status of the 'variable' in the underlying representation of specificational constructions.

- (185) *Blom & Daalder (1977), Declerck (1988), Heggie (1988), Moro (1997) etc.*
- variable/identified = underlying predicate
 - value/identifier = underlying subject

With the exception of Moreau (1971) (who only shares the ‘underlying predicate’ part of (185), adopting an extraction analysis; see section 6.2) and Blom & Daalder (1977), who avail themselves of a pre-p&p transformational framework, all of the aforementioned generativists assume a SMALL CLAUSE structure for this underlying subject–predicate relationship, as illustrated in (186).

(186) ... *be* [_{SC} [_{Subj} XP] [_{Pred} *wh*-clause]]

It is especially Heggie (1988) who provides a range of syntactically based arguments for an underlying subject–predicate analysis of specificational sentences, with particular emphasis on pseudoclefts. Some of her arguments are intended to support the predicative nature of the *wh*-clause; others seek to vindicate the underlying subject status of XP. We will go through her arguments briefly in what follows, after which we turn to the question of how to derive the surface word order in which the ‘variable’ precedes the ‘value’.

(i) QUANTIFICATION RESTRICTIONS (cf. section 3.2)

Heggie’s first argument for the predicativity of the *wh*-clause, based on facts of the type in (187), was also discussed in section 3.2, above. The upshot of it is that the impossibility of *-ever* in the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts (of whichever order; cf. (187a)) can be likened to the ungrammaticality of (187b) on the assumption that the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts is a predicate (like the post-copular noun phrase in (187b)).

(187) a. *whatever Mary hates is Bill’s tie
 *Bill’s tie is whatever Mary hates
 b. *John is every teacher

As was argued in section 3.2, this argument has no force: combined with the quantificational restrictions on the ‘value’–XP of specificational sentences, it would lead to the nonsensical conclusion that *both* major constituents of specificational pseudoclefts are underlying predicates.

(ii) ECM (cf. section 3.4)

The second indication that the *wh*-clause of specificational constructions (with ‘variable<value’ order) is a predicate, according to Heggie, comes from constructions of the type in (179): ECM complements (see our section 3.4, above). Heggie points out that it is impossible to embed a specificational pseudocleft (with *wh*<XP order) under verbs like *consider*:

(188) a. I consider important to himself what John is
 b. *I consider what John is important to himself

The essence of this argument is that small clauses (like the tenseless complements of *consider* in the examples in (179) and (188)) do not make space available to perform inversion of subject and predicate; the grammatical examples in (179a) and (188a) must hence feature subject and predicate in their base order — hence, the *wh*-clause of (188) must be a predicate in the underlying representation of specificational pseudoclefts.

Once again, however, the argument is not foolproof. A clear indication that something more needs to be said about these data is that adding *to be* renders (179b) grammatical while, for most speakers at least (cf., however, Hankamer 1974, Faraci 1970), (188b) is irremediably bad:

- (179b') I consider the best candidate *to be* John
 (188b') %I consider what John is *to be* important to himself

(The fact that Blom & Daalder (1977) give examples of specificational constructions with predicate-initial order embedded under ECM verbs does not refute Heggie's argument: see section 4.2, below, for discussion.)

(iii) COMBINING CLEFTS AND PSEUDOCLEFTS (II) (cf. section 3.3)

Heggie's third argument (see our section 3.3, above) makes inventive use of the combinability of clefting and pseudoclefting, as in (151a). The argument kills two birds with one stone: for alongside arguing for the predicativity of the *wh*-clause, it also confirms the subjecthood of the 'value'-XP. Heggie observes that, of the four possible outputs of a combination of a cleft and a pseudocleft in (151), only the a-example actually comes out grammatical.

- | | | | | |
|-------|----|---------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|
| (151) | a. | it's coconut that is what Mary hates | cf. | it's John that is the teacher |
| | b. | *it's what Mary hates that coconut is | | *it's the teacher that John is |
| | c. | *it's what Mary hates that is coconut | | *it's the teacher that is John |
| | d. | *it's coconut that what Mary hates is | | *it's John that the teacher is |

The force of the argument here comes from the independent fact that in predicate nominal constructions like *John is the teacher* or *the teacher is John*, only the non-inverted subject can be clefted (cf. the examples in the right-hand margin). The parallel behaviour of *what Mary hates* and *the teacher* in the two paradigms then suggests that the former, just like the latter, is a predicate in the underlying representation of copular sentences — if one assumes, of course, that *the teacher* in *John is the teacher* (a non-inverted specificational copular sentence) is in fact a predicate nominal. If one accepts the latter claim (cf. Moro 1997; but see Heycock & Kroch 1999 for a different perspective), the facts in (151) argue for the predicativity of the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts.

Notice that if this argument goes through, it at the same time argues that *coconut* (the 'value') in the left-hand examples is like *John* in the right-hand cases in being an underlying subject. This is confirmed further by a variety of additional arguments provided by Heggie, the first of which concerns

(iv) GAPPING (cf. section 3.3)

This argument is originally due to Higgins (1979), and discussed also in Heycock & Kroch (1999) and Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) (see section 3.3, above). The key point for Heggie is that gapping of the copula linking the *wh*-clause and the 'value' fails in (189b) (while it succeeds perfectly well in (189a), featuring non-inverted XP<*wh* order):

- | | | |
|-------|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (189) | a. | important to himself is what John is, and important to herself is what Mary is |
| | b. | *what John is is important to himself, and what Mary is is important to herself |

Heggie makes the interesting suggestion that the ungrammaticality of (189b) reduces to the general ban on gapping in constructions featuring *movement across the subject*, as illustrated in (190):

- (190) *which man did Bill see, and which man ~~did~~ Gary ~~see~~?

Notice, though, that while (190) involves gapping of two non-contiguous elements, (189b) incurs no such discontinuity problems; the causes of the ungrammaticality of the two examples may well be unrelated, therefore. At the very least, it is not clear that they *are* related.

(v) COMPARATIVES (cf. section 3.2)

Noting that comparatives of the type in (191a) are ‘limited to predicates’, she goes on to construe the ungrammaticality of (191b) (also brought up in section 3.2, above) as evidence that *important to himself* is **not** a predicate, hence must be a subject.

- (191) a. X is more important than Y is
 b. *what John is is more important to himself than what Bill is is

This argument will only go through if one accepts the premise that specificational pseudoclefts are *predicational* constructions — otherwise there is no implicational relationship between the non-predicatehood of *important to himself* and its subjecthood.

(vi) RAISING (cf. section 3.4)

Heggie seeks to derive further evidence for the subjecthood of the ‘value’ from raising (cf. Williams 1983): (192a) is grammatical, which shows that *important to himself* behaves like subjects in allowing for raising-to-subject. However, the raising argument raises a problem for Heggie’s other claim: that the *wh*-clause is a predicate. For notice that (192b) is rejected by most speakers (but cf. Hankamer 1974 and Faraci 1970), which exposes the *wh*-clause as a creature with properties distinct from those of inverted predicates in double-NP specificational copular sentences — after all, inverted predicate nominals *can* undergo raising, as (192c) shows.

- (192) a. important to himself seems to be what John is
 b. *what John is seems to be important to himself
 c. the best candidate seems to be John

The grammaticality of (192c) flatly contradicts Heggie’s (1988:301) claim that ‘only subjects may undergo raising’, unless one is willing to treat *the best candidate* in (192c) as a subject, a view which would fatally undermine the parallelism arguments in favour of the predicativity of the *wh*-clause reviewed in the foregoing (cf. esp. (151)).

(vii) LANGUAGE VARIATION

A last argument for the subject–predicate relationship expressed in (186) comes from interesting observations that Heggie (1988) makes about certain differences between French and English. She observes that English is reasonably flexible in the types of ‘honorary NP’ subjects (to borrow Safir’s 1983 term) that it allows (cf. (193)), while French is much more restricted — crucially, not just in (194a) but in (194b) as well, regardless of the relative order of the *wh*-clause and the ‘value’-XP. The PP ‘value’ of (194b) thus behaves exactly like the subject of a predicative copular sentence, and the *wh*-clause behaves just like the predicate of a copular sentence.

- (193) a. in the park is a good place to have a picnic
 b. in the park is where John met Mary
 where John met Mary was in the park

- (194) a. *dans le parc est un bon endroit pour un pique-nique
in the park is a good place for a picnic
b. *dans le parc est où Jean a rencontré Marie
in the park is where Jean has met Marie
*où Jean a rencontré Marie est dans le parc

Heggie’s last argument, (vii), is presumably the most convincing — especially the fact that *surface* word order is inconsequential indicates that what is at issue will in all likelihood be a property peculiar to *underlying* subjects of predicates. If this argument stands up to closer scrutiny, it shows that specificational pseudoclefts — regardless of surface word order — feature a subject–predicate structure. If this is right, it also disconfirms Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder’s (2000) tentative suggestion that their ‘Type B’ specificational pseudoclefts, whose underlying structure is as in (186), do not allow inversion.

In the foregoing, we reviewed a number of syntactic considerations which have led several scholars to assume an underlying predication relationship between the two major constituents of specificational sentences. There is two further batteries of facts which have been advanced in this connection, concerning the *distribution of the copula* in and the *extraction restrictions* on inverse specificational constructions. But since these arguments are based specifically on INVERSE copular sentences, we will discuss them in section 4.3, which addresses the analysis of inversion from the perspective of analyses based on a predicational approach to specificational sentences.

4.2 *Inversion*

If one assumes a non-predicational approach to specificational sentences, one needs to spend little time on the question of how the reversibility of these constructions is to be looked upon analytically: any non-predicational analysis will assume that the two major constituents of such copular sentences are ‘on equal footing’; neither is predestined to take precedence when it comes to occupying the (surface) subject position.

If, on the other hand, one bases oneself on a predicational approach to specificational sentences, one of the two word orders of reversible copular constructions will more or less directly reflect the underlying representation, the other being derived from it via some sort of syntactic transformation. The question that arises then is what kind of transformation derives the other order.

The predicational analyses reviewed in section 4.1.2 agree that the underlying relationship between the two major constituents is such that the ‘variable’ is a predicate and the ‘value’ functions as its subject. Deriving the word orders reflected in (195) will hence be straightforward: starting out from the base structure in (186), all one needs to do is raise the underlying subject of the small clause (which may be of a variety of category types, subject to some language variation; cf. (193) vs (194), above) to the subject position of the clause.

- (195) a. John is the best candidate
b. under the bed is the best hiding place
c. important to himself is what John is
d. write novels is what John does for a living
(196) a. the best candidate is John
b. the best hiding place is under the bed
c. what John is is important to himself
d. what John does for a living is write novels
(186) ... *be* [_{SC} [_{Subj} XP] [_{Pred} *wh*-clause]]

To get from (186) to the word orders reflected in (196), one will need to do either or both of the following two things:

- (a) manoeuvre the predicate into a position to the left of the subject, and/or
- (b) manoeuvre the subject into position to the right of the predicate

Whichever (combination) of these tacks one takes, INVERSION in copular sentences will come down to the reversal of the underlying subject–predicate word order — an example such as (196a) thus represents an inverse construction.

(We note in passing that there is considerable confusion in the literature about the contents of the terms ‘inversion’ and ‘reversal’: while Blom & Daalder 1977, Declerck 1988 and all principles-and-parameters studies use it in the way we are using it here (see also Quirk *et al.* 1972:954), Prince 1978 and Collins 1991 refer with the term ‘reverse/inverse’ construction precisely to the word order pattern which, when viewed from a predicational base perspective, corresponds to the underlying subject–predicate order.)

All three tacks (i.e., (a), (b) or (a) and (b)) have actually been taken in the literature on copular inversion. Most authors have opted for (a) (cf. Declerck 1988, Heggie 1988, Verheugd 1990, Moro 1997, Heycock 1994, Den Dikken 1995), though there is disagreement among those authors when it comes to the type of position that the pre-copular predicate finds itself in: for Blom & Daalder (1977) and Heggie (1988), this is an A'–position (COMP/SpecCP), while for Moro (1997), Heycock (1994) and Den Dikken (1995) it is crucial that this be an A–position (the subject position of the clause, SpecIP; cf. also Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000 for an analysis of this type for what they call ‘Type B’ specificational pseudoclefts). As far as option (b) is concerned, it has been argued by Blom & Daalder (1977) it exists as an alternative to leftward displacement of the predicate; and Guéron (1992, 1993) argues that both the underlying predicate and the subject are displaced, the latter to a right-peripheral focus position. (‘Displacement’ here, as well as ‘manoeuvre’ in (a) and (b), are meant to be theoretically neutral with respect to the question of whether there is movement involved or not.) The literature can hence be summarised as follows:

(197) *Blom & Daalder (1977)*

- inversion = topicalisation/left-dislocation of the base predicate to COMP, or
extraposition/right-dislocation of the base subject

(198) *Guéron (1992, 1993)*

- inversion = leftward A'–movement of the base predicate into a position adjoined to an empty-headed subject, and rightward A'–movement (focus movement) of the base subject

(199) *Heggie (1988)*

- inversion = leftward A'–movement of the predicate to COMP/SpecCP

(200) *Heycock (1994), Moro (1997), Den Dikken (1995)*

- inversion = predicate raising to subject position (SpecIP)

Since Blom & Daalder’s (1977) analysis is the oldest and also represents a superset of the (a)–type approaches, let us take theirs as a starting point for the discussion. For Blom & Daalder, when what is in pre-copular position corresponds to the underlying subject, the pre-copular constituent finds itself in subject position of the clause, where it is base generated (cf. (201), which uses a verb-final word order; recall that Blom & Daalder are exclusively concerned with Dutch, an OV language). However, when the *wh*-clause (the

deep predicate) surfaces in pre-copular position, it is not the surface subject — it either raises to a left-peripheral A'-position (via topicalisation; cf. (202a)) or it stays put and sees the deep subject extrapose around it (extraposition/right-dislocation; cf. (202b)).

- (201) [S Subject [VP Predicate *be*]]
 (202) a. [S' [COMP Predicate] *be* [S Subject [VP ____]]]
 b. [E [S' COMP [S ____ [VP Pred *be*]]] Subject]

Blom & Daalder stress that both topicalisation/left-dislocation and extraposition/right-dislocation are independently available mechanisms in the grammar of a language like Dutch. The status of the former is undisputed and will not be commented on further; that of the latter, Blom & Daalder argue, is confirmed by the existence of constructions of the type in (203):

- (203) a. ____ belde ineens aan: de pianostemmer
 '____ suddenly rang the doorbell: the piano tuner'
 b. ____ is erg lekker: aardbeien met slagroom
 '____ is very nice: strawberries and cream'

It is interesting to note that what (203) and specificational sentences share in common is their list reading and colon intonation (cf. Higgins 1979). (It should be noted, however, that such examples have a stylistically restricted ring to them; they certainly are not as natural as specificational sentences in which the variable precedes the value.)

Blom & Daalder's approach to inversion in specificational sentences thus takes the 'value<variable' order as basic (subject<predicate) and derives the other order from it in either of two ways: (202a) or (202b). The former will be unavailable in embedded contexts — Blom & Daalder thus predict that in embedded clauses the only way in which the inverted order can be derived is via the (rather marked) strategy of extraposition/right-dislocation. In support of this prediction, Blom & Daalder (1977:111) mention the contrast between (204a) and (204b): even though Dutch embedded clauses are normally verb-final, in embedded specificational sentences in which the predicate precedes the subject, the latter must surface all the way at the end of the clause, to the right of the verbal cluster. Just like the examples in (203), the inverse construction in (204b) must have the special colon intonation characteristic of (202b).

- (204) a. *het bleek dat nog veel hoger de aankoopsom was
 it turned-out that still much higher the buying-sum was
 b. het bleek dat nog veel hoger was: de aankoopsom
 it turned-out that still much higher was the buying-sum

The problem with this kind of approach to inversion in embedded contexts, however, is the fact that in genuine specificational copular sentences (which (204) are not), it *is* in fact perfectly possible to invert the relative order of hyponym and hyperonym in such a way that the former ends up to the *left* of the verbal cluster — that is, (205b) is grammatical (alongside the stylistically marked (205c), with its characteristic colon intonation).

- (205) a. het bleek dat de sollicitant uit New York de beste kandidaat was
 it turned-out that the applicant from New York the best candidate was
 b. het bleek dat de beste kandidaat de sollicitant uit New York was
 it turned-out that the best candidate the applicant from New York was
 c. het bleek dat de beste kandidaat was: de sollicitant uit New York
 it turned-out that the best candidate was the candidate from New York

Since (205b) clearly is not the product of a type (b) analysis, and since topicalisation (type (a)) is entirely impossible in embedded clauses in Dutch, Blom & Daalder (1977) seem at a loss accounting for the grammaticality of this example. *Mutatis mutandis*, Heggie's (1988) analysis of inversion (phrased solely in terms of movement to SpecCP) faces the same problem — a problem that presents itself not just for Dutch but for English as well: in English, too, inversion is perfectly possible in embedded specificational copular sentences (even those not embedded under bridge verbs); no 'colon intonation' is required. (See also Heycock 1992 for discussion of this point.)

- (206) a. it turned out that the applicant from New York was the best candidate
 b. it turned out that the best candidate was the applicant from New York

Blom & Daalder (1977) also mention the ungrammaticality of inversion in yes/no-questions as an argument in favour of their approach to inversion. A paradigm first highlighted by Merckens (1961), in the classic '*kooplieden* discussion' in the Dutch linguistic literature in the 'fifties and 'sixties (cf. Bos 1961, Droste 1961 for other contributions to this discussion, brought together in Hoogteijling 1969), will serve to illustrate this point.

- (207) a. kooplieden zijn dat
 merchants are that
 'that's what merchants are (viz., clever/thrifty/successful/mean/...)'
 b. dat zijn kooplieden
 that are merchants
 'that's what merchants are' / 'those are merchants'
- (208) a. zijn kooplieden dat?
 are merchants that
 'is that what merchants are?'
 b. zijn dat kooplieden?
 are that merchants
 'are they merchants?' (*'is that what merchants are?')

The example in (207b) is ambiguous between a reading in which *dat* 'that' is the subject of the sentence and *kooplieden* 'merchants' is its predicate (cf. English 'they/those are merchants'; for reasons that need not concern us here, Dutch systematically has the finite verb agree with the predicate nominal in such cases), and one which is the inverse counterpart of the example in (207a), in which *kooplieden* is the subject of pro-predicate *dat*. For Blom & Daalder, the latter reading of (207b) is derived via topicalisation of *dat* to COMP/SpecCP (with concomitant raising of the verb; Dutch is a Verb Second language). Interestingly, now, the example in (208b), the yes/no counterpart of (207b), is not ambiguous: it only has a reading corresponding to a structure in which *dat* is the underlying subject.

The unavailability of the 'is that what merchants are?' reading for (208b) will follow if both (a) and (b) can be blocked. For (a) this is unproblematic: topicalisation is impossible in yes/no-questions. Extraposition/right-dislocation of the deep subject around the predicate is less easy to block, however — especially in the light of Blom & Daalder's (1977:111) own examples in (209), which show that yes/no-questions do not in general block the 'colon construction'. In the light of the acceptability of (209) with 'colon intonation', one would minimally expect (208b) to improve once the requisite intonation contour is superimposed on it. Making the clause-final subject heavier will facilitate this — but (210), with a heavy clause-final NP and 'colon intonation', is simply bad, and definitely lacks the desired inverse predication interpretation.

- (209) a. is hier misschien voor handen: een oude damesfiets?
is here perhaps available an old ladies' bike
b. heb jij soms gevonden: de sleutels van mijn auto?
have you perhaps found the keys of my car
- (210) *zijn dat: kooplieden uit Amsterdam?
are that merchants from Amsterdam

The radical unavailability of the inverse predication reading in Dutch yes/no-questions of the type in (208b)/(210) thus comes as a partial surprise from Blom & Daalder's (1977) dual approach.

From examples of the type in (208b) we should not draw the general conclusion, however, that inversion of subject and finite verb is never possible in inverse copular sentences (see also (xxii) in section 3.4, above). Examples of the type in (212b), derived from the inverse construction in (211b), are grammatical. Since topicalisation is impossible in yes/no-questions in English as well, Heggie (1988) has no way of deriving (212b) at all. The well-formedness of this example hence stands out as an insurmountable obstacle for Heggie's analysis. Blom & Daalder (1977) would still have option (b) at their disposal, though — and even though they do not discuss this kind of example, they might adduce the fact that (212b) seems best on a contrastive reading (cf. *or the dog*) in support of a (b)-type analysis of this kind of example.

- (211) a. (when we go on a holiday,) the cat is our biggest worry
b. (when we go on a holiday,) our biggest worry is the cat
- (212) a. is the cat your biggest worry?
b. is your biggest worry the cat (or the dog)?

Dutch behaves like English when it comes to (212b). But it may be interesting in this context to note that when subject and predicate disagree in number features, as in (213), subject–predicate inversion in a yes/no-question still seems possible in English while in Dutch it is poor:

- | | | | | |
|-------|----|--------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| (213) | a. | the children are our biggest worry | a'. | de kinderen zijn onze grootste zorg |
| | b. | our biggest worry is the children | b'. | onze grootste zorg zijn de kinderen |
| (214) | a. | are the children your biggest worry? | a'. | zijn de kinderen je grootste zorg? |
| | b. | is your biggest worry the children? | b'. | ??zijn je grootste zorg de kinderen? |

The difference between Dutch and English in (214b,b') seems to be related to the difference in finite verb agreement between the two examples (cf. also (213b,b')): while in English it is the inverted predicate that determines agreement (*is*), in Dutch agreement is triggered by the underlying subject in both 'canonical' and 'inverse' copular sentences. (We will not address the question of how the difference between Dutch and English in (214b,b') can be related to the agreement difference.)

Moro (1997) and Heycock (1992) discuss the agreement facts in detail (see also section 3.2, above; Moro's work presents a perspective on language variation (English vs Italian) in this department — see Den Dikken 1997 for a critique with particular reference to Dutch). And of course the fact that in English it is the inverted predicate that triggers agreement with the finite verb in (213b) (*our biggest problem is/*are the children*) stands out as an important additional argument against a topicalisation approach to inverse copular sentences à la Heggie (1988) (as Heycock 1992 also stresses).

The agreement facts, when carried over into the realm of specificational pseudoclefts, appear to furnish an argument in favour of an inverse predication approach to such constructions featuring *wh*<XP word order. Thus, consider the minimal pair in (97) (from Declerck 1988:80). As Declerck notes, agreement serves to disambiguate *wh*-clefts — singular agreement, as in (97a), yields a specificational reading, while

plural agreement, as in (97b), enforces a predicational interpretation. Of note in this connection is also Declerck's (1988:79) example in (215a), which can only be assigned a specificational reading (due to the presence of the negative polarity item *any* in the 'value' constituent) — concomitantly, only singular verb agreement is possible.

- (97) a. what you have bought is fake jewels [specificational]
 b. what you have bought are fake jewels [predicational]
- (215) a. what the book does not offer is/*are any solutions to the problems that are noted
 b. what you wanted was two things (Geluykens 1984)

We should note in this context, however, that the agreement facts in specificational copular sentences in general are not as categorical as especially Moro makes them out to be. Despite the fact that there certainly are strong tendencies of the type just illustrated, Declerck (1988:79–80) points out that '[i]n specificational sentences the number of the copula can apparently be determined by that of either the superficial subject NP or the variable NP'. He quotes the following examples to illustrate:

- (216) a. the aim of our policy is/*are improved relations with the Soviet Union
 b. improved relations with the Soviet Union is/?are the aim of our policy
- (217) a. more books is/?are what I need
 b. what I need is/?are more books
- (218) a. theft and robbery is/are what I despise most
 b. what we can't have here is/?are theft and robbery

Verb agreement is not a foolproof diagnostic, therefore; but at the very least, what we may conclude is that the very ability of the pre-copular predicate in inverse specificational sentences to trigger agreement on the finite verb is an indication that a pure topicalisation analysis of inversion, à la Heggie (1988), is presumably untenable.

Blom & Daalder's two-pronged approach to the derivation of inversion in specificational constructions is no better equipped to account for the English agreement facts.³⁶ An analysis of inverse copular sentences which treats the pre-copular variable constituent as a surface subject, by contrast, is eminently fit to explain the fact that the inverted predicate can trigger agreement on the finite verb in English examples of the type in (213b).³⁷ Likewise, it will straightforwardly accommodate the fact that inverted predicates of specificational sentences can undergo *raising* to ever higher subject positions, as shown in examples such as (219).³⁸

- (219) a. the best candidate could be John
 b. [?]the best candidate is likely to be John
 c. ^{??}the best candidate seems to have turned out to be John

36 It should be noted, of course, that their analysis was exclusively designed for Dutch; it is only in a brief appendix that they consider the possibility of extending it to English.

37 See Moro (1997) for discussion of the difference between English and Italian; see Den Dikken (1997) for a critique with reference to Dutch.

38 Note that, for most speakers in any event, specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP orders behave differently in this respect (cf. Hankamer 1974, Halvorsen 1978); see section 3.4, above, for illustration and discussion.

Examples of this type get less and less brilliant as the length of the raising trajectory increases (cf. also Declerck 1988:91), but they are certainly not ungrammatical. A raising-to-subject analysis of inversion predicts their grammaticality straightforwardly. A topicalisation analysis, by contrast, cannot account for the fact that a whole string of (raising) verbs can squeeze itself in between the inverted predicate and its subject, unless, in addition, the analysis resorts to extraposition/right-dislocation of the subject. In other words, to accommodate (219), an A' predicate movement instantiation of option (a) would necessarily need option (b) *at the same time*, and would need to apply both operations simultaneously.

Guéron (1992, 1993) presents an analysis that does indeed combine both options, taking (a) to involve A'–movement into a position adjoined to an empty-headed noun phrase base-generated in subject position (cf. (220)).

(220) $[_{IP} [_{DP0} [_{DP0} \textit{pro}]_i [_{QP} \textit{Op}_1 \textit{Q} [_{DP2} t_i \textit{D} \textit{NP}_{[+Q]}]_k]]] [_{I} [_{VP} [_{VP} t_j [\textit{BE} t_k]] \textit{DP1}_j]]]$

The key asset of Guéron's analysis, with its special articulation of the complex noun phrase structure in the subject position resulting from the predicate inversion operation, is that it can make sense of the quantificational restrictions on inversion, illustrated in (58), repeated here.

(58) a. Bill is {captain of the team/a doctor/a friend of mine/the best doctor in town/my best friend}
 b. {*captain of the team/*a doctor/*a friend of mine/the best doctor in town/my best friend}
 is Bill

For Guéron, these quantificational restrictions are part and parcel of the QP–structure which the raised predicate–DP ends up embedded under.

The rightward movement of the base subject (DP1) into a VP–adjoined position (Guéron's version of (b)) also gives Guéron a window on the fact that the postcopular subject of an inverse copular sentence is *focused* — on the assumption that the right-peripheral VP–adjoined position is a focus position, this falls out straightforwardly. Less clear, however, is how Guéron's (1992, 1993) analysis would make sense of the agreement facts discussed above. For Guéron, the output of adjunction of the predicate to the *pro*-headed subject is essentially a free relative configuration (with the raised noun phrase coming to serve as a predicate of the *pro* heading the complex noun phrase resulting from the adjunction operation). Agreement of the copula with the raised predicate should then be mediated by *pro*, which should be made to agree in number with DP2. Guéron does not address this issue; we will not attempt a formal account here. In closing the discussion of Guéron's proposal, we add that the fact that inversion of DP2 around DP1 'creates' a free relative structure in the subject position establishes a direct parallel between inverse copular sentences and specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP orders (on an account of the latter, that is, which takes the *wh*-clause of specificational pseudoclefts of this type to be a free relative; see section 5 for critical discussion of this point).

All in all, the fact that the topicalisation and extraposition/right-dislocation analyses stay empty-handed when it comes to a variety of properties of inverse copular sentences stands out as a strong argument for the view that the pre-copular constituent of inverse specificational sentences finds itself in subject position. This is guaranteed by the analyses proposed by Moro (1997), Heycock (1992) and Den Dikken (1995) (all involving predicate raising), possibly by that of Guéron (1992, 1993) (though the agreement facts remain to be worked out for that analysis), and also, of course, by accounts which treat these constructions as equatives (cf. Heycock & Kroch 1999). The fact that (as (97) and (215) illustrate) the agreement behaviour peculiar to inverse specificational sentences seems to be shared by specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP orders is a potential argument for an analysis of the latter along the same lines as that of the former (cf. Heggie 1988, Guéron 1992, 1993); but the topic–comment analysis of *wh*<XP (or 'Type A') specificational

pseudoclefts proposed in Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder (2000) accommodates the facts in (215) as well: the copula, on their analysis (cf. the structure in (182), above), is a linker between the topic in SpecTopP and the comment in the complement of Top, entertaining a Spec–Head agreement relationship with the (singular) *wh*-clause in SpecTopP. (See Den Dikken, Meinunger & Wilder 2000 for more discussion of Spec–Head agreement in TopP, in connection with the tense agreement/congruence effects noted in section 3.2.) The fact that specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP orders fail to *systematically* exhibit the same set of properties as inverse specificational sentences (cf. e.g. the difference between (219) and a pseudocleft like %*what John does seems to be write novels*, which is impossible for the majority of speakers), suggests that a full assimilation of such pseudoclefts to inverse specificational sentences may not be on the right track.

At this point, we may conclude that analyses of inverse specification constructions (i.e., specificational copular sentences in which the ‘value’-XP follows the ‘variable’) in terms of topicalisation (A’-movement to a left-peripheral position; COMP/SpecCP in Blom & Daalder 1977 and Heggie 1988) or extraposition/right-dislocation both face problems, and that an analysis which places the pre-copular ‘variable’ in SpecIP is preferable on a number of counts. This said, we still need to determine whether the pre-copular ‘variable’ ended up in SpecIP via movement or whether it was base generated there. In the next subsection we will present the arguments which have been brought up in support of a movement approach, considering their pros and cons.

4.3 Evidence for inversion as movement to subject position?

4.3.1 Embedding under ECM and raising verbs

Both Heggie (1988) and Moro (1997) have drawn attention to the fact that it is impossible for the ‘variable’ to precede the ‘value’ in the verbless (small clausal) complement of ECM verbs like *consider*; cf. (221) (see also section 3.4). Similarly, raising verbs like *seem* do not allow the predicate of their small clause complement to invert with its subject — (222b) is bad even for those (largely British English) speakers who accept (222a).

- (221) a. we consider John the best candidate
 b. *we consider the best candidate John
 (222) a. %John seems the best candidate
 b. *the best candidate seems John

This follows straightforwardly from a movement analysis of inverse specificational constructions: successful movement is dependent on the presence of a landing-site for the moved element; but the structure of the small clause complement of *consider* and *seem* is not large enough to make such a landing-site available.

The argument for a movement approach to inversion based on (221) and (222) will go through regardless of whether one assumes (with Heggie 1988) an A’-movement derivation or (with Moro 1997 etc.) an A-movement one. The argument becomes more specific, however, once we consider the fact that there is a way of salvaging the ungrammatical b-examples — by inserting *to be* in the complement of the ECM/raising verb (something which Heggie 1988 overlooks):

- (221b’) we consider the best candidate *to be* John
 (222b’) the best candidate seems *to be* John

Moro (1997) and Den Dikken (1995) argue in detail that the distribution of the copula in these contexts is an argument in favour of an A-movement analysis of inversion in specificational constructions.

Of course the negative argument (against the A'-movement approach) is easy to make on the basis of (221b') and (222b') — the A'-movement analysis simply makes no appropriate landing-site available in the infinitival complement: we know that topicalisation in ECM and raising infinitivals is generally impossible (cf. **we consider the best candidate, John to be*). Moreover, even if we could somehow allow topicalisation in such infinitivals under limited conditions, we would still face difficulty accounting for the surface word order of the examples — how does one manoeuvre the infinitival copula into a position in between the topic and the subject, given that there is no subject-auxiliary inversion in infinitives (cf. **we were wondering when to be eventually/finally/ultimately there and when were you eventually/finally/ultimately there?*)?

The positive side of the argument (showing how an A-movement analysis can account for the distribution of the copula in this context) involves a particular outlook on the functions of the copula, in combination with a minimalist theory of locality (cf. Den Dikken 1995). In a nutshell, the analysis runs as follows. A-movement of a predicate around its subject would — nothing else done — incur a violation of the minimalist theory of locality (based on Rizzi's 1990 Relativised Minimality): in (223), the predicate, on its way to the higher A-position, skips an intermediate A-position (that of its subject).

(223) $*[_{FP} PRED_i F [_{SC} SUBJ H [t_i]]$

To remedy the locality problem, one must ensure that the first position that the predicate can land in and the position that the predicate skips on its way there be rendered *equidistant* (cf. Chomsky 1995). The way to do this is to perform an operation of domain-extending head movement — some head which has the position of the subject in its minimal domain should raise to a higher head ('F' in (223)) which has the landing-site of the raised predicate in its minimal domain. (See Den Dikken 1995 for further details.) The moving head in question is the functional head of the small clause ('H') in (223).³⁹ The resulting derivation is schematised in (214).

(224) $[_{FP} PRED_i F+H_j [_{SC} SUBJ t_j [t_i]]$

This structure is well-formed: the subject and the landing-site of the raised predicate are now equidistant, hence predicate raising is in conformity with the Minimal Link Condition ('make the shortest move').

To link the obligatory head movement of (224) to the obligatoriness of the copula in (221b') and (222b'), Den Dikken makes the additional assumption that the result of domain-extending head movement of H to F is the emergence of the copula *be*. The copula, in constructions of the type at hand, is hence an overt signaller of the application of predicate raising and its concomitant domain-extending head movement.

The account of the distribution of the copula in ECM/raising complements just sketched is crucially based on the A-movement analysis of predicate raising — if either the predicate did not raise to SpecFP but was base-generated there, or the predicate did so raise but not via A-movement, the obligatoriness of the copula could no longer be derived from the theory of locality along these lines. Thus, the facts in (221) and (222) provide us with an argument for an A-movement analysis of inversion in specificational constructions.

Heycock & Kroch (1999:373ff.) raise a number of objections to this argument in favour of an A-movement account of inversion in specificational copular sentences. First, they note that there are surface subjects which, even though they cannot be analysed as inverted predicates, do trigger the obligatory presence of *to be* in ECM and raising contexts. Consider the following examples:

39 Den Dikken identifies this head as Agr; Moro (1997) objects that if the functional head of small clauses is Agr, one would not expect it to be possible to find disagreement in phi-features between subject and predicate — but such disagreement is in fact possible: cf. the examples in (213), for instance. We will leave the question concerning the nature of 'H' open here.

- (225) a. one hundred yen is the best value for the dollar
 b. the best value for the dollar is one hundred yen
- (226) a. the banks consider one hundred yen the best value for the dollar
 b. *the banks consider the best value for the dollar one hundred yen
- (227) a. the best value for the dollar has changed –
 b. – it used to be one hundred and thirty yen, but now it is only one hundred

The distribution of the copula in (226) is the same as in the above examples; yet to analyse *the best value for the yen* as an inverted predicate on account of its ‘non-referential’ interpretation would seem to commit one to a predicational analysis of this noun phrase in (227a), where it likewise receives a non-referential interpretation. Heycock & Kroch (1999:373) admit that this batch of facts ‘does not, of course, entail the absence of predicate raising (i.e., ‘inversion’) in the copular examples, but it does greatly weaken the motivation for it’. True equatives like *the Morning Star is the Evening Star* weaken it further, they go on to point out — for these, too, require the presence of *to be* in ECM/raising constructions, yet there seems to be no referentiality difference between the two NPs in equative constructions (or ‘identity statements’).⁴⁰

The previous two arguments are at best circumstantial evidence against a predicate raising approach to inverse specificational constructions. A potentially much stronger argument (cf. Heycock 1994, Heycock & Kroch 1999:381) comes from ECM/raising examples featuring unquestionably specificational constructions with a variable < value order which, unlike the ones in (221b,b’) and (222b,b’), do *not* trigger the presence of *to be*, as seen in (228a–c):

- (228) a. if what you say is true, that would make the real murderer John!
 b. the best solution remains instant retreat
 c. at this point our real problem becomes John
 d. *I guess that makes one good doctor John
 e. *an example of this kind becomes World War II

The verbs *make*, *remain* and *become* behave differently from *consider* and *seem* when it comes to their interaction with predicate raising. Heycock (1994, 1998), Den Dikken (1995) and Guéron (2000) all seek to relate this to the aspectual properties of the constructions involved; Guéron, in particular, argues that the verbs *make*, *remain* and *become* take a small clause complement containing an abstract BE, an analysis which, if correct, would render (228) directly compatible with the Moro/Den Dikken analysis. Whatever the fate of such analyses, however, we should note that the verbs in question do not simply accept *any* inverse copular sentence in their complement: while *one good doctor is John* and *an example of this kind is World War II* (cf. (123a)) are grammatical, the examples in (228d,e) (due to Jacqueline Guéron) are bad. Further research into constructions of the type in (228) is clearly called for. But at least on its face, the difference between (228a–c) and the ones brought up originally in support of the ‘predicate raising as A-movement’ analysis raises some questions.

Further questions are raised by an observation made by Blom & Daalder (1977:113), in connection with their dual account of inversion in specificational sentences. They point out that their analysis allows, in principle, for inversion in ECM contexts — even though a derivation along the lines of (202a) (topicalisation/left-dislocation) is unavailable, there is nothing, in principle, that would block an extraposition/right-dislocation analysis à la (202b). And indeed, Blom & Daalder (1977:113) point out that (229) is grammatical (with the same characteristic colon intonation that products of (202b) have in general); and they claim that (230) is ambiguous between a reading in which *een geboren leider* is the value and one in which it is the variable (with intonation serving as a disambiguator).

40 See, however, Blom & Daalder’s (1977:76) predicational analysis of equatives, mentioned in section 1.4, above.

4.3.2 *Extraction restrictions*

Already in Grosu (1972) it was noted that in specificational pseudoclefts with *wh*<XP order, extraction from the post-copular ‘value’-XP is impossible (cf. 3.2, above). He also notes that the same is true for specificational copular sentences in general. The example in (231b) illustrates this for double-NP inverse specificational sentences. Moro (1997) points out, in addition, that not just extraction *out of* but also extraction *of* the post-copular ‘value’-XP is impossible in inverse specificational sentences:

- (231) a. I think that the cause of the riot was a picture of the wall
 b. *what do you think that the cause of the riot was a picture of *ec*?
 c. *which picture do you think that the cause of the riot was *ec*?

These two extraction restrictions have been brought up as definitional properties of inverse specificational constructions. Italian exhibits cliticisation facts which parallel the *wh*-extraction data presented here; see Moro (1997:28–29) for discussion. Note that Moro (1997:59) claims that the predicate of canonical (i.e., non-inverted) copular sentences is also unextractable — but Heycock & Kroch (1999:377) point out that this claim runs counter to the general facts (his particular example being unacceptable for reasons tangential to the subject/predicate issue).

For Heggie (1988), the ungrammaticality of (231b) (and, by the same token, although she does not discuss this explicitly, of (231c) as well) fits in with her topicalisation analysis of inverse specificational constructions — the deviance of these examples will then illustrate the familiar ‘topic island’ effect (cf. Ross 1967). However, the degree of deviance of the examples in (231b,c) is substantially stronger than that of a garden variety topic island effect (cf. ^{??}*what do you think that to Mary, John would never give?*). It is likely, therefore, that the deeper roots of the ungrammaticality of these examples has to be sought elsewhere.

One possibility would be to look for the deeper roots in the domain of focus. What inverse specificational constructions all share in common is the fact that the post-copular constituent (or a subconstituent thereof) is in focus. One may wish to translate this structurally into the hypothesis that it is in a special, right-peripheral focus position, and that it is this which blocks extraction of and from the post-copular noun phrase. Guéron (1992, 1993) presents an analysis along these lines (see also Heggie 1988 for the suggestion that the post-copular noun phrase is in some sort of ‘constructional focus’ position in at least some inverse specificational sentences; also cf. Blom & Daalder’s 1977 extraposition/right-dislocation approach to these constructions). The assumption that the post-copular constituent is in a focus position (an A’ island position) will readily make sense of the ban on *sub*extraction from it. It is less clear, however, that it will also successfully rule out *wh*-extraction of the *entire* constituent: *wh*-constituents are themselves foci, and in languages (like English, unlike Hungarian) in which they must raise to SpecCP they may well do so, systematically, via a stop-over in the focus position (which is the surface position of *wh*-constituents in languages like Hungarian) along the way, to check their focus feature. If so, movement from the focus position on to SpecCP should be allowed in general; it will then be unclear why the post-copular focus of inverse copular sentences should be unable to undergo *wh*-movement.

Moro (1997) presents an alternative account of these facts which capitalises on his raising-to-subject analysis of predicate inversion. Den Dikken (1995) presents a variant of this account, based on the same overall analysis of inversion in specificational sentences. The key to both analyses is that the post-copular constituent in an inverse specificational construction is a structural *subject* — i.e., finds itself in a specifier position. We are familiar from early transformational work (cf. Ross 1967) with the fact that specifiers (left branches) are strong islands — the ‘subject condition’ severely penalises extraction from subjects. The ungrammaticality of (231b) then follows, from the subject condition (Subjacency). That of (231c) can also be made to follow from the subject status of the post-copular deep subject, if one assumes that in its base

position, the trace of the extracted ‘value’-NP in (231c) cannot be properly governed, which causes an ECP violation. Den Dikken (1995) presents a different analysis of (231c), one which does not resort to the ECP but capitalises on the coindexation of subject and predicate and the Principle C effect (strong crossover) resulting from extraction of the subject across its A-raised predicate (but see fn. 40).

Central to the account of (231b,c) sketched in the previous paragraph is idea that the post-copular constituent in inverse specificational sentences is in a subject position. It is in this respect that this account rests crucially on the movement analysis of inversion in specificational constructions: if this order were base generated, the post-copular NP would not be a subject. Den Dikken’s (1995) crossover approach to the ungrammaticality moreover capitalises on the idea that the fronted predicate lands in an A-position (rather than some A’-position).

Heycock & Kroch (1999:376–78), in their repartee of the raising analysis of specificational sentences, object, however, that ‘true equative sentences’ exhibit the same extraction restrictions, despite the fact here there is no sense in which one of the two NPs can be singled out as an underlying predicate (but cf., once again, Blom & Daalder 1977:76 for a different perspective):

- (232) a. *who is your attitude towards Jones my attitude towards?
 b. *whose attitude towards Davies would you say that your attitude towards Jones is?

They go on to point out that ‘in inverse (and equative) sentences the extraction of the surface subject is just as ungrammatical as the extraction of the postcopular noun phrase’ (p. 377) — a point overlooked by Moro (1997), Den Dikken (1995), Heycock (1994) and others.

- (233) a. *which of the themes do you think *ec* is that phrase of music?
 b. *whose opinion of Edinburgh do you think *ec* is your opinion of Philadelphia?

Heycock & Kroch are right to point out that these facts seriously undermine the extraction argument.

While they do not present a new account of the extraction facts, Heycock & Kroch (1999:378, fn. 9) do make a potentially interesting suggestion which needs to be looked into in future research. They suggest that it might be fruitful to look for an account of the extraction restrictions in the domain of ‘the only other symmetric constructions in natural language syntax: coordination’. The following examples show that there is indeed a close parallel between coordination constructions and equatives — even in the domain of cross-the-board extraction.

- (234) a. *which city is your opinion of *ec* my opinion of Philadelphia?
 b. *which city is your opinion of Edinburgh my opinion of *ec*?
 c. which city is your opinion of *ec* my opinion of *ec*?
 (235) a. *which city does John love *ec* and Mary despise Philadelphia?
 b. *which city does John love Edinburgh and Mary despise *ec*?
 c. which city does John love *ec* and Mary despise *ec*?

This parallel suggests that what we are dealing with in the domain of extraction restrictions is constraints on ‘symmetric constructions’. If this is right, it strongly enhances an account of inverse specificational sentences as equative sentences, not as inverse predicational constructions.

4.4 Reversibility: Concluding remarks

In this section we have discussed approaches to what is perhaps the most conspicuous earmark of specificational copular sentences: the reversibility of their major constituents. There are two basic questions that come up in the accounts of reversibility offered in the literature:

- does reversal involve movement or not?
- if so, is it movement of the ‘variable’ to the left or of the ‘value’ to the right (or both), and what kind of movement (A or A’) are we dealing with?

Approaches which take inverse specificational sentences to be a subtype of equative copular sentences (or ‘identity statements’) answer the first question negatively. Underlyingly predicational approaches to inverse specificational sentences of necessity give a positive answer to this question, and have come up with a variety of ways of deriving the surface word order from an underlying subject–predicate base. Evidence has been presented in the literature in favour of the underlying predicativity of inverse specificational sentences, as well as for leftward predicate movement and rightward subject displacement accounts of the inverted order. None of these accounts is flawless, however: many of the individual arguments face difficulties, as we have seen. This raises questions about the transformational account, and, concomitantly, about the predicational base of inverse specificational sentences as well.

The predicativity of the pre-copular constituent is also potentially called into question by the fact that there are severe restrictions on what qualifies as an ‘invertible predicate’ (cf. (58), above). Heycock & Kroch (1999:379–80) review these restrictions (see also Declerck 1988, Guéron 1993, 2000) and conclude that what they show is ‘that it is not possible to treat any constituent appearing in [SpecIP] as predicated of a postcopular argument’. This stands out as perhaps the most serious obstacle to a predicate raising analysis of inverse specificational sentences. Guéron (1993, 2000), however, presents a concrete perspective on how to analyse these restrictions (which are mostly of a quantificational nature) from a perspective of an approach which starts out from an underlying subject–predicate relationship.

On the other hand, an analysis of inverse specificational sentences which treats them on a par with equative copular constructions (or ‘identity statements’) will need to face the fact that, despite their similarities in the domains highlighted by Heycock & Kroch, there are differences between the two as well — see section 1.3.

With these conclusions concerning the analysis of specificational copular sentences drawn, we have now reached the final destination of the code-share flight operated by double–NP specificational sentences and specificational pseudoclefts. From this point on, we will leave constructions of the type *the best candidate is John* behind, and focus instead on two questions arising specifically in the context of specificational PSEUDOCLEFTS, concerning:

- the status of the *wh*-clause
- the relationship between specificational pseudoclefts and their simple clause counterparts

We will address these two questions in turn, in sections 5 and 6, respectively.