

On the theory of presentation

STEFAN HUBER (LUND UNIVERSITY)

Abstract

The aim of the paper is to introduce a new information-structural category *presentation* and to argue for its relevance and independence from other information-structural layers. It is shown that a successful presentation consists of two steps, namely the *import* of a new discourse participant and its establishing (*process*) in the ongoing context. The employment of import and process is a coherence strategy that involves at least two sentences. Therefore, these presentational notions must be distinguished from merely intrasentential information structure concepts such as *topic*, *focus*, *contrast*, *theme*, *rheme*, etc.

The paper also discusses some morphological and syntactic reflections of presentation. Notably, it will be claimed that both non-given (i.e., rhematic) and given (i.e., thematic) information can be (re-) presented. Moreover, the autonomy of the import-process layer from other information-structural concepts will be supported theoretically.

1 Information Structure: Syntax and Pragmatics

Throughout the last decade, much attention has been paid to the investigation of information-structural features, such as topic, focus, theme, rheme, contrast, etc. Moreover, at least since Rizzi's (1997) theoretical proposal, numerous attempts have been made to integrate such features into core syntax. The aim of this paper is to revisit and discuss some of these informational features, both from a syntactic and pragmatic view. In particular, it will be argued that there is a demand for a model that consists of at least four different layers of information structure, i.e., a new layer called presentation will be introduced. In order to facilitate the ensuing discussion, a short survey on both sides of information structure – syntax and pragmatics – will be given in this introductory section.

The goal of the syntactic investigation of information structure has been to prove that categories such as focus, topic, contrast, etc. have a more or less severe impact on word order. These claims have been extended from discourse-configurational languages such as Hungarian (cf. Brody 1995, É. Kiss 1998), Finnish (Molnár & Järventausta 2003) or Basque (Arregi 2002) to Indo-European languages as well (e.g., Rizzi 1997 for Italian; É. Kiss 1998, Meinunger 1998, den Dikken 2005 for English; Frey 2004a, 2004b for German and many others). Traditionally, the main interest has been on the so-called left periphery. Especially for the features topic, focus and contrast, there have been attempts to create specific functional categories within the initial sentence domain. An item carrying one of these features has been claimed to raise to the relevant position to check its feature, according to (earlier) minimalist assumptions (Chomsky 1995). The evidence for such functional positions in

discourse-configurational languages such as Hungarian and Basque is compelling, since a phrase can only be interpreted as a topic or (narrow) focus if it occurs in these designated positions (cf. Brody 1995, É. Kiss 1998). It has been more difficult to prove the existence of pragmatically motivated categories for Germanic languages. For instance, focus assignment in Germanic corresponds to accentuation and the accent placement in Germanic is rather free, i.e., a focus can also be interpreted *in situ*.

As for the *pragmatic* evaluation of information structure, Molnár (1991, 1993) suggests that three distinct layers have to be assumed, according to the following pattern:

- | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------------|---|---------|
| (1) Message: | → | Topic | – | Comment |
| Hearer: | → | Theme | – | Rheme |
| Speaker: | → | Background | – | Focus |

Molnár differentiates between the layers of the message, the hearer and the speaker. Within each layer, there is a particular bifurcation: The message layer can be divided into a part that the utterance is about (*topic; T*)¹ and a part that contains the actual information-structural predication (*comment; C*). Furthermore, the speaker organizes the utterance with regard to his/her assumptions as to hearer-old information (*theme; Th*) or new information (*rheme; Rh*). Finally, the speaker marks the more important (*focus; F*) and less important (*background; B*) information.

Molnár points out that in the prototypical case the three layers coincide as in (2):

- (2) (I met a man.)²
 He]_{T/Th/B} [was a professor]_{C/Rh/F}.

However, Molnár discusses a wide array of other examples that demonstrate that the three layers need to be kept apart. In particular, she emphasizes that the concepts of topic and focus are not mutually exclusive, but rather apply on different levels. Two relevant examples for this claim are given in (3), which involves multiple foci, and (4), which presents an all-new sentence that still can be divided into a topic and a comment part:

¹ Throughout the paper, the following abbreviations are used: AT = aboutness topic, B = background, C = comment, DT = discourse topic, F = focus, FT = frame topic, I = import, P = process, PT = pre-topic, Rh = rheme, T = topic, Th = theme.

² Within the examples, parentheses are used to indicate context material, whereas brackets are meant to mark the relevant informational units.

(3) (Who did what?)
 [Peter]_{F1=T1} [peeled the potatoes]_{F2=C1} and
 [Mary]_{F3=T2} [chopped the onions]_{F4=C2}.

(4) (What happened?)
 [[A man]_T [bought a new car.]_C]_F

In (3) *Peter* and *Mary* serve as two separate foci (F_1 and F_3). Still, they are to be regarded as topics³ within each conjunct. Likewise, example (4) presents an all-new sentence which is all-focus but still can display a topic-background structure. These facts are strong evidence that the notions focus and topic must be separated and that a distinction between different layers of information structure is plausible.

In recent years, there have been attempts to modify the basic information-structural terms even further. For instance, it has been argued that additional differentiations have to be made regarding the notion of given or shared information (the “theme” in Molnár’s terminology). This category has been split up into “discourse-old/new”, “hearer-old/new”, and “speaker-old/new” (cf. Birner 1994).

Likewise, the notion of topic has been refined and subtypes such as *frame topics* (cf. Chafe 1976), *aboutness topics* (Molnár 1991, 1993, Frey 2004a), *discourse topics* (Averintseva 2005) and even *pre-topics* (Endriss & Gärtner 2005) have been suggested.

Frame topics (FT), by their very definition, embed a proposition in a specific temporal or spatial surrounding. They typically involve temporal and/or locative adverbial phrases:

(5) [In Baghdad]_{FT1}, [this morning]_{FT2}, another bomb exploded killing three people.

Note that in English and many other languages, locative and temporal frame topics can be realized simultaneously at the left edge of a sentence.

Aboutness topics (AT) are often considered to be prototypical topics since they set an anchor for the pragmatic utterance of a sentence, i.e., they denote an element that the (pragmatic) predication is about. Topicalization in this pragmatic sense, then, is a strategy by which an aboutness topic is chosen.

³ Note that this syntactic pattern is also compatible with a so-called I-intonation, involving an “I-” or “contrastive” topic (cf. Jacobs 1996 and many others):

(i) [$\sqrt{\text{Peter}}$]_{F1=T1} [peeled the po\TAtoes]_{F2=C1} and [$\sqrt{\text{Mary}}$]_{F3=T2} [chopped the \ONions]_{F4=C2}.
 Since I assume that also contrastive topics are topics, the basic information-structural analysis should remain the same as in (3) above.

Typically, nominal arguments are used in this manner, but also other referential items have been claimed to serve as aboutness topics:

- (6) a. DPs: [Peter]_{AT}, I like.
 b. VPs: [To have such a car]_{AT}, Eva had long wanted.
 c. CPs: [That he can't come]_{AT}, I don't understand.

Other constituents, however, are arguably not suitable aboutness topics due to their lack of reference⁴, e.g., sentence adverbials or expletives/non-referential subjects:

- (7) a. Maybe we will study history next semester.
 b. It is raining.

Discourse topics (DT) have been investigated mainly from a text-linguistic or discourse-theoretic perspective (see, e.g., Büring 1998). They are often labeled “text themes” (cf. Hundsnurscher 1994) due to their intersentential character. Discourse topics, thus, serve as themes for larger text chunks. Averintseva (2005) discusses one such topic type. She demonstrates that right dislocations in German cannot be used felicitously unless they serve as the starting point of a more or less extended text section:

- (8) a. Ich finde ihn dumm, [den Peter]_{DT}.
 I find him stupid the Peter
^{OK}Er hat immer so irre Ideen.
 he has always such insane ideas
 ‘I find Peter crazy. He always has such insane ideas.’
 b. Ich finde ihn dumm, [den Peter]_{DT}.
 I find him stupid the Peter
[#]Meine anderen Klassenkameraden sind Elmar, Gudrun, Hannes ...
 my other classmates are Elmar, Gudrun, Hannes
 ‘My other classmates are Elmar, Gudrun, Hannes, ...’

Only if *Peter* is resumed in the following passage the right dislocation is licit, which according to Averintseva (2005) is a valid test for their function as discourse topics.

The notion of *pre-topics*, finally, has been introduced by Endriss & Gärtner (2005) in their investigation of so-called “V2 relative clauses” in German. Since

⁴ Similarly, the status of truly non-specific indefinites is controversial since they do not really refer:

- (i) a. Anything goes.
 b. Whatever you want, I will give you.

they analyze these constructions as coordinative structures (cf. also Gärtner 2001), they define a pre-topic as some sort of anchor that links the second conjunct to the first one. The analysis of example (9a) in (9b) is a rough sketch of Gärtner's (2001) and Endriss & Gärtner's (2005) approach:

- (9) a. Apfeldorf hat viele Häuser, die stehen leer.
 Apfeldorf has many houses these stand empty
 'Apfeldorf has many houses that are abandoned.'
 b. Apfeldorf hat [viele Häuser]_{PT} (& die stehen leer).

Note that also the DP *Apfeldorf* must be considered an (aboutness) topic for the following proposition. Thus, it seems that there are two different topics in this sentence.

As for the concept of focus there have been ambitions to differentiate this category as well. Not only have foci been classified according to their scope (minimal, intermediate, maximal foci, cf. Rosengren 1993 and many others), but more recently, a necessary distinction between focus and contrast has been repeatedly argued for (Molnár 2002, Frey 2004b), the claim being that a contrast always involves some sort of exclusion of individuals from a given set, which is not necessarily true for a (narrow) focus.

Although information structure is closely tied to textual coherence, only few researchers have addressed concepts and strategies that include intersentential relationships. Note that all of the terms discussed thus far refer to single sentences as the limiting category. This circumstance is certainly due to the dominance of syntactic theories over information-structural investigations. Note, however, that some notions, such as thematic or given information, can only be analyzed if a proper co(n)text exists.

It is the purpose of this paper to argue for the relevance of yet another information-structural strategy that reflects the coherence of two sentences by means of presenting an item. I will call this strategy *presentation* (in line with Lambrecht 1988, Brandt 1990 and others). By the term *presentation* I mean that an item is introduced into the ongoing discourse and that subsequently this newly presented element is established in the discourse. I will call the introducing part *import* and the establishing part *process*. The necessity of this additional layer of information structure will be supported by the fact that the import-process dichotomy does not coincide with other informational dichotomies such as background-focus or topic-comment. In this context it will be shown that yet another important distinction has to be made, namely the one between *presentational* and *existential constructions* although the two notions have commonly been used interchangeably. As will be demonstrated, both the meaning of the items involved and the structures surrounding them differ considerably.

In section 2 the basic idea will be presented. In section 3 a survey over some relevant presentational constructions is given, which should corroborate the claim that presentation is reflected linguistically. In section 4 we will return to the theoretical framework and plead for the independence and importance of the presentational import-process layer.

The investigation mainly deals with English and German data.

2 The Basic Idea: Presentation as a Two-Step Strategy

It is often argued that the pragmatic function of existential sentences like (10) is to present or introduce an item into the ongoing discourse. Therefore they have been labeled “presentational” as well:

(10) There are mice in the church.

It is undoubtedly possible to introduce an (indefinite) phrase like *mice* into the context by means of a *there is/are*-construction in English. The reverse, however, is not necessarily true as the two different contexts for (10) in (10’a, 10’b) demonstrate:

- (10’) a. (As you can see from the trails on the floor,
 there are mice in the church.
 (They seem to thrive in cool, dark places like St. Matthew’s.)
- b. (Can you believe it?)
 There are mice in the church!
 (It’s disgusting! No wonder nobody is Christian any longer ...)

In (10’a), the information unit that denotes *mice* re-occurs in the following text passage as an anaphoric pronoun (*they*). Hence, it has been properly introduced as discourse participant. In (10’b), on the other hand, there is no such thematic progression, i.e., no resumption of the referent *mice*. Nevertheless, in both sentences we find so-called “existential” constructions (i.e., a *there are DP*-construction). As one easily can understand, only (10’a) can be described as a true presentational construction. For this reason, it seems imperative to keep the notions “existential” and “presentational” apart.

Presentation, thus, has to consist of at least two steps: first, an item is introduced into the context. As I aim to demonstrate in section 3, there are numerous morphosyntactic means to provide such an introduction. Second, the newly introduced item is being resumed and integrated into the discourse. Only if both conditions are met, an item can be said to be successfully presented. In the following, I will call the introducing part the *importing* (or short *import*, *I*) of an item. The second step will be called the *processing* of the item in the

discourse (or short *process*, *P*). The term *import* is meant to signal the destination of the item into the contextual flow, whereas the term *process* is chosen to indicate the transformation the information undergoes when being presented.

If one looks at the concept of processing an introduced item, one can notice that there are at least two ways in which an item is established. First, the imported item can be described according to its properties. This strategy can be iterative, i.e., several properties can be mentioned in the subsequent sentences:

- (11) There are [mice]_I in the church.
 [They seem to thrive in cool, dark places like St. Matthew's.]_{Pa}
 At any rate, [they have been living here for centuries.]_{Pb}

Another way of processing the presented element is to establish it as a new participant in the context. In this case, new elements might be presented within the process part so that the presentation becomes recursive:

- (12) There are [mice]_{I1} in the sanctuary St. Matthew's.
 [They are building [a nest]_{I2} there.]_{P1}
 [It hosts their off-spring.]_{P2}

Example (12) seems to be an instance of normal thematic progression (cf. Daneš 1974). However, although the imported items (*mice* and *a nest*) might correspond to rhemes in a standard theme-rheme analysis, a corresponding theme cannot be understood as identical to a process. As can be seen, the processes P_1 and P_2 in (12) are more complex, i.e., they contain propositions, whereas the themes (e.g., *they*, *it*) are single phrases. Thus, the concepts of theme-rheme and import-process need to be kept apart. I will return to this point in section 4.1.

On a closer look, it seems that a prototypical import involves an indefinite DP. However, it will be shown that also definite DPs can re-enter the context, for instance if the speaker wants to re-establish a participant that is assumed not to be salient or present in the hearer's consciousness at the point of the utterance. A typical case of such a re-presentation is what Lambrecht (1988) and Brandt (1990) call "continuative relative clauses:"

- (13) After many years, I finally met Peter Giles again, who immediately told me about Kevin Curby's death. (Apparently Kevin had died already in 1998.)

My suggestion would be that *Peter Giles* is re-imported into the context, whereas the extraposed relative clause represents its re-establishing/processing. Note that within the relative clause the DP *Kevin Curby* is re-imported as well

since this phrase is processed in the subsequent sentence. Thus, also representations can be used recursively.

As for the morphosyntactic make-up of the process part, it occurs that an independent sentence is not necessary to establish an imported item. In the examples (10'a, 11, 12), separate sentences were chosen, whereas in (13) a subordinate clause was sufficient to process the imported information. However, as will be clear in section 3, some “pragmatic balance” between the two clauses that convey a presentation seems to be essential (in the sense of Brandt 1990). One of the additional claims being made in this paper is that presentations always imply some sort of bisententiality.

In the following we will address specific formal means that can be used for presentational purposes.

3 Presentational Constructions

3.1 Indefinites

3.1.1 Single Indefinites

The simplest way to introduce a single element into the ongoing discourse in Germanic languages like English or German is marking the phrase in question as an indefinite DP:⁵

- (14) In London, I got to know [an interesting man]_I.
[His name was Dr. Frankenstein and he told me that he had created an artificial creature.]_P

In this prototypical scenario, the meaning of the imported item (*an interesting man*) could be described as existential, since the existence of this item is entailed, although not presupposed. The negation test shows this very clearly:

- (14') In London, I didn't get to know an interesting man.

Since (14') does not imply that there is an interesting man in London, the existence of such a man in (14) can only be entailed.⁶

⁵ Throughout this paper, only presented DPs (and marginally CPs) will be investigated with regard to their presentational features. Other morphological units such as AP, PPs, VPs, AdvPs, etc. are disregarded due to their different referential status.

⁶ The question is whether the existence might be asserted as well and whether there is a difference between these two notions with respect to examples like (14). It occurs that the (complex) verb *get to know* does not really *assert* the existence of the following DP. However, I will not address this rather intricate semantic-pragmatic issue.

The reading of *an interesting man* in (14), however, has to be described as specific as well since the speaker refers to a uniquely identifiable individual that can be specified in the following sentences, i.e., by the information expressed in the process part. Other examples demonstrate this specificity property as well. As we already saw in the example (10) above, stating the mere existence of the item to be imported is not enough to present it properly. Further specifications are needed. Consider again (10'b) in its surrounding context:

- (10')b. (Can you believe it?)
 There are mice in the church!
 (It's disgusting. No wonder nobody is Christian any longer ...)

Since no further elaboration on the entity *mice* is carried out, this DP can be described as being part of the verbally expressed state ('mice-being'), i.e., an undivided predicate unit. Non-specific indefinites typically occur as bare plural objects⁷ in VPs expressing processes or states:

- (15) (I have been washing cars all afternoon.)
 a. I am tired of it.
 b. ^(?)They have to be washed by tonight.

The specification test in (15b) shows that adding further information about the indefinite phrase *cars* is somewhat unexpected, since the mere activity is highlighted in the preceding sentence. In this case, the meaning of *cars* changes immediately, i.e., it must be understood as a specific DP, which by way of the second sentence is integrated in the discourse. Hence, it seems essential to any presentation that the presented phrase be specific.⁸

⁷ Singular objects in this function are possible, too, cf.:

(i) I smoked a cigarette. Then I went home.

However, there might be some further implication since the "internal" semantic structure of the event ought to be different from the one described in (15). I will not elaborate on this point.

⁸ There might be one exception from the specificity requirement. Note first that a non-specific reading as the one in (15) must not be confused with the generic reading. I understand "generic" here vaguely as "pertaining to the entire set of individuals with the same distinctive property." Such a generic reading is very well compatible with presentations in the sense suggested above, cf.:

(i) [Since we are talking about pets, let me say the following:]

[Snakes]_I are dangerous animals. [They shouldn't be allowed in houses.]_P

Also in (i) a new item (*snakes*) is established as a discourse participant and properly processed. As we will see in section 3.2., definites, too, can be (re-) presented. More generally speaking, it appears that a presented item must have a "strong" reading in the terminology of Diesing (1992). For the scope of this paper, I will adhere to specific DPs.

An important question in this context is whether such a specific reading is dependent on the choice of the verb. Lambrecht (1988), who discusses “presentational relative constructions” and “presentational amalgam constructions” (see below, 3.2.2.), only mentions examples containing *there is/are* or *have*. Apparently, more predicates can initiate specific readings and/or presentations, e.g., verbs of perception (16) or encounter (17):

- (16) a. I saw a man. He was blind.
 b. I heard a lovely song. It reminded me of the old days.
 c. She felt a strange tingle in her right hand. It started on her fingertips and spread all over her arm to her upper body.
- (17) a. In Munich, Max met a very busy priest. He hardly had the time to take Max’s confession.
 b. I ran into a young man the other day. He said he was a former student of mine.

Certainly, there are other verbal classes as well that allow for presentations. The question, then, is whether all these predicates have some sort of a common semantic feature. At this point, I doubt that this is the case, but I have to leave this question open. So far, a specific reading of an internal argument seems to be compatible with any predicate in a proper context.

On the other hand, it is not the case that any specific reading automatically triggers a presentation. For instance, in situations where the element pointed out is given in the surroundings of the utterance, a verbally explicit process part can be skipped. If one adheres to the rather strict definition given in section 2, no proper presentation takes place. Consider the following example, where two people in a discotheque look at a male person dancing in a very spastic way. The referent in question is denoted by the indefinite pronoun *somebody*:

- (18) Speaker A: Somebody forgot his valium this morning.
 Speaker B: No doubt.

Although there is no real process part, it could be claimed that *somebody* acts as a deictic indicator of a specific person in the room. The specificity of *somebody* becomes evident through the choice of the anaphoric possessive *his*. With non-specific DPs, on the other hand, like the one in (19), no such agreement can be observed. (19) describes a situation where a person finds a couple of valium tablets in an unexpected place. The matching possessive is *their*, since it is not clear whether it is one person (and in this case: whether this person is male or female) or several persons who forgot the tablets:

- (19) Look at that: Somebody forgot their valium this morning.

Thus, a specific reading can occur without processing the specific item, i.e., presenting it.

Let us turn now to the process part: In the examples discussed so far, an independent sentence is chosen to process the indefinite DP and establish it as a discourse participant. However, also a sentential coordination is acceptable:

(20) I met interesting people in London and they showed me the city.

Furthermore, a process part might be expressed by a relative clause. Lambrecht (1988) calls these constructions “continuative” or “presentational relative constructions”, depending on the matrix predicate:

(21) I met interesting people in London, who showed me the city.

(21) shows that the relative clause has a non-restrictive character and occurs in extraposition, i.e., after the locative adverbial *in London*. As for their counterparts in German, the label “weiterführende Relativsätze” has been used (cf. Brandt 1990, Reis 1997 and others). According to Brandt (1990) there has to be a balance between the matrix and the relative clause. At least on an information-structural level, the entire sentence ought to be considered displaying a coordinative rather than a subordinative structure. Brandt also makes a strong point about the independent focus-background structure of such relative clauses. We will return to a more thorough pragmatic analysis of these constructions in section 4.3.⁹

Note, however, that such a “balanced” account requires that presentations always involve some sort of bisententiality, i.e., that the process part has to be contained within a separate sentence. Apparently, in coordinative structures two syntactically independent sentences are present, each of which hosts one of the two presentational steps. The bisententiality requirement is also reflected by yet another strategy to process the imported item, namely the employment of parentheses. An example is given in (22):

(22) I met interesting people in London – they showed me the city –,
but I never made any real friends during my three months in the UK.

⁹ The syntactic difficulty of this approach is how to coordinate a subordinate and a matrix clause. This is especially problematic for German since there are two strongly diverging word orders for matrix clauses (V2) and dependent clauses (V-last). It has, however, been pointed out repeatedly that this combination is licit, at least in certain constructions, e.g., in conditional clauses (cf. Höhle 1989):

(i) Wenn du nach Hause kommst und der Gerichtsvollzieher steht vor der Tür, ...
if you to home come and the bailiff stands in-front the door
'If you come home and you meet the bailiff at the door ...'

If one regards non-integrated parentheses¹⁰ as a pragmatic strategy of last-minute modification, the speaker of (22) uses the string *they showed me the city* to alter the status of *interesting people* into a specific DP. Thus, the parenthesis has to be regarded as a sentence with an independent focus-background structure and, hence, meets the criteria to serve as a proper process part of a presentation.

3.1.2 “Indefinite Demonstratives”

It has been long known that English displays demonstratives in certain contexts that cannot be described as truly definite,¹¹ cf. the investigations by Prince (1981), Gundel, Hedberg, & Zacharski (1993), Endriss & Gärtner (2005), and others. These DPs have been named “indefinite demonstratives”. An example with context is given in (23):

- (23) Yesterday, I met this American woman.
(She was just breath-taking. We talked for hours. ...)

Endriss & Gärtner (2005) also present and discuss cases of German indefinite demonstratives:

- (24) a. Im Sommer gab es plötzlich diesen Moment, da klappte alles.¹²
in-the summer was there suddenly this moment then worked-out all
'In the summer there was suddenly this moment when everything
came together.'
- b. Da waren noch diese Studenten, [...]. Die haben ständig geschwätzt.
there were also these students they have permanently chattered
'There were also these students who chattered all the time.'

It appears that all these DPs are highly specific. By uttering indefinite demonstratives, the speaker clearly indicates that s/he has additional information about the denoted referents and that s/he wants to share this information.¹³ S/he does so in the subsequent sentence or clause.

I regard the morphological marking of a DP as an indefinite demonstrative as an unambiguous strategy by the speaker to initiate a presentation. The utterance of such a specific item without any form of textual progression – for instance,

¹⁰ For the difference between integrated and non-integrated parentheses see Reis (1996).

¹¹ Note that the notion of (in-) definiteness has been used both in a morphological and in a semantic sense (cf. Diesing 1992, Frey 2001). In this paper, I try to use these terms mainly as morphological categories.

¹² The example in (24a) involves a so-called “V2 relative clause”, which will be discussed at length in subsection 3.1.3.

¹³ Dekker (2004) talks about “referential intentions” with indefinite demonstratives.

discourse-finally – is illicit, as is the non-addressing of the DP in question. Regard, e.g., the following contexts for (23):

- (23') (What happened to you yesterday?)
- a. Yesterday, I met this American woman. # \emptyset
 - b. Yesterday, I met this American woman. # Then I went shopping.
 - c. Yesterday, I met this American woman. ^{OK} She was just breath-taking.

(23'a,b) are uttered felicitously only if *this woman* is understood as a regular demonstrative DP. The indefinite use of *this woman*, on the other hand, demands further specification of this entity, i.e., its processing in the sense suggested above. Therefore, the category of indefinite demonstratives must be considered the morphological encoding of an imported item and, hence, is strong evidence for the relevance of the category *presentation*.

3.1.3 “V2 Relative Clauses” in German

In German, relative clauses are always introduced by proper relative pronouns, which in many respects behave like *wh*-phrases. Being subordinate clauses, relative clauses display V-last at the surface. However, there is a clause type that lately has caught increased linguistic attention, since it contains a fronted pronoun that resembles the relative pronoun but still shows V2. V2, however, is a characteristic of independent matrix clauses in German, which makes these constructions somewhat irregular.¹⁴ Some examples are given in (26):

- (25) a. Es war einmal ein König, der hatte eine wunderschöne Tochter.
 there was once a king he had a wonderful daughter
 ‘Once upon a time there was a king who had a wonderful daughter.’
- b. Ich habe eine Frau getroffen, die konnte im Damensattel reiten.
 I have a woman met she could in-the side saddle ride
 ‘I met a woman who could ride side saddle.’
- c. Es gibt Ansichten, die möchte man am liebsten verbieten.
 there are opinions them would-like one the most forbid
 ‘There are opinions that preferably one would like to forbid.’

¹⁴ Embedded V2 occurs after certain (“bridge”) verbs, see (Haider 1993), Vikner (1995), Meinunger (2006) and many others. These clauses, however, do not need to be introduced by a pronoun, cf.:

- (i) Peter sagt, Maria gehe bald nach Hause.
 Peter says Maria goes soon to home
 ‘Peter says Mary will go home soon.’

In his investigation of V2 relative clauses, Gärtner (2001) mentions some necessary prerequisites for the grammaticality of such structures. First of all, the heads of these V2 relative clauses need to be indefinite or quantified.^{15 16} Second, the relative clauses obligatorily occur in extraposition, i.e., in the field after the right verbal sentence bracket. Hence, in some cases (like in 25'b) they must obligatorily be separated from their heads:

- (25') b. * Ich habe eine Frau, die konnte im Damensattel reiten, getroffen.
 I have a woman who could in-the side saddle ride met

(25'b) is only acceptable if the relative clause is understood as a parenthesis.

Finally, Gärtner (2001) mentions the following syntactic properties of these sentences, which make them unlike ordinary (restrictive) relative clauses in German: V2 relative clauses are neither subject to A'- (26) nor to A-movement (27). Also, V2 relative clauses do not display interclausal C-binding effects (28) nor do they admit variable binding (29):

- (26) a. Ich suche jemanden, den nennen sie Wolf-Jürgen. (Gärtner 2001:99ff.)
 I seek somebody him call they Wolf-Jürgen
 'I am looking for somebody who they call Wolf-Jürgen.'
 b. *Jemanden, den nennen sie Wolf-Jürgen, suche ich.
 c. Jemanden, den sie Wolf-Jürgen nennen, suche ich.
- (27) a. Ich höre, dass jemand der Königin vorgestellt wurde, der heißt W.-J.
 I hear that somebody the queen presented was he is-called W.-J.
 'I hear that somebody was introduced to the queen who is called W.-J.'
 b. * Ich höre, dass jemand, der heißt Wolf-Jürgen, der Königin vorgestellt wurde.
 c. Ich höre, dass jemand, der Wolf-Jürgen heißt, der Königin vorgestellt wurde.
- (28) a. * In Köln traf er_i Leute, die haben Hans_i nicht erkannt.
 in Cologne met he people they have Hans not recognized
 'In Cologne Hans met people that didn't recognize him.'
 b. ?? In Köln traf er_i Leute, die Hans_i nicht erkannt haben.

¹⁵ Consider, though, the examples (24) above and (39) below.

¹⁶ Thus the reading of quantified elements has to be "strong" in the sense of Diesing (1992), cf.:

- (i) Es gibt zwei Linguisten, die kann ich nicht ertragen.
 there are two linguists them can I not stand
 'There are two linguists I cannot stand.'

Frey (2001) calls such a reading "partitive", i.e., the sentence implies that a set of linguists is given from which the two unbearable are chosen.

demonstrate the purported parallel behavior of V2 relative clauses and restrictive relative clauses. One important test is that a V2 relative clause does not seem to trigger implicatures as do regular coordinations:¹⁷

- (32) a. Das Blatt hat eine Seite, die ist ganz schwarz (= Gärtner 2001:112)
 the sheet has a page it is completely black
 ‘The sheet has a page that is completely black.’
 b. [#]Das Blatt hat eine Seite und die ist ganz schwarz.

According to Gärtner, the reading (32b) implicatures that the sheet has only one page which is incompatible with world-knowledge (hence [#]). On the other hand, (32a), which in his theory is some sort of an amalgam of a coordination and a relative subordination, arguably does not trigger such a reading but rather the appropriate one “one page of the sheet is completely black”.

Gärtner’s main problem, however, is that he cannot explain why the heads of V2 relative clauses cannot be marked as definite phrases. As a solution, he refers to the semantic-pragmatic approach by Heim (1988): The V2 structure of these clauses renders an assertive rather than a presuppositional interpretation. On the other hand, definite DPs containing restrictive relative clauses rather presuppose than assert the proposition embedded in the relative clause. Thus, according to Gärtner, the unacceptability of these constructions can be accounted for by referring to semantic-pragmatic incompatibilities.

Endriss & Gärtner (2005) basically agree with Gärtner’s assumptions regarding the coordinative character of constructions involving V2 relative clauses and the incompatibility of V2 relative clauses with presuppositionality. Furthermore, Endriss & Gärtner (2005) claim that the head of a V2 relative clause is some sort of a topic (“Prä-Topik”, “pre-topic”) which requires a subsequent comment in the shape of a V2 clause, i.e., the V2 relative clause. Den Dikken (2005), investigating V2 relative clauses in Dutch, reaches a similar conclusion.¹⁸

¹⁷ Another (morphological) test shows that it is possible to *one*-replace a V2 relative clause in conjunction. This is also possible with regular relative clauses (cf. Gärtner 2001:111):

(i) Hans kennt einen Philosophen, der mag Achternbusch, und Maria kennt auch einen.
 Hans knows a philosopher he likes Achternbusch and Maria knows also one
 ‘Hans knows a philosopher who likes Achternbusch, and Maria knows one, too.’

¹⁸ As to the syntactic form of these constructions, however, den Dikken (2005: 702) takes a somewhat different stand than Gärtner (2001) and Endriss & Gärtner (2005). He suggests that the matrix clause of these constructions moves to the specifier position of a topic phrase (TopP). The V2 relative clause on the other hand serves as the complement of the empty topic head Top⁰. According to den Dikken (2005), this is the designated comment position, cf. (den Dikken 2005:701):

(i) a. Er waren twee jongens op het strand die hadden geen zwembroek aan.
 there were two boys on the beach they had no swimsuit on

Although I agree with Gärtner (2001) in that V2 relative clauses should not be considered relative clauses in the canonical sense¹⁹ and that these constructions involve some form of coordination, the introduction of a “relative conjunction” π°_{REL} is rather problematic. To my knowledge, there is no independent evidence for such a coordinating element. The fact that coordinative conjunctions with more or less specified meanings exist (*aber* ‘but’, *denn* ‘because’, etc.) does not provide sufficient motivation for an empty conjunction with a “relative” meaning.²⁰ Moreover, the stipulation of such an element does not solve one of Gärtner’s main problems, i.e., the impossibility of definite “heads” for V2 relative clauses.

Lambrecht (1988) and Brandt (1990:49) suggest that V2 relative clauses need to be analyzed as presentational constructions since they introduce a new element into the discourse. I would like to adopt this view and claim that V2 are used to import the head of the V2 relative clause within the matrix clause and to process it by way of the following V2 relative clause. Moreover, since I will make a distinction between (aboutness) topics and imports, I will not assume den Dikken’s (2005), and Endriss & Gärtner’s (2005) pragmatic analyses of these structures as (pre-)topic-comment structures.

Given the assumption that imports carry a specificity feature which requires further specification, the “relative nature” (cf. Gärtner 2001:122) of the V2 relative clause constructions follows naturally: The imported item is looking for an additional specification and finds it in the extraposed V2 clause. The “restrictiveness effect”, then, is a mere epiphenomenon, since further descriptions of indefinite, but specific DPs can only be interpreted in that way. Thus, if one assumes that the DP *eine Seite* in (34b) is interpreted as specific – some lexical material such as *gewiss* or *bestimmt* (‘certain’) or *besonders* (‘particular’) might be helpful for this purpose –, an overt coordinative conjunction is fine.²¹

‘There were two boys at the beach that had no swimsuits on.’

- b. [_{TOPP} [_{S1} Er waren twee jongens op het strand] [_{TOPP}’ \emptyset [_{S2} die hadden geen zwembroek aan]]].

Apart from the fact that a syntactic topic phrase lacks independent evidence in Dutch, the interpretation of such a structure – if possible at all – would not be the appropriate one, i.e., the whole clause *er waren twee jongens op het strand* cannot be the topic of the whole sentence since the obvious comment part corresponds only to the DP *twee jongens* and not the whole proposition in which it is embedded.

¹⁹ Nevertheless, I will adhere to the term “V2 relative clauses” throughout the remainder of the paper.

²⁰ Gärtner (2001:106) entertains, though, the possibility of other semantically flavored empty conjunctions (e.g., “ $\pi^{\circ}_{\text{CONCESS}}$ ”), however without arguing for their existence.

²¹ In German the indefinite article and the numeral for 1 are identical (*ein*). English makes a clear distinction between these two items (*a* vs. *one*). Thus the sentence is bound to trigger

- (32') b. ^{OK} Das Blatt hat eine (bestimmte) Seite, und die ist ganz schwarz.
 the sheet has a certain page and this is completely black
 'The sheet has a (certain) page and this page is completely black.'

Note, too, that the meaning of *haben* in this version is rather 'to display' than 'to have' or 'to consist of.' This reading is highly compatible with a presentation. Therefore, an implicature that the sheet has only one page is not triggered in this case.

One further argument for the suggestion that constructions containing V2 relative clauses need to be regarded as presentational constructions is provided by Endriss & Gärtner (2005) themselves. They note that the few instances of indefinite demonstratives in German allow for these structures. Reconsider example (24a) again, here repeated for the sake of convenience:

- (24) a. Im Sommer gab es plötzlich diesen Moment, da klappte alles.
 in-the summer was there suddenly this moment then worked-out all
 'In the summer there was suddenly this moment when everything came together.'

Diesen Moment must be regarded as highly specific. It requires further specification, which is delivered in the following V2 relative clause.²²

two readings, one of which is bad. The bad reading can be said to be the result of a semantic incompatibility (*Seite* and *I*), and not of a illicit pragmatic implicature.

²² Note that Endriss & Gärtner (2005) discuss some cases where V2 relative clauses are not compatible with "indefinite demonstratives" such as (i):

- (i) A: Und was ist noch in der Vorlesung passiert?

and what is also in the lecture happened

'And what else happened during the lecture?'

- B: *Tja, da waren noch diese Studenten, die saßen ganz links.

well there were also these students they sat completely left

Endriss & Gärtner try to explain the ungrammaticality of the V2 relative clause *die saßen ganz links* by referring to their non-presuppositional status ("proto-assertions"). This might be correct. However, it seems to me that the answer given by speaker B is semantically incongruous with the question asked by speaker A. Note that a verb like *passieren* ('to happen') only agrees with activity or process verbs, and not with stative verbs such as *sitzen* ('to sit'). Thus, a sentence like (ii), where the proposition has been replaced by the activity verb *schwätzen* ('chatter') is perfectly fine in this context:

- (ii) A: Und was ist noch in der Vorlesung passiert?

B: ^{OK}Tja, da waren noch diese Studenten, die haben ständig geschwätzt.

well there were also these students they have permanently chattered

'Well, there were also these students who chattered all the time.'

On the other hand, if one chooses a different verb within the question part, the answer in (i) is acceptable:

As for the morphosyntactic structure, it is noteworthy that the weak demonstratives used in German V2 relative clauses correspond to those used in German left dislocations, cf.:

- (33) a. Diese Seite, die ist ganz schwarz.
 this page it is completely black
 ‘This page is completely black.’
 b. In diesem Moment, da klappte alles.
 in this moment then worked-out everything
 ‘In this moment, everything worked out.’
 c. In diesem Land, da kostet das Bier ein Vermögen.
 in this country there costs the beer a fortune.
 ‘In this country, beer costs a fortune.’

Therefore I would like to suggest that V2 relative clauses are remnants of coordinated left dislocations with a definite or demonstrative head, according to the rough sketch in (32’):

- (32’) Das Blatt hat eine (besondere) Seite ~~und diese Seite~~, die ist schwarz.
 the sheet has one certain page and this page it is black.

On PF, the string *und diese Seite* can be deleted due to the highly specific and salient status of the constituent *Seite*. Thus, there is no need for a new conjunction π that is hard to argue for in the first place.

3.1.4 “Syntactic Amalgams” in English

Lambrecht (1988) evaluates investigations by Lakoff (1974) and Fillmore (1985), who address a construction type in English, in which one constituent appears to be used simultaneously in two clauses. This type has traditionally been called “syntactic amalgams” (for Scandinavian counterparts see Engdahl 1997).²³ Some examples are given in (34):

-
- (iii) A: Und was ist dir in der Vorlesung aufgefallen?
 and what is to-you in the lecture stuck-out
 ‘And what else did you notice throughout the lecture?’
 B: Tja, da waren noch diese Studenten, die saßen ganz links.
 well there were also these students they sat completely left
 Well there were also these students who were sitting far to the left.”
 Das ist eigentlich nicht erlaubt.
 that is actually not allowed
 ‘That is actually not allowed.’

²³ Engdahl (1997) uses the label “contact clauses” for this type of construction. They can be found in Scandinavian languages and dialects:

- (34) a. There's a lot of people don't know that. (= Lambrecht 1988:319)
 b. I have a friend in the Bay Area is a painter.

The first impression that comes to mind when reading these sentences is that they involve truncated relative clauses, i.e., relative clauses whose relative pronoun or relative complementizer have been phonetically deleted:

- (34') a. There's a lot of people ~~who/that~~ don't know that.
 b. I have a friend in the Bay Area ~~who/that~~ is a painter.

Note that in all these examples it is the subject that has been deleted in the relative clause. With objects, the phonological deletion is not only possible but sometimes even required:²⁴

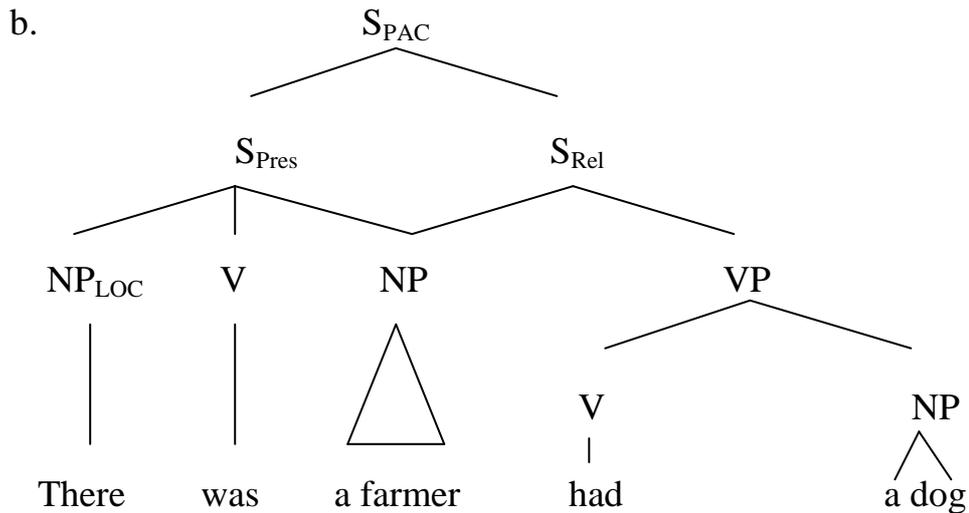
- (35) a. There's a lot of people (who/that) I don't know.
 b. I have a friend in the bay area (who/that) I haven't visited for years.

Lambrecht (1988:335) reaches the conclusion that the amalgam character of these sentences has to be captured syntactically as follows:

- (36) a. There was a farmer had a dog. (= Lambrecht 1988:335)

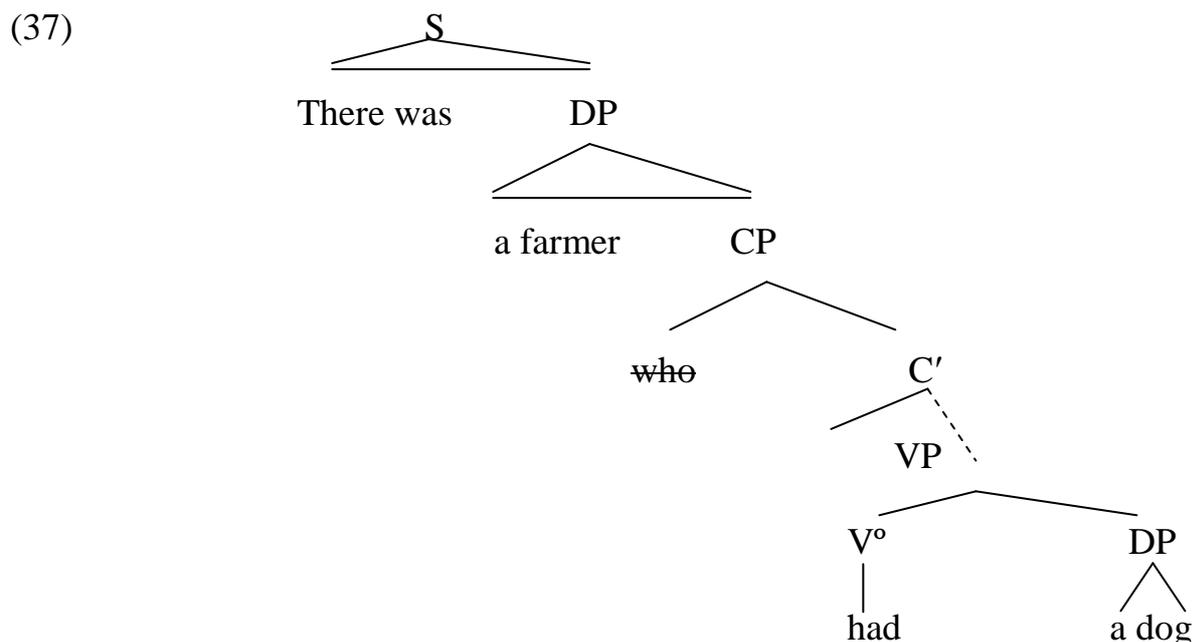
-
- (i) a. Der er et tog går klokken seks. (Spoken Danish) (= Engdahl 1997:61)
 there is a train goes six
 'There is a train leaving at six o'clock.'
 b. Jeg har to døtre bor i København. (North Sealandish)
 I have two daughters live in Copenhagen.
 'I have to daughters who live in Copenhagen.'

²⁴ One of the most convincing theoretical explanations of these facts is given by Platzack (1998), who argues for a subject position within the C-domain. Once the C-domain is visible (i.e., phonetically filled) at Spell Out by virtue of the overt subject there is no need for a complementizer or any other C-element any more.



In accordance with Lakoff (1974), Lambrecht calls such structures “presentational,” which makes sense since an (indefinite) item is introduced as a new discourse participant by way of an existential clause or as the object of *have*. In a second step, i.e., in the relative clause (S_{REL}), this item is established by being processed. The morphosyntactic strategy of amalgamating two sentences into one is very interesting, particularly since it underlines the fact that the import part and the process part belong tightly together.

However, I concur with Engdahl (1997) in that these clauses must contain a phonologically deleted relative complementizer/pronoun, i.e., the amalgam structure emerges first at PF and is not the product of a syntactic derivation. At a minimum, a structure like (36b) would violate the theta-criterion and should thus render ungrammaticality. The PF analysis, on the other hand, is fairly plausible since it relieves from the burden of modifying standard theoretical assumptions. Thus, a more adequate tree structure would be (37):



The deletion of the relative pronoun might be motivated by the very presentational character of the construction, comparably to the one found in V2 relative clauses in German (see above, 3.1.3.).

3.2 Definites

3.2.1 Simple Definites

Presenting an item by means of import and process can take place in at least two different ways: Either a completely new element is introduced into the ongoing context or an element is presented that the speaker assumes to be known by the hearer, although it might not be as salient as other given elements at the time of the utterance. In this case, the speaker can choose a re-import strategy. Note that a re-imported item needs to be processed in a proper way, too. Some examples of these re-presentations are given in (38).

- (38) a. After a month I met [the Indian grocer]_I again. [He seemed to be ten years older.]_P
 b. I often think of [my foster daughter]_I. [She must be grown up by now.]_P
 c. All of a sudden, [Peter Miller]_I, – [he seemed very upset]_P – entered the room. We had to interrupt our meeting.

In Germanic languages, the morphological marking of given (noun) phrases is usually achieved by using the definite article (38a), another definite determiner (as e.g., the possessive in 38b), or inherently definite expressions such as proper names (38c). In the prototypical case, the definite article also indicates the specificity of the definite DP. Thus, a definite DP is compatible with the specificity requirement for imports, as stated above. As for the morphosyntactic make-up of the process part with definite imports, they basically follow the same pattern as indefinites, i.e., we find two-sentence structures (38a), continuative relative clauses (38b), and parentheses (38c).

Note that – pace Gärtner (2001) and Endriss & Gärtner (2005) – I find an asyndetic string of two V2 clauses with a definite import (= constructions containing V2 relative clauses with a definite head) not generally bad, cf.:

- (39) (Was hast du gesehen?)
 what have you seen
 ‘What did you see?’
 a. Ins Zimmer kam ein Mann, der war total \AUFgeregt.
 into-the room came a man he was totally upset
 ‘A man entered the room who was totally upset.’

- b. ^(?)Ins Zimmer kam Peter, (und) der war total \AUFgeregt.
 into-the room came Peter and he was totally upset
 ‘Peter entered the room and he was totally upset.’

The parallelism between (39a) and (39b) is rather striking. Note that sentence (39b) is not purely a punctuational variation of two sentences that actually are independent of each other and therefore should display separate focus-background structures. I agree with Gärtner (2001) in that sentences such as (39) can be all-focus. In this case, only the so-called “focus exponent” receives a falling accent (\AUFgeregt). Thus, the ban on mono-focal V2 strings must be revisited.

3.2.2 *Appositive and Continuative Relative Clauses*

Lambrecht (1988) and Brandt (1990) distinguish between restrictive, non-restrictive/appositive and continuative relative clauses. Lambrecht (1988) makes yet another distinction between continuative and presentational relative clauses. The latter ones are restricted to presentational constructions such as certain existential constructions or presentational amalgam constructions (see above, 3.1.4.), but belongs to the group of continuative relative clauses. Examples for the different types of relative clauses are given in (40):

- (40) a. restrictive relative clauses: (= Lambrecht 1988:323ff.)
 The cockroach who lived in the paper bag was very arrogant.
 b. appositive relative clauses:
 The cockroach, who was very arrogant, was hated by all the neighbors.
 c. continuative relative clauses:
 The cockroach gave a breadcrumb to his wife, who promptly ate it.
 d. presentational relative clauses:
 There was an old cockroach who lived in a greasy paper bag.

As for the semantic and pragmatic behavior of these constructions, Lambrecht (1988) and Brandt (1990) notice that restrictive relative clauses presuppose the information of the embedded proposition. Furthermore, restrictive relative clauses are integrated in the focus-background structure of the matrix clause (41a). According to Brandt (1990), this is one of the major differences between restrictive and appositive relative clauses: Appositive relative clauses are generally held to have a focus-background structures of their own, which can be reflected by two separates accents (41b), cf.:

- (41) a. The cockroach who lived in the paper bag was very \Arrogant.
 b. The cockroach, who lived in the \PAper bag, was very \ARrogant.

There are some morphosyntactic tests that show the distinction between these two types: The first is the *one*-replacement test, which works for restrictive, but not for appositive relative clauses (42; cf. also Lambrecht 1988, Gärtner 2001), and the insertion of appositeness markers such as *by the way*, *on the other hand* or modal particles, which is possible in appositive, but not in restrictive relative clauses (43):

- (42) a. restrictive relative clause:
The one who lived in the paper bag was very \ARrogant.
b. appositive relative clause:
* The one, who lived in the \PAper bag, was very \ARrogant.
- (43) a. restrictive relative clause:
The one who (*by the way / on the other hand) lived in the paper bag was very \ARrogant.
b. appositive relative clause:
The one, who (by the way / on the other hand) lived in the \PAper bag, was very \ARrogant.

According to Brandt (1990), not only appositive, but also continuative relative clauses display focus-background structures of their own. Brandt further claims that these relative clauses are pragmatically independent from their matrices. Note that the head of such relatives clause can be a DP, VP, PP, or even a sentential category (IP/CP):

- (44) a. DP: I met Peter again, who instantly started to talk about Paul's accident.
b. VP: I like to cook, which I pursue in my spare time.
c. PP: I arrived in Rome, where I later should meet my future boyfriend.
d. IP/CP: I forgave her, which I wouldn't have done under different circumstances.

Lambrecht (1988:325) argues for the similarity of the continuative and presentational constructions (e.g., the syntactic amalgams discussed in 3.1.4.) and shows an important difference between the restrictive and the continuative/presentational use of relative clauses: Within a coordination of continuative relative clauses, a resumptive pronoun in the second conjunct is possible, but not with coordinated restrictive relative clauses:

- (45) a. restrictive relative clause: (= Lambrecht 1988:326)
I told you the story about the cockroach who lived in a paper bag and who/*he was very poor.

b. continuative relative clause:

I met the old cockroach again, who now lived in a paper bag
and who/^{OK}he was very poor.

In a semantic-pragmatic respect the attributive relative clause presupposes and the continuative/ presentational asserts the embedded proposition. Lambrecht (1988) and Brandt (1990) notice that the continuative relative clause type forms a comment to a topic within the matrix clause, i.e., the head of the relative clause or the entire first clause. In this view, the whole sentence structure has to be analyzed as a coordinative rather than a subordinative structure.

The division between restrictive and appositive relative clauses is legitimate as is the division between restrictive and continuative relative clauses. However, as will be shown in the upcoming section, the anchor of a continuative relative clause cannot be regarded as a topic in the strict sense but rather as an import within a presentational strategy. The continuative relative clause, then, forms the process part for the presented item. The notions of topic and import need to be kept apart, mainly because topic is an intrasentential category, whereas import refers to intersentential relations (see 4.2.).

The taxonomy presented in Lambrecht (1988) and Brandt (1990) is also problematic from another perspective: It appears that there is no clear semantic and/or syntactic distinction between the appositive and the continuative relative clause type, but merely a topological one. Thus they could be of the same basic type: Both seem to display independent focus-background structures and both can be used as process parts with respect to the strategy of (re-) presentation. The only remaining difference is that continuative relative clauses obligatorily occur in extraposition whereas appositive relative clauses are free to be placed right-adjacent to their heads, cf.:

(46) a. continuative relative clause:

I invited [Max]_I to my birthday party [, who immediately started
talking about Paul's accident]_P.

b. appositive relative clause:

I invited [Max]_I, [who immediately started talking about Paul's
accident,]_P to my birthday party.

Lambrecht's coordination test shows that the relative pronoun within appositive relative clause can be replaced by a resumptive personal pronoun in the second conjunct, too:

(47) I invited [Max]_I, [who immediately started talking about Paul's
accident and who/^{OK}he doesn't seem to be too sympathetic with him,]_P
to my birthday party.

Finally, both continuative and appositive relative clauses equally assert rather than presuppose the embedded proposition and they also have both a parenthetical flavor to them.²⁵

So far, continuative and appositive relative clauses seem to display the same formal and interpretative properties and there is no need to keep them as separate categories.²⁶ Maybe there are some divergences on a textual level, but I will have to leave this question to further research.

4 Back to Theory: The Relevance of Import-Process

The definition of presentation provided in the beginning of section 2 stated that presentation is a two-step measure, in which an item is (re-) introduced in the context and established in a second sentence. What has been called “import” throughout this paper is a category that seems comparable to the one of aboutness topic. Both den Dikken (2005) and Endriss & Gärtner (2005) argue that the presented material should be considered some sort of (pre-) topic as well. Also, the imported entity is arguably not quite as salient to the hearer as truly given information. Thus, one could assume that imported items necessarily need to be new information, even though they might be definite. Finally, it seems that an import must be part of the focus domain of the sentence in which it occurs, whereas the process part does not necessarily have to meet this requirement.

The aim of this section is to address the theoretical justification of the introduced layer of presentation. In particular, I will show that the dichotomies of topic-comment, theme-rheme, and background-focus must be distinguished from the layer import-process.

We will start with the comparison of theme-rheme and import-process.

4.1 Import-Process vs. Theme-Rheme

In section 2 it was argued that a presentation can involve both indefinite and definite DPs. The prototypical case might be an indefinite and non-given, i.e., rhematic element, but also thematic elements occur:

(48) Yesterday, I met [an/the old man]_I. [He was very angry.]_P

²⁵ There might, however, be a difference between the continuative/appositive and the presentational type. It could be claimed that a sentence like (40d) above displays one single focus-background structure, i.e., that the relative clause is integrated in the focus domain of the matrix clause. See also 4.3. below.

²⁶ This is mainly problematic for Lambrecht (1988), who offers strongly diverging syntactic analyses for appositive and continuative relative clause constructions.

The claim made above was that in both cases the imported DP was specific. The purpose of the specification is to establish the introduced DP as a new discourse participant. Apparently, the term “introduction of an item into an ongoing discourse” implies some sort of newness. However, as (48) shows, the category “import” does not have to contain (completely) new information which the speaker assumes not to be present in the hearer’s mind at all.

There have been various attempts to differentiate thematic and rhematic material (amongst others Gundel, Hedberg, & Zacharski 1993, Birner 1994). For our purposes, a two layer model of (non-) givenness might suffice. Thus, one could argue that indefinite imports are all-new, whereas definite imports are given, but not activated (in the sense of Gundel, Hedberg, & Zacharski 1993). The following table shows the difference:

(49)

	Given	Non-given
Activated	A	B
Non-activated	C	D

Given and activated material (A) can be considered truly thematic, whereas non-given and non-activated material (D) is truly rhematic. In this sense, D can be understood as the category of indefinite imports. Given, but non-activated material (C) is information that has been mentioned previously but cannot be assumed to be completely salient in the hearer’s mind at the very point of the discourse. Therefore, it needs to be re-introduced. Definite imports ought to belong to this category. The residual category “non-given, but activated” (B), might be information that is not evident from the context, but from the cotext, i.e., from the circumstances that surround the speech situation, but have not been verbally expressed.

As for the process part, I suggest that the information involved has to be non-given. Although it might contain some elements previously mentioned,²⁷ the entireness of the proposition must be new. Otherwise it would be irrelevant in the sense of Grice (1975). The very notion of focus by definition demands some form of newness.

²⁷ As Molnár (1993) shows, focal material can consist of purely given material:

(i) Speaker A: Apologize to Sandra. You insulted her!

Speaker B: No, [SHE insulted ME.]_F

None of the lexical material in the B-part is new (or “non-activated”), not even the verb *insult*. Still, the semantic roles and thus the perspective of the elements involved are different. Therefore, the utterance becomes relevant.

4.2 Import-Process vs. Topic-Comment

The category “import” shares some interesting common properties with the one of (aboutness) topics. Therefore, it does not surprise that Brandt (1990), den Dikken (2005), Endriss & Gärtner (2005) label a presented item a “(pre-) topic.” However, it is essential that these two notions be kept apart.

Note first that both concepts can involve the establishing of an anchor of the ensuing pragmatic predication, i.e., the comment or the process part. Hence, in both cases we find a touch of aboutness. A phonological reflex of this aboutness character is that both imports and topics can receive distinct raising accents (= “topic accents”, cf. Uhmann 1991), whereas the comment or process section is assigned a corresponding falling accent (“focus accent”; *ibid.*). This is at least true for certain constructions in German, cf.:

- (50) a. [/*Peter*]_T [*fuhr* *gestern* *nach* *Mal\LORca*]_C
 Peter went yesterday to Mallorca
 ‘Yesterday, Peter went to Mallorca.’
- b. In meiner Stadt stehen [*HÄUser*]_I, [*die* *sind* *völlig* *\BAUfällig*]_P
 in my town stand houses they are completely ramshackle
 ‘In my town there are houses that are totally ramshackle.’

However, there are a row of differences between imports and topics. According to the definition given in section 2, a presentation necessarily has to be a two-step strategy, i.e., import and process are relational concepts. In other words: If there is no import, there can be no process and vice versa. Processing means that an item that has been introduced is established in the discourse. If there is no such item, there is no need for a process. If there is no process for an item that has been imported, the utterance is infelicitous (see, e.g., the examples in 23 above).

Some researchers have claimed the same for the topics, i.e., that there cannot be a topic without a comment and vice versa (e.g., Ulrich 1985). The general understanding, however, is that a comment is an obligatory part of each utterance, whereas the division into topic and comment is optional. Indeed, sentences without topics have been discussed intensely throughout the last years. One specific topicless type are so-called “thetic” sentences (cf. Sasse 1987, Rosengren 1996), in which an event is presented as a non-split atomic entity:

- (51) a. (What’s the matter?) My father just died.
 b. (Why are screaming?) My house is on fire.
 c. (What did you find out?) There are featherless swans in Macedonia.

Note that all of these examples are also all-focus since the embedded proposition is conceived as entirely new and presented as highlighted or relevant

information.²⁸ These sentences, however, lack a topic. Regarding presentations, a relational definition seems inevitable: There can be no presentations that lack an import or a process part. Both elements are equally essential due to the very intersentential character of presentations.

A second, more important observation is the fact that the categories import/topic and comment/process normally do not overlap. Note again the case ofthetic sentences like those in (51): Although these are all-comment and all-focus – the introducing questions evoke such a reading –, they still might present a new element, which in a second phase could be processed. For instance, Gärtner (2001) describes some German V2 relative clause constructions such as (52) as “informational units”, i.e., all-focus structures. In the theory presented in this paper, these sentences have been taken to be true presentational constructions:

- (52) Es gibt natürlich Philosophen, die kommen aus Grönland.
 there are of-course philosophers they come from Greenland.
 ‘Of course, there are philosophers who come from Greenland.’

In section 3.1.1., it was argued that existential sentences can be used for presentational purposes if the meaning of the introduced DP is specific. However, existentials seem to lack a topic since topics should occur as far to the left as possible, preferably within the C-domain (Molnár 1991, Platzack 1996, Rizzi 1997, Frey 2004a and many others). The expletive *es* in (52) is not capable of serving as a proper topic due to its lack of reference. Likewise, the indefinite DP *Philosophen* cannot be regarded a topic either since it occurs in the object position (presumably within VP).²⁹ Thus, the sentence must be analyzed as topicless.

Nevertheless, a presentation is initiated in (52). The information structure of (52) could be roughly sketched as follows:

- (52’) [Es gibt [Philosophen]_I, [die kommen aus Grönland.]]_PC

Thus, a import-process structure is possible within an all-comment sentence.

Next, consider cases in which there are overt aboutness topics, while at the same time a new element is introduced and established:

²⁸ Note, again, that there might still be some given elements within the focal propositions, e.g., *my father* in (51a) or *my house* in (51b). See the preceding footnote.

²⁹ Frey (2004a) claims that the sentence topic position (in German) must be right below C°, but above the position of sentence adverbials. The imported item *Philosophen* in (52) occurs lower than CP and lower than the purported topic position since it is placed after the sentence adverbial *natürlich* (‘naturally’).

- (53) (Speaking of Paul, I have to tell you this:)
 In 1996, Paul met this woman. She totally bewitched him.
 (Later he even married her)

It was suggested in 3.1.2. that indefinite demonstratives such as *this woman* in (53) obligatorily require the presentation of the denoted element. Hence, a sentence without a process part would be infelicitous (see 23'). However, in (53) there is not only a proper aboutness topic in the sentence (*Paul*), but also a frame topic (*in 1996*). It has been suggested that there might be several topics within one sentence (see e.g., Rizzi 1997) and they arguably must all appear within designated functional projections in the C-domain. A DP in an object position such as *this woman* can hardly be argued to occupy such a projection. Therefore, the imported item *this woman* cannot be a topic. I suggest the following information structure for (53):

- (53') [In 1996]_{FT} [Paul]_{AT1} [met [this woman]_I]_{C1} [[She]_{AT2} [totally bewitched him.]_{C2}]_P

Note, too, that even a process itself can be divided into a topic-comment structure (AT₂ – C₂). This data provide strong evidence that the layers import-process and topic-comment must be kept apart.

If one agrees with Gärtner (2001) in the assumption that sentences like (52) must be considered coordinative rather than relative constructions, there is yet another interesting fact that corroborates the necessity of distinguishing between these two layers of information structure. Topic and comment are notions that are tied to one single sentence. Import and process, on the other hand, pertain to more or less independent sentences. Thus, the dichotomy import-process is rather text-linguistic in its nature whereas topic-comment mainly applies on an intrasentential level.

Summing up: It seems necessary to make a clear distinction between the layer of topic-comment and the layer of import-process. Despite some intuitive similarities between these categories, there is an array of crucial differences as well. The most important fact is certainly that the two dichotomies can occur simultaneously in different positions of the same sentence(s). More generally speaking, it appears that topics must be realized in the beginning of a sentence whereas imports tend to occur sentence-finally.³⁰ Also, topic and comment are

³⁰ One question that I have to leave to further research is whether imports could ever occur in the topic position and whether the categories of topic and import could coincide. It is relatively easy to construct examples with an imported item in the first position, cf. the following V2 relative clause construction with a fronted head:

- (i) Sachen gibt's, die gibt's gar nicht (= Gärtner 2001:97)
 things are-there they are-there at all not

intrasentential categories, while import and process refer to intersentential relations. In order to avoid terminological confusion, I believe it is beneficial to dispense with the notion “pre-topic” (Endriss & Gärtner 2005) and to adhere to the new term “import” instead.

4.3 Import-Process vs. Background-Focus

If there are intuitive parallels between the dimension of topic-comment and the dimension of import-process, things become slightly more complicated when it comes to the comparison of the layers import-process and background-focus.

Note first that in the prototypical case an imported item seems to belong to the focus domain of the sentence in which it occurs. The process part, on the other hand, seems to be contained in a second sentence with an independent focus-background structure, cf. the focal structure of (53):

(53'') [Paul]_{B1} [met [this woman]_I]_{F1}. [[She]_{B2} [totally bewitched him.]_{F2}]_P

This fact alone is evidence enough to keep the dichotomies background-focus and import-process separated because they refer to different informational domains.

But there are more arguments for such a distinction: It is interesting to notice that some of the V2 relative clause constructions discussed in 3.1.3. can be uttered as single-focus structures, especially those that Lambrecht (1988) labeled “presentational relative clauses” (cf. ex. 40d above). A German example for such a construction would be (52), which we have already discussed above. The background-focus analysis of (52) is given in (52'):

(52') [Es gibt natürlich [Philosophen]_I, [die kommen aus Grönland.]_P]_F

Given the assumption that this structure involves the coordination of two syntactically independent V2 clauses we find that the maximum focus domain includes both clauses. However, within this single focus domain a presentation, i.e., a division into an import and a process part, can take place.

‘There are things that are just unbelievable.’

Likewise, one might argue that the specific subject DP *some people* in (ii) seems to be processed by the following sentence and hence properly presented:

- (ii) Some people can't just be helped. They want to make careers,
but they don't want to work.

Note, though, that even if one allows for a description of the fronted DPs in (i) and (ii) as topics and imports in one, the corresponding comments and processes differ from each other (intra- vs. intersentential realizations, see above).

Thus, the categories of import and process can be found within one or two focus-background structures, which, in turn, demonstrates the importance of assuming separate information-structural levels.

5 Conclusion

The theoretical claim put forward in this paper has been that an independent, intersentential layer of information structure must be assumed in order to capture the idea of introducing an item into the ongoing context. Thus, *presentation* was defined as a method of (i) mentioning the new or inactive discourse participant (*import*) and (ii) delivering enough additional specification to establish it as a constituent in the context (*process*). Not only were there a row of morphosyntactic patterns that confirmed the necessity of such an information-structural layer, but also theoretical considerations made the distinction of this layer from the traditional ones (*theme-rheme*, *topic-comment*, *background-focus*) inevitable. It was first and foremost due to the fact that import and process parts could be found independently from the other categories that their relevance became evident.

As a summary I would like to offer the following extended version of Molnár's (1991, 1993) model of information structure. Since I assume that presentation involves textual progression (i.e., intersententiality), I will call this layer *context*:

(54)

	Sentence 1	Sentence 2 +
(Sentential) Message	Topic – Comment	
Hearer	Theme – Rheme	
Speaker	Background – Focus	
Context	Import –	Process

Further differentiations might be necessary. These differentiations, as well as a more thorough investigation of the four layers' complex interdependencies, will hopefully be provided by future research.

6 References

- Arregi, K. 2002. *Focus on Basque movements*. Doctoral Dissertation. Cambridge, MA: MIT.
- Averintseva, M. 2005. German right dislocation and discourse topic. Paper given at *Sinn und Bedeutung 10*. October 2005.

- Birner, B. 1994. Information status and word order. An analysis of English inversion. *Language* 70, 233-259.
- Brandt, M. 1990. *Weiterführende Nebensätze. Zu ihrer Syntax, Semantik und Pragmatik*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- Brody, M. 1995. Hungarian focus and bare checking theory. *Arbeitspapiere des Sonderforschungsbereichs* 340, University of Tübingen.
- Büring, D. 1998. Focus and Topic in a Complex Model of Discourse. Ms. UCSC.
- Chafe, W.L. 1976. Givenness, contrastiveness, definiteness, subjects, topics, and point of view. In. *Subject and topic*, ed. Li, C, New York: Academic Press, 25-55.
- Chomsky, N. 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Daneš, F. 1974. Functional sentence perspective and the organization of the text. In *Papers on Functional Sentence Perspective*. ed. Daneš, F. Prague: Academia /The Hague: Mouton, 106-128.
- Dekker, P. 2004. The pragmatic dimension of indefinites. *Research on Language and Computation* 2, 365-399.
- Den Dikken, M. 2005. A comment on the thopic of topic-comment. *Lingua* 115, 691-710.
- Diesing, M. 1992. *Indefinites*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Endriss, C. & H.-M. Gärtner 2005. Relativische Verbzweitsätze und Definitheit. In. *Deutsche Syntax: Empirie und Theorie*. ed. d'Avis, F Göteborger Germanistische Forschungen 46.
- Engdahl, E. 1997. Relative clause extractions in context. *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 60, 51-79.
- Fillmore, C. 1985. Syntactic intrusions and the notion of grammatical construction. In *Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, ed Niepokuj, M. et. al. UCB, 73-86.
- Frey, W. 2001. About the whereabouts of indefinites. *Theoretical Linguistics*. Special Issue: NP Interpretation and Information Structure. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Frey, W. 2004a. A medial topic position for German. *Linguistische Berichte* 198, 153-190
- Frey, W. 2004b. The grammar-pragmatics interface and the German prefield. *Sprache & Pragmatik* 52, 1-39
- Gärtner, H.-M. 2001. Are there V2 relative clauses in German? *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 3, 97-141.
- Grice, H.P. 1975. Logic and conversation. In *Speech acts*, eds. Cole, P. & J. Morgan, New York: Academic Press, 41-58.
- Gundel, J., N. Hedberg, & R. Zacharsky 1993. Cognitive status and the form of referring expressions in discourse. *Language* 69, 274-307.
- Haider, H. 1993. *Deutsche Syntax – generativ*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

- Heim, I. 1988. *The semantics of definite and indefinite noun phrases*. New York: Garland.
- Höhle, T. 1989. Assumptions about Asymmetric Coordination in German. In *Sentential Complementation and the Lexicon*, eds. Jaspers, D., W. Klooster, Y. Putseys and P. Seuren, Dordrecht: Foris.
- Hundsnurscher, F. 1994. Dialog-Typologie. In *Handbuch der Dialoganalyse*, eds. Fritz, G. & F. Hundsnurscher, Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Jacobs, J. 1996. Bemerkungen zur I-Topikalisierung. *Sprache & Pragmatik* 41, 1-48.
- Kamp, H. & U. Reyle. 1993. *From discourse to logic*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- É. Kiss 1998. Identificational focus vs. information focus. *Language* 74, 245-73.
- Lakoff, G. 1974. Syntactic amalgams. In *Papers from the Tenth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*, eds. La Galay, M.W. et al. University of Chicago, 321-344.
- Lambrecht, K. 1988. There was a farmer had a dog: Syntactic amalgams revisited. In: *Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*. UC Berkeley, CA, 319-339.
- Meinunger, A. 1998. A monoclausal approach to cleft and pseudo-cleft sentences. *ZAS Papers in Linguistics* 10, 89-105.
- Meinunger, A. 2006. The discourse status of subordinate sentences and some implications for syntax and pragmatics. In *The architecture of focus*, eds. Molnár, V. & S. Winkler, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Molnár, V. 1991. *Das TOPIK im Deutschen und Ungarischen*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- Molnár, V. 1993. Zur Pragmatik und Grammatik des TOPIK-Begriffes. In: Reis, M. (ed.), 155-202.
- Molnár, V. 2002. Contrast – from a contrastive perspective. In *Information structure in a cross-linguistic perspective*, eds. Hasselgård, H., S. Johansson, B. Behrens & C. Fabricius-Hansen, Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, 147-161.
- Molnár, V. & Järventausta, M. 2003. Discourse Configurality in Finnish and Hungarian. In *Structures of Focus and Grammatical Relations*, eds. Hetland, J. & V. Molnár, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 111-148.
- Platzack, C. 1996. Germanic verb second languages. Attract vs. Repel: On optionality, A-bar movement and the symmetrical/asymmetrical verb second hypothesis. In: *Deutsch – typologisch*, eds. Lang, E. & G. Zifonun, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 92-120.
- Platzack, C. 1998. A visibility condition for the C-domain. *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 61, 53-100.
- Prince, E. 1981. Towards a taxonomy of given-new information. In *Radical Pragmatics*, ed. Cole, P. New York: Academic Press. 223-255.

- Reis, M. 1997. Zum syntaktischen Status unselbständiger Verbzweit-Sätze. In *Sprache im Fokus. Festschrift für Heinz Vater zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Dürscheid, C. et al, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 121-144.
- Reis, M. (ed.) 1993. *Wortstellung und Informationsstruktur*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Rizzi, L. 1997. The fine structure of the left periphery. In *Elements of grammar. Handbook in generative syntax*, ed. Haegeman, L., Dordrecht: Kluwer, 281-337.
- Rosengren, I. 1993. Wahlfreiheit mit Konsequenzen – Scrambling, Topikalisierung und FHG im Dienste der Informationsstrukturierung. In Reis, M. (ed.), 215-312.
- Rosengren, I. 1996. The thetic/categorical distinction revisited once more. Ms. Lund.
- Sasse, H.-J. 1987. The thetic/categorical distinction revisited. *Linguistics* 25, 511-580.
- Uhmann, S. 1991. *Fokusphonologie*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Ulrich, M. 1985. *Thetisch und kategorisch*. Tübingen: Narr.
- Vikner, S. 1995. Verb Movement and expletive subjects in the Germanic languages. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stefan Huber

stefan.huber@tyska.lu.se