English clefts as discourse-pragmatic equivalents of Spanish postverbal subjects

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ABSTRACT

This paper shows the similarities in terms of pragmatic function of specific Spanish sentence types with postverbal subjects and English clefts. An overview of the discourse functions performed by cleft constructions in English is presented followed by examples from a corpus of translations where clefts have been selected in the rendering not only of similar cleft constructions in Spanish but of Spanish sentences with verb-subject order, such as intransitive VS clauses with a focal contrastive subject, OVS with a focal object (frontings), OVS with a topical object or a clitic object (left-dislocations) and VS constructions with initial topical adverbials (AVS). The comparison adds support to the widely acknowledged belief that rigid word order languages like English need to make use of marked syntactic constructions in order to convey some of the pragmatic emphases which more flexible word order languages like Spanish can achieve via word order alone.

1.   INTRODUCTION

The database and the research conducted for this paper are part of a larger project I carried out recently for my PhD. My thesis (Pinedo 1997) aimed to investigate the discourse-pragmatic functions of postverbal subjects in Spanish and how they are rendered in translation. One of the methods employed by translators consists of clausal extraposition or cleft sentences. In this paper I will focus on such constructions. First, I will begin by describing what the term cleft refers to, how clefts are formed and some of the classifications of clefts which appear in the literature.

1.1. Description of data

The database from which the examples in this paper are taken consists of a corpus of Spanish original texts from three different genres: short stories, plays and magazine articles together with their published translations into English.

As regards the fictional texts, the main advantage of collecting data from literature is not only the variety of authors, styles and easy access to the translations which this genre permits but also the official status of the translations as published texts. Similarly, literary data facilitate the possibility of studying different versions of a translation, which lends itself to interesting comparison [1]. Short stories were chosen to the detriment of novels mainly due to the advantage of their length which allows a high variety of authors, translators and styles to be covered within the time available. Plays, on the other hand, were selected since they provide a small sample of written language mirroring oral speech, and more interestingly, potential colloquial types or instances of Spanish VS order which might be absent in the rest of the data.

The magazine articles are taken from the air-flight magazine *Ronda-Iberia,* published monthly by Iberia. They provide an excellent source of data because they include a wide range of articles from different genres such as news, reports, reviews, short stories and advice for travellers. Furthermore, the translations are regularly done by different teams of professional translators, which contributes to ensuring stylistic diversity, avoiding recurrent idiosyncratic preferences or tendencies. Additionally, the fact that all the translations of the magazine articles as well as of most of the other data are the work of native English speakers also ensures or at least favours natural utterances in the target language. This is an important point for this study since the target language of the data is not my native tongue, which is far from the ideal for a translator or translation-text analyst. Therefore, although I am aware that some instances of the data may sound forced or odd to some native speakers, I assume that the majority, if not all, will be perfectly acceptable elegant English utterances.

In the next sections I will move on to the study of clefts in my corpus. I will begin by describing what the term cleft refers to, how clefts are formed and some of the classifications of clefts which appear in the literature.

1.2. What are clefts?

The term "cleft" is commonly used in grammar to refer to the extraposition and isolation of a sentence constituent by using the copulative verb *to be*. This

type of extraposition constitutes one of the main focusing devices available in most languages. Focus is usually coded in language by three means, namely word order changes, intonation (stress or tone) and morphology. The first two reflect two common iconicity principles of the grammatical code whereas the third, morphology, is more conventionalized. In rigid word order languages, clefts and pseudo-clefts provide the maximal combination of the three coding elements of focus (Givón 1990: 733-4). However, as in the written language intonation is absent, it is morphology and word order which need to be exploited in order to produce meaning. Therefore, clefts occur more frequently in writing (see for instance Collins 1991). In fact, "in oral communication an uncleft with the appropriate intonation may be functionally equivalent to the corresponding cleft" (Hupet and Tilmant 1986: 428). The use of clefts in spoken discourse cannot, none the less, be underestimated. For instance, Lambrecht (1994: 25) regards clefts as one of the specific solutions in spoken French to the competition between syntax and pragmatics. They constitute a special kind of "mixed strategy" which allows two things at once:

> It substitutes structures of a certain pragmatically preferred type for the pragmatically unacceptable SV(O) sequence; preserves its syntactically controlled basic order without violating the information-structure constraint which maps topic with subject and focus with object; and it avoids violation of its strict oxytonic pattern. The "mixed strategy" of cleft formation allows the language to have its cake and eat it too. It represents one of the specific solutions in French to the competition between syntax and pragmatics.

In written language the difference between clefts and unclefts is regarded as one of contrast. Experiments have shown that cleft constructions are preferred over canonical sentences in contexts where the speaker's utterance was to provide new information which was incompatible with the addressee's belief (Hupet and Tilmant 1986). Clefts were selected when the speaker wished to correct or change the addressee's belief about some state of affairs. Similarly, cleft sentences seem to be understood faster than the corresponding unclefts when used for conveying contrastive information. Therefore, the pragmatic function of clefts would lie in the fact that they imply a contradiction, a contrast between what is presupposed and what actually happens. This is absent in a canonical sentence which does not even signal that there is a contradiction of beliefs. This hypothesis has in fact been confirmed by experiments with informants presented with both types of sentences in written form, that is, when there are no intonational clues which could disambiguate between given and new information or between a contradiction or a presupposition (ibid).

In some clefts the focused constituent can be sentence-final. This is the case with the so-called pseudo-clefts discussed in the next section (see

example (5) below). In such clauses the focus position coincides with that of a canonical declarative sentence with two full lexical arguments such as SVO. The difference between the pseudo-cleft and the declarative lies in the relationship between the focus and the rest of the predication. The *wh*-clause of the pseudo-clefts always conveys given presupposed information, while the subject and verb of an uncleft declarative clause may convey new information. Similarly, a cleft which focuses a subject NP differs from a presentational verb-subject sentence not only in markedness but also in the scope of the focus. The VS sequence of a language like Spanish, with flexible word order, can have both a broad and a narrow focus reading (like a subject-accented SV English sentence). In other words, it can be analysed as having either sentence focus (i.e. focus on the whole sentence) or alternatively, as having 'argument focus' (i.e. focus on the postverbal subject). However, the cleft can only have a narrow focus interpretation (argument focus) (cf. Lambrecht 1994: 17). In short, the focus of a canonical SVO or VS construction is taken to be unmarked whereas that of a cleft is always marked and explicit. Therefore, as De Jong (1981: 99) notices, the pragmatic goal of a speaker uttering a cleft is the reduction of ambiguity as to which items are in focus. Furthermore, De Jong claims that the use of clefts as paraphrases of canonical sentences can also serve as a means to establish which part of the predications in a structure is in focus and which parts are not. In short, the main feature of clefts would be their marked focus as well as the relationship between presupposition and focus, which has been considered the "grammatical meaning of cleft sentences" (Borkin 1984: Appendix B).

1.3.   Types of clefts

In English a distinction is usually made between two types of clefts: *it-clefts* and *wh-clefts*. The latter type are also called pseudo-clefts. Pseudo-clefts can also be divided into canonical and inverted, according to whether the *wh*-clause is initial or final in the sentence. In Spanish a similar classification can be made although the two sets of constructions are not totally equivalent in either form or function as will be explained later. The two types are illustrated in the following (the two cleft parts have been highlighted for easy identification):

   (1)   <u>It-cleft: inanimate focus</u>
        It was **his keys** that **John lost**.

        Fueron **las llaves** lo que **perdió Juan.**
        Were   the keys what lost   John

(2)   <u>It-cleft: animate focus</u>
      It was **John** who **I saw**.

      Fue **Juan** al que/a quien **vi**.
      Was John whom   saw-I

(3)   <u>Canonical pseudo-cleft: inanimate focus</u>
      What **John lost** was **his keys**.

      Lo que **perdió Juan** fueron **las llaves**/lo que **Juan perdió** fueron **las llaves.**
      What   lost   John were the keys what   John lost   were   the keys

(4)   <u>Canonical pseudo-cleft: animate focus</u>

      The one who **is coming with us** is **John**.
      El   que **viene con nosotros** es **Juan**/Quien viene   con nosotros es **Juan.**
      the one who comes with us   is John who   comes with us   is John

(5)   <u>Inverted pseudo-cleft: inanimate focus</u>
      That was what **John lost**.

      Eso fue lo que **perdió Juan**
      that was what   lost   John

(6)   <u>Inverted pseudo-cleft: animate focus</u>

      John is the one who is **coming with us.**

      Juan es quien/el   que **viene con nosotros.**
      John is who/ the one who comes with us

As can be seen in (1) above, English makes the verb *to be* singular when it is shifted to the head of a cleft sentence, whereas in Spanish there is always agreement between the verb and the focused element. Moreover, Spanish clefts require the nominalizer *el/la/los/las que/quien(es)* which agrees in number and gender with the noun it replaces. In other words, Spanish *que* on its own cannot join the two parts of a cleft unlike English *that.* Only a nominalizer (*el que* or *quien*) can be used as the following example taken from Butt and Benjamin (1994:461) illustrates:

(7)   Es **este coche** el   que   **compré**
      is this car   the-one-which bought-I
      This car is the one **I bought** (**not** *Es este coche que compré)

Furthermore, clauses of time, place or manner require a preposition instead of the pronoun, unlike in English:

(8)   It was **in Madrid** that **I was born**.
      Fue **en Madrid** <u>donde</u> **nací**.
      Was in Madrid where was born-I

As all the previous examples show, Spanish does not have a clear distinction between clefts and pseudo-clefts. This has led some linguists to consider that in fact Spanish does not have proper clefts at all but only pseudo-cleft constructions (Moreno Cabrera 1987, Barcelona Sánchez 1983 in Martínez Caro 1995:164). In this paper I will not elaborate further on that issue because it is not directly relevant as only English clefts are considered.

2.   PRAGMATIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLEFT SENTENCES

2.1. *It*-clefts vs. *Wh*-clefts

It-clefts and *wh*-clefts have been contrasted as performing different functions in discourse. Prince (1978) claims that in spite of the fact that they have often received a similar treatment in grammar, on the basis that they were interchangeable (cf. Bolinger 1972, Chafe 1975, in Prince ibid.) they differ not only in syntax and semantics but also pragmatically.

From a pragmatic point of view, Prince distinguishes clefts from pseudo-clefts according to the type of information that the subordinate clause conveys in relation to that of the antecedent or focused element. According to Prince, whereas the that-clause in an *it-cleft* can contain either given or new information, initial *wh-clauses* normally convey given information, either anaphoric or inferrable from implicatures by "bridge-building", that is, linking the clause in point with the previous discourse, as in the following:

(9)   Himself a religious Jew, Prof. Flusser says that Carter's piety is not the problem. "**What I'm worried about**", he declares,.....

In (9) the reader builds an inferrable bridge between a problem and worrying about it. The first sentence tells us indirectly that there is a problem and informs us directly that Carter's piety is not it.

Similarly, for Sornicola (1988: 372) the main difference between clefts and pseudo-clefts would lie in the informative status of both the focused element (typically given in the cleft and new in the pseudo-cleft) and the subordinate clause, which is always given in the *wh-cleft* but can be either given or new in the *it-cleft*.

Furthermore, it is often claimed that clefts cannot occur as the initial utterances of discourse. Pseudo-clefts, by contrast, often appear as first

utterances in communication (cf. Hetzron 1975, Givón 1984). For instance, Givón claims that clefts are rather odd in discourse-initial contexts. It is thus perfectly acceptable to introduce a lecture-topic by the pseudo-cleft but odd with the cleft. This is so because "a certain *build-up of contrary expectations* must take place in the preceding portion of the current thematic unit" (1990: 710-711). However, cleft sentences can in fact occur initially (see example (12) below from my data, or examples in Prince 1978 or Lambrecht 1994). When this is the case the information contained in the presupposition-clause is indeed new to the addressee but it is presented as a known fact. Therefore, the reader has to "willingly accommodate" the presupposition to its context (Lambrecht 1994: 25). A similar explanation for the occurrence of initial clefts is presented in Prince (ibid.), who solves the problem of felicitous initial *it-clefts* by distinguishing between two different types of *it*-clefts according to their discourse function. They are described below.

2.2. *It*-clefts: types and functions

From a discourse-pragmatic point of view Prince classifies clefts in two types, namely "stressed-focus" and "informative-presupposition" *it*-clefts. In the former the focused element is usually new and contrastive whereas the *that*-clause tends to convey presupposed information. This type is exemplified in (10) taken from Prince:

(10)   So I learned to sew books. They are really good books. It's just **the covers** that **are rotten**.

Conversely, in the second type, i.e. "informative-presupposition", the information conveyed by the *that*-clause is new because it is not inferrable or presupposed to be in the reader/hearer's consciousness. "In fact, the whole point of these sentences is to inform the hearer of that very information" (ibid.: 898). Witness the following example also from Prince:

(11)   It was **just about 50 years ago** that **Henry Ford gave us the weekend**. On September 25, 1926, in a somewhat shocking move for the time, he decided to establish a 40-hour work week, giving his employees two days off instead of one.

(11) would be odd in canonical order according to Prince, because it would seem as though the newspaper had just discovered the fact. The *it-cleft* "serves to mark it as a known fact, unknown only to the readership". In contrast with *wh-clauses* or stressed focus *it-clefts*, in this type of cleft the information contained in the *that*-clause is "presupposed logico-semantically"

but new on the discourse level and therefore, higher in communicative value.

A similar case of "informative-presupposition" *it-cleft* in Spanish could be the following, taken from my corpus:

> (12)   "Fue, al parecer **el general De Gaulle** el que,   tras una visita a Brasil,
> *was   apparently the general D G   the-one who after a   visit to Brasil*
> **comentó   que aquél   no   le parecía   un país   serio**."
> *commented that that one did-not to-him seemed a   country serious*
>
> 'It was apparently **General De Gaulle**, after a visit to Brasil, who **said that it did not seem a serious country**.'
> (April 94)

Prince finds that this second type of *it*-cleft, namely "informative-presupposition/given focus", tends to occur in formal, often written discourse, and its main function is to mark a piece of information as a fact known to many people but not to the reader. They are preferred when the writer does not wish to take personal responsibility for the truth or originality of the statement. Other specific sub-functions of these clefts are to convey irony, implicate a cause and effect relationship, and indicate politeness or deference.

Unlike "stressed-focus" clefts, "informative-presupposition" *it*-clefts have the stress on the *that*-clause. They generally have a short and anaphoric focus, which is usually expressed by a subject pronoun or short NP, as in the examples below:

> (13)   "Los sevillanos contemplan las imágenes de sus cofradías como algo   vivo.
> *the sevillians contemplate the images   of their cofradias as   something alive*
> Es **Dios** quien **está en la calle**, no les   cabe la menor duda."
> *is God who is   in the street not to them have the least   doubt*
> (Ronda-Iberia magazine April 1994)
>
> 'Sevillians watch the images belonging to the *Cofradías* as though these were alive. No doubt about it, it is **God** who **is here in the street**.'
> (April 92)

> (14)   ...compuestas por obreros de piedra sagaz. Son **ellos** quienes **diseñan y**
> *made   by workers of stone   a*r*e they who   design and*
> **escriben el suelo   que   pisamos todos los días**."
> *write   the pavement which we-tread all   the days*
>
> 'It is **they** who **draw and write on the pavements that we tread each day**.'
> (April 94)

> (15)   "Era **la muchacha -todavía una niña**- la   que **escuchaba fascinada las**
> *was the girl   -still a child   the- one who listened fascinated the*

> **historias del   hombre del   carromato, que llegaba precedido por los**
> *stories   of-the man   in the caravan....*
> **ladridos de Nei, unas veces en la puerta de la cabaña y otras veces**
> **junto al fuego, en invierno**, pues de ese modo él agradecía la hospitalidad,
> a la ida o al regreso.”
>
> 'It was **the girl, still a child**, who **would listen in fascination to the tales of**
> **the waggoner, whose arrival was always heralded by Nei's barking**.'
> (*La dama del agua*)

Alternatively, the focused element can often be an adverbial of time, place or reason Kuno's "thematic scene-setting adverbials" (1987). In such structures the *th/wh* pronoun is not deletable, as shown in examples (16) through (18), also from my corpus:

Locative focus

> (16) “Por último, en un plano superior, al que se asciende a través de una
> majestuosa escalinata de piedra, un pequeño palacio urbano, la célebre Casa
> de la Parra, así llamada....
> Fue **en este lugar** en donde **Ataulfo Argenta**, como ya
> *was in this place in where A   A   as already*
> hemos   explicado**, puso en pie   a la Orquesta Nacional**
> *we-have explained put   on their-feet to the Orchestra National.....*
> **de España en una lejana noche de julio de hace muchos años, para**
> **escuchar en silencio las doce campanadas del reloj de la Torre**
> **Berenguela**.”
>
> 'It was **here** that **Ataulfo Argenta,** as we have already said**, brought the**
> **Spanish National Orchestra to its feet, one July night long ago, in order**
> **to listen in silence to the twelve chimes of the Berenguela clock tower**.'
> (July 93)

Temporal focus

> (17) “Y fue **entonces** cuando **un gitano de la   cofradía del   barrio de San Román**
> *and was then   when   a gypsy of the cofradia of the district of S   R*
> **dio   una de las lecciones de teología popular tan habituales en estas fechas,**
> *gave one of the lessons   of theology popular so   habitual   in these dates...*
> **en que los sevillanos son como evangelistas apócrifos de un quinto**
> **evangelio**.”

'**Then** it was that **a gypsy from San Roman district cofradia gave one of the popular theology lessons so typical of the festival**."
(April 92)

Reason adjunct as focus

(18)   "**Por eso** fue que **se me ocurrió que podíamos visitar al Ministro**."
Because of that was that it occurred to me that we could visit the minister

'It was **because of this** that **it occurred to me that we might go and see the Minister.**'
(*El presupuesto*)

Finally, the focus can also be, less frequently, an anaphoric object. Object NPs are reported to be rare in *it*-clefts of the type "informative-presupposition" (Prince Ibid.). As expected, they are also rare in my data, not only in *it*-clefts but also in *wh*-clefts. All occurrences in the corpus involve extraposition or right-dislocation. Witness, for example (19):

(19)   "Es **de eso** de lo que **quizás   nos acordemos aquí más seguido: de aquel**
is   of that of which perhaps we   remember   here more of that
Tanilo que nosotros enterramos en el   camposanto."
Tanilo who we   buried   in the church yard

'Because it is **that** that **we will remember here most often: that Tanilo we buried in the church yard**.'
(*Talpa*)

A similar case is presented in (20), where an inverted pseudo-cleft is employed instead, with the same function:

(20)   "Lo que usted dice se llama el libro talonario —dijo gravemente el jefe. Pues
what   you say is called the stub-book   said gravely   the boss since
esto es lo que **yo traigo aquí: el libro talonario de mi huerta, o sea los tallos**
this is what   I bring here....
a los que estaban unidas estas calabazas antes de que me las robara ese ladrón."

'What you are talking about is called the stub-book, said the inspector gravely. Well, **that**'s what **I have here: the stub-book of my garden, that, is the stems to which these pumpkins were attached before this thief stole them from** me.'
(*El libro talonario*)

Inverted *wh*-clefts, like the one in (20) above, differ from canonical pseudo-clefts in that the wh-clause occurs after the focused element, as was mentioned above. Such constructions have received little attention in the literature as far as I am aware. Prince only suggests that their discourse function is probably more similar to an *it*-cleft than to a canonical *wh*-cleft. A similar view is defended by Halliday (1994: 41). For this linguist the main difference is one of Theme and markedness, i.e. whereas canonical pseudo-clefts constitute nominalized unmarked Themes, inverted clefts represent marked alternatives, "in which the usual relationship is reversed and the nominalization becomes the Rheme". In his framework, *it-clefts* also constitute marked predicated Themes. Therefore, *it*-clefts are more similar in thematic organization to inverted *wh*-clefts than to canonical ones.

An interesting and more detailed discussion of inverted *wh*-clefts and clefts in discourse is presented by Geluykens (1988, 1991) on the basis of a corpus of spoken English data. He proposes two main types of clefts which he calls "filler-focus" and "proposition/clause-focus". In Geluykens' terminology the focus of a cleft or pseudo-cleft is called the filler, i.e. the extraposed constituent placed directly after or before the copula, as opposed to the *wh/that* clause. The first type, "filler-focus", coincides roughly with Prince's "stressed-focus clefts" above described, and includes cases where the filler is focal, usually new or irrecoverable and/or contrastive. In such constructions the filler carries the most salient or highlighted information, whereas the Proposition or clause represents background information. Canonical pseudo-clefts would all fall under this type as well. In fact, such constructions are particularly suitable for introducing a large amount of irrecoverable information; often the filler is an entire clause, as in (21):

> (21) "A mí me importa <u>lo que tengo entre mis manos</u>."
>   *to me me matters what have:I between my hands*
>   '**What matters to me** is what **I can hold with my hands**.'
>   (*Yerma*)

In the second type, i.e. "clause-focus", however, the situation is reversed; here it is the proposition or clause (i.e. the *that/wh*-clause) which is highlighted, whereas the filler carries background information and is usually short. This second type resembles Prince's "informative-presupposition/given focus" category presented earlier. Inverted pseudo-clefts all display such a distribution of information too, namely a given filler and a new/focal clause. Therefore, under this interpretation, canonical pseudo-clefts resemble "filler-focus" *it*-clefts. Inverted pseudo-clefts, on the other hand, are similar to "clause-focus" clefts.

The main difference between Geluykens' analysis of clefts and that of Prince described above, or other interpretations present in the literature (Givón

1984, Sornicola 1988, Lambrecht 1994), is the fact that he does not associate filler with focus in cleft constructions. In fact, in his study, the so-called "clause-focus" *it*-clefts, as well as inverted pseudo-clefts, do not display a focal filler. The focus lies in the *that/wh*-clause as opposed to the item occupying the filler in such structures, which is typically short, given and non-focal. This is partly the reason why he employs the label *filler* instead of *focus* to refer to the extraposed item [3].

The type of constituents which each type of cleft typically takes, also seem to support Geluykens' analysis. For instance, filler-focus *it*-clefts usually take a subject as filler. This is not surprising since their discourse function can be regarded as a technique for moving the focal and/or contrastive subject away from initial position, and for placing it as far to the right as possible, given the limitations of the SVX pattern in English. Conversely, subject-filler clause-focus *it*-clefts preserve the topic > focus and short > long order. Thus, in such structures, the clause tends to be longer that the filler (see examples (14)-(16) above repeated here as (22)-(24):

(22)   "Los sevillanos contemplan las imágenes de sus cofradías como algo
       the Sevillians contemplate the images   of their cofradias as   something
       vivo. Es **Dios** quien **está en la calle**, no   les   cabe la menor duda."
       alive is God who is   in the street not to them have the least   doubt

       'Sevillians watch the images belonging to the *Cofradías* as though these
       were alive. No doubt about it, it is **God** who **is here in the street**.'
       (April 92)

(23)   "...compuestas por obreros de piedra sagaz. Son **ellos** quienes **diseñan y**
       *made   by workers of stone   a*r*e they who   design and*
       escriben el suelo   que   pisamos todos los días."
       write   the pavement which we-tread all   the days

       'It is **they** who **draw and write on the pavements that we tread each day**.'
       (April 94)

(24)   "Era **la muchacha —todavía una niña**— la   que **escuchaba fascinada**
       was the girl   still   a child   the-one who listened   fascinated
       las historias del   hombre del   carromato, que llegaba precedido por los
       the stories   of-the man   in the caravan....
       ladridos de Nei, unas veces en la puerta de la cabaña y otras veces
       junto al fuego, en invierno, pues de ese modo él agradecía la hospitalidad,
       a la ida o al regreso."

       'It was **the girl, still a child**, who **would listen in fascination to the tales of**
       the waggoner, whose arrival was always heralded by Nei's barking.'
       (*La dama del agua*)

Canonical pseudo-clefts, on the other hand, show a higher frequency of objects in the filler position than *it*-clefts. The position of these objects preserves an SVO pattern and results in having them in utterance-final position. The latter would not always be the case in a noncleft version of the utterance, such as in the common SVOA English clause. Furthermore, many objects in such constructions are clausal. Consequently, they introduce a lot of new information. Therefore, canonical pseudo-clefts represent optimal strategies for keeping end-focus/weight.

In inverted pseudo-clefts, object fillers are also common, but for different reasons. As such objects tend to be anaphoric and given, they are placed in the typical topical position of the clause, i.e. initial. Most frequently, the filler in such constructions is encoded by a demonstrative pronoun, such as *that* and *this*, particularly in conversation (see (20) above for instance, repeated here as (25)):

(25)   "Lo que usted dice se llama el libro talonario - dijo gravemente el jefe. Pues
       what   you   say is called the stub-book   said gravely   the boss since
       esto es lo que   **yo traigo aquí: el libro talonario de mi huerta, o sea los tallos**
       this is   what I   bring here....
       a los que estaban unidas estas calabazas antes de que me las robara ese
       ladrón."

    'What you are talking about is called the stub-book, said the inspector gravely. Well, **that**'s what **I have here: the stub-book of my garden, that, is the stems to which these pumpkins were attached before this thief stole them from** me.'
(*El libro talonario*)

For similar reasons, we find a high number of inverted pseudo-clefts with filler adverbials.

As regards adverbials, Geluykens observes that in his corpus time adverbials are preferred in "filler-focus" *it*-clefts whereas inverted pseudo-clefts feature place, manner and reason adverbials instead. The explanation he gives for this phenomenon is that the usual position of a time adverbial in a non cleft sentence in English is either clause-initial or clause-final. However, if the adverbial is focal, a more marked position has to be sought; since the filler in "filler-focus" *it*-clefts is both non-initial and non-final, it is ideal in this respect. Compare the following:

(26)   (Yesterday) he read a book (yesterday).
(27)   It was **yesterday** that **he read a book**.

According to Geluykens the cleft in (27) highlights the adverbial in a way that (26) does not.

Adverbials in inverted pseudo-clefts, however, tend to be given and are thus ideal in initial position, a position they would often not occupy in a

noncleft version. In fact, a noncleft version may sound awkward, as in (28) below, taken from Geluykens:

> (28)   He died yesterday; he can't come for that reason/ for that reason he can't come.

An inverted pseudo-cleft sounds much more natural:

> (29)   **That**'s why **he can't come**/**that**'s the reason why **he can't come**.

In Spanish, however, the positioning of such adverbials is more flexible than in English; they sound natural in initial position, particularly when they are topical/given. Therefore, the cleft is not necessary. Interestingly, it is in the translation of Spanish AVS clauses with such adverbials that inverted pseudo-clefts are employed in English, as will be shown in the next section.

3.   CLEFTS IN TRANSLATION

The value of clefts in translation across languages with different restrictions of word order has already been recognised in the literature. For instance, Papegaaij and Schubert (1988: 182) point out that the main advantage of such structures is that they provide an escape to a higher and, in this particular respect, freer level when word order is relatively fixed at clause level. Hence, extraposition represents a useful "strategy for resolving the tension between syntactic and communicative functions in translation and language learning" (Baker 1992: 167). Similarly, Hetzron claims that clefts provide a useful focusing device in languages with rigid word order as a means of reaching "a compromise between the constraints on surface order and the presentative function/movement", by bringing into focus and elevating "the communicational importance of an element above the level of the rest of the sentence" (Hetzron 1975: 364).

In my corpus the number of cleft sentences is higher in English than in Spanish. I think that two related factors account for this fact. On the one hand, clefts in Spanish are less frequent and more marked because the same function can be performed by verb-subject inversion and other word order combinations. On the other hand, clefts are often employed in the translation as a special strategy to render VS and AVS clauses. However, needless to say, this does not mean that clefts and VS order constitute similar constructions or represent merely stylistic variants. Furthermore, clefts are rare in the corpus as translations of intransitive VS clauses, as was mentioned earlier. In fact, they are mainly employed for rendering VS order when the subject is contrastive,

i.e. in non presentational constructions, as well as in the translation of AVS and OVS clauses when the initial constituent is given and topical. The two cases are illustrated in the next sections.

3.1.   Contrastive subjects

When the subject in Spanish VS order conveys contrastive information, as in (30) below, the translation via a "filler-focus" *it*-cleft maintains its focality and markedness.

(30)   "Se enteran <u>los mirones,</u>   y   uno no se entera!   Ni de
find out   the nosy-parkers and one not   finds out neither of
lo   bueno ni de lo   malo!"
the good   nor of the bad!

'It's **the nosy-parkers** that **see everything, good or bad**, and you don't see a thing yourself!'
(*Los cuernos de Don Friolera*)

In such cases a mere syntactic transfer via SV order would have shifted the referent of the SC focal subject into the topic of the TC. Consequently, the information structure and the message conveyed would have also been altered.

If the subject is heavy (long and/or complex) as well as contrastive, such as a clause, a canonical pseudo-cleft is preferred (i.e. also a "filler-focus" construction in Geluykens' terminology). Such a construction keeps the same linear order (given > new, comment > focus) and allows end-weight, as shown in the following examples:

(31)   "A mí me importa <u>lo que tengo entre mis manos</u>."
to me me matters what have:I between my hands

'What **matters to me** is what **I can hold with my hands**.'
(*Yerma*)

(32)   "Pero sí existe, al pie del castillo, <u>la Cueva de la Morica Encantada,</u>
but yes exists at foot of-the castle the cave of the mooress enchanted...
<u>abierta entre las rocas que sustentan lo que queda del murallón, un agujero en</u>
<u>el piso en rápida pendiente hacia una impenetrable oscuridad que se adivina</u>
<u>cegada por las piedras que los hombres y el tiempo han ido acumulando</u>."

'What **does exist at the foot of the castle**, however, is **the Cave of the Enchanted Mooress, which opens into the rocks supporting the remains of the walls**.'
(*Añoranzas*)

Canonical *wh*-clefts, as those in the preceding instances always focalize the item in the filler, unlike inverted ones.

3.2. LDs and clVS

VS clauses with preverbal clitic objects, as in (20) above, and LDs of the object, exemplified in (34), typically display a connective function in Spanish. In addition, they often perform an introductory function of the referent of the postverbal subject in clause final position. When the subject is not heavy, the "filler-focus" *it*-cleft provides an optimal pragmatic equivalent because it preserves the focality of the subject and its non-initial position, unlike in a literal rendering. Witness the following cases:

(33)   "Le mató <u>la tristeza de verse   ciego</u>."
        him killed the sadness of see-himself blind

       'It was **the sorrow of being blind** that **killed him**.'
       (*Luces de bohemia*)

(34)   "La flor   del   negocio se la llevan <u>las acciones liberadas</u>."
        the flower of-the business it carry   the actions liberated

       'It's **the insider dealing** that **creams off the best part of the profits**.'
       (*Los cuernos de Don Friolera*)

In (35) below, occurring in dialogue, the inverted pseudo-cleft (i.e. "clause-focus") maintains the topicality/givenness of the object in initial position, while preserving the informative value and focality of the source-clause subject. Note that the filler is a demonstrative pronoun, as is common in spoken discourse (cf. Geluykens 1988):

(35)   "Eso lo dicen <u>las madres dóciles, las quejumbrosas</u>."
        That it say   the mothers weak   the complainers

       '**That**"s what **weak, complaining, mothers say**.'
       (*La casa de Bernarda Alba*)

3.3. Frontings

Initial focal objects in Spanish usually occur in clauses with pronominal, omitted or non-final subjects. The initial object/complement can be both given or new but usually constitutes the focus of the utterance, unlike in LDs discussed in

the preceding section. As the objects/complements in frontings are focal, such constructions are usually rendered into English via canonical order. This is particularly the case when no final adjuncts occur in the sentence, thereby maintaining the object in a focal position. Alternatively, they can be rendered via fronting/topicalization in English, i.e. OSV, which also keeps the object in a focal and marked position. The latter option of translation only occurs in the data from the dialogues. This is only to be expected since such structures typically occur in conversation in English. Similarly, when the object conveys given information, clefts are also employed in the dialogues, as in the following:

(36) "(Arrebata un bastón a su madre y   lo parte   en dos) Esto hago <u>yo</u>
      grabs   a stick to her mother and it breaks into two) This do   I
      con la vara de la dominadora."
      with the stick of the ruler

      '**This** is what **I do with the tyrant's cane**.'
      (*La casa de Bernarda Alba*)

(37) "¿El D.M. sabes? Ése soy   <u>yo</u>."
      The D.M. know: you That am I

      '**That**'s who **I am**.'
      (*El costo de la vida*)

(38) "Y a esto llaman justicia <u>los ricos canallas</u>!"
      and to that call   justice the rich bastards

      'And **that**'s what **the rich bastards call justice**!'
      (*Luces de bohemia*)

In the preceding instances, the selection of an inverted *wh*-cleft in the translation preserves the initial placement of the given object/complement. In addition, when the subject of the source clause is heavy, such a construction contributes to ensuring end-weight. (39) and (40) are two cases in point:

(39) "Eso tiene <u>la gente que nace   con posibles</u>."
      that have the people who are-born with obligations

      '**That**'s the way **it has to be for people who have certain obligations**.'
      (*Yerma*)

(40) "Eso decía <u>el señor cura</u> desde allá   arriba del   púlpito."
      that said the mister priest from there up   of-the pulpit

      '**That** is what **the priest said from up there in the pulpit**.'
      (*San Manuel*)

3.4. Initial adjuncts: AVS/AVSO

As mentioned before, Spanish clauses containing initial given adverbials and postverbal focal subjects can be adequately translated into English via a "clause-focus" *it*-cleft (Prince's "focus-given/presupposition-new" type), or an inverted *wh*-cleft with the same function. Such constructions provide pragmatically optimal renderings for preserving the given > new pattern of information. Moreover, in this way the referent of the SC subject is kept out of topic position in the TC. Witness the following cases in which an inverted *wh*-clause has been selected in the translation:

> (41) "Ahí empieza <u>el   primer mito</u>."
> *there starts   the first   myth*
> 'And **that** is where **the first of the myths begins**.'
> (January 94)

> (42) "Allí está <u>la   barca</u>."
> *there is   the boat*
> '**That** is where **the raft is**.'

> (43) "En eso está <u>el   Señor rector</u>."
> *in   that is   the mister rector*
> '**That** is what **the rector is endeavouring to do**.'
> (July 93)

Similar cases, translated this time with *it*-clefts are presented below:

> (44) "Allí se acababa <u>el   mundo conocido</u>."
> *there finished   the world known*
> 'It was **there** that **the known world ended**.'
> (July 93)

> (45) Y   precisamente en eso, en imbricar creación cultural y   tecnología,
> *and precisely   in that in overlap   creation cultural and technology*
> andan <u>Algora y Gibson</u>."
> *are A and G*
>
> 'It is **exactly in overlapping cultural creation and technology** that **Algora and Gibson are involved**.'
> (April 92)

In transitive structures (AVSO) "clause-focus" clefts and inverted pseudo-clefts are sometimes employed instead of canonical ASVO/SVOA order. Such constructions enable the translator to keep the SC initial adverbial in the same

clausal slot in the TC and to move the SC subject out of topic position. They are found in the dialogues, as shown in the examples below:

(46)   "Solamente en estos casos admito <u>yo</u> la caída de Loreta."
       only   in these cases admit I   the fall   of Loreta

       'It would only be **in this type of case** that **I could accept Loreta's misdemeanour**.'
       (*Los cuernos de Don Friolera*)

(47)   "Aquí ahogamos <u>tu   abuelo   y   yo</u> una compañía entera de gabachos,
       here   drowned your grandfather and I   a   company full   of frogs...
       peste de Satanás en los días terribles de la francesada."

       '**This** is where **your grandfather and I drowned a whole company of Frogs, God damn them, in the terrible times of the occupation**.'
       (*La dama del agua*)

Similarly, in the case of manner adverbials, such as *así*, (like this, in this way) canonical order is ungrammatical or highly marked in Spanish. Inverted *wh*-clefts are often selected in the translation. They provide optimal renderings as they enable simultaneous initial placement of the given adverbial and placement of the subject in a focal position. Such adverbials can be infelicitous in both initial and final position in a non-cleft English sentence (cf. Geluykens 1988: 838), as mentioned earlier:

(48)   "Así   pasan   <u>las cosas</u>."
       like this happen the things
       a.   '**That**'s how **things happen**.'
       b.   '**That**'s the way **accidents happen**.'

(49)   "Así   soy <u>yo</u>."
       like this am I
       a.   '**That**'s the way **I am**.'
       b.   '**That**'s **the sort of woman I am**.'
       (*Yerma*)

(50)   "Así   lo lleva   haciendo <u>el ser   humano</u> desde el comienzo de los
       like-this it carries doing   the being human from the beginning...
       tiempos, pues, tener fe, cualquier fe, no debe ser más que tener la valentía de aceptar, de reconocer la propia duda."

       'For **this** is what **human beings have been doing since the beginning of time**, since having faith, any faith, is really nothing more than having the courage to accept, to recognize one's own doubt.'

(51)   "Así   surgió <u>lo que unos llaman la invención del   sepulcro del   apóstol</u>
        like-this rose   what   some call   the invention of-the sepulchre of-the apostle
        <u>Santiago y otros afirman el descubrimiento de su tumba</u>."

'And **that** is how **what some call the invention and others the discovery
of the sepulchre of the apostle St. James the Elder came about**.'
(July 93)

4.   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this paper we have seen how clausal extraposition is employed in the
translation into English of Spanish sentences with postverbal subjects. This in
itself does not mean that the two constructions are equivalent. Furthermore, VS
clauses in Spanish vary greatly in terms of the pragmatic function assignment
of each constituent in the same way as not all clefts have a single pragmatic
function. However, different types of clefts in English seem to perform a
similar pragmatic function as certain verb-subject constructions in Spanish, as
the data from translations suggest. Translators, in a conscious or intuitive way,
select the most suitable construction in the relevant context which conveys all
the meaning of the source text structure. In most of the cases we have
witnessed above, a canonical translation via subject-verb order in English
would fail to render the discourse function and information flow encoded in
the linear order of the original sentence.

The examples shown reveal how clefts are employed in translation in the
following contexts: first, as a strategy to assign prominence to constituents
with a focal-contrastive function. Thus, "filler-focus" clefts are used for
rendering contrastive subjects of intransitive VS clauses. Such constructions
are especially successful when the subject is not heavy, since the filler in those
clefts is typically short. As Geluykens points out (1991: 351) focal fillers tend
to be relatively short (less than four words) in spite of being highlighted,
(although still longer than given fillers which typically display only one word).
He believes that this is partly due to the fact that "filler-focus" *it*-clefts run
counter to the general linguistic tendency of placing focal/new information
later in the clause than topical/given one, which makes such structures more
difficult for the hearer to process. The speaker, therefore, feels obliged to limit
the amount of highlighted information in the filler. Another factor which
explains the "shortness" of the filler constituent in "filler-focus" clefts, is that
the fillers in those clefts tend to be contrastive, i.e. one single piece of
information, usually of restricted length, is contrasted with something else.
Conversely, when the contrastive postverbal subject in Spanish is heavy,
canonical pseudo-clefts, i.e. also "filler-focus" constructions, are preferred
instead, since they allow end-weight, unlike their *it*-clefts counterparts.

Secondly, clefts can be employed as a device to front topical objects and adverbials. Inverted *wh*-clefts with a demonstrative filler provide a successful transference from the pragmatic point of view, of AVS order with an initial adverbial of time, place and manner. They typically display a given filler and a focal *wh*-clause. Therefore, they maintain the initial position of the adverbial and the focal position of the subject. Similarly, they can also be employed to translate Spanish OVS and CVS order when the object/complement is given, while simultaneously the informational value of the SC subject is preserved through insertion in the target clause focal wh-clause. The latter clause typically contains the informative message of the utterance.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that this study is based on clefts found in translation data. Therefore, caution is advisable when drawing generalizations. The small size of the corpus and the restricted type of data can also have an effect on the results [4]. Obviously, more research needs to be done on real occurrences of clefts in English and in Spanish as well as in spontaneous discourse. However, it is hoped that the data and reflections here presented can be of use particularly in translation and language teaching.

NOTES

[1] Within literature, poetry was left out due to the potential occurrence of hyperbatos and marked structures as well as poetic licenses which could bring a different and complex parameter into the study. For similar reasons, the advertisements of the magazines were also ignored.

[2] An interlineal translation (word-for-word gloss) is given for all the examples. In the examples extracted from the corpus, this translation is followed by a bracketed line, which specifies the source of the text: for the short stories the full title is given. As for the texts of the magazines, the information which appears in brackets includes the year and month of the issue where the example was found. When two or more examples belong to the same text, the title appears only at the end of the list (see Appendix for the full notation of all the texts included in the corpus). The glosses provide an approximate literal word-for-word rendering of the source clause. They do not include grammatical information. They appear in italics for easy identification. For similar reasons, the Spanish clause is enclosed by double inverted commas and the translation in between single ones. When two translations are available they are referred to as (a) and (b) respectively.

[3] Halliday (1994:301-2) presents a similar classification of *it*-clefts based on their marked or unmarked information focus, and the mapping between Theme and New information:

Unmarked (local) Theme: It is **you** who were to blame. (Theme/New-Rheme/Given)

Marked Theme: It is you who were to **blame**. (Theme/Given-Rheme/New)

[4] Clefts are employed in the data less frequently than other strategies, as reflected in the quantitative analysis. They are mainly employed in the translation of magazine reports and in the dialogues of the plays (4 %) as opposed to the narratives where they are particularly rare (1.2 %). Perhaps the most unexpected finding concerns the similar frequency of clefts as a method of translation in the dialogues of the plays and in the magazine reports (3.9 % and 4 %). One factor which contributes to this result is the fact that clefts often translate frontings of the object as well

as AVS clauses with initial given adverbials of manner, place and reason, which are common in conversation. Besides, such clauses are more appropriately rendered by means of clefts than via the passive or transitivisation since the latter constructions are of more formal nature, and thus inadequate in the translation of dialogues. See table below for the actual figures.

TABLE 1

Use of clefts in the corpus

Genre	Total VS clauses	Clefts as a method of translation
Short Stories	784	10
		1.2 %
Ronda Magazines	227	9
		3.9 %
Plays	325	13
		4.0 %
Total	1336	32
		2.3 %

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APPENDIX: SOURCES FOR CORPUS

Ronda Iberia (in-flight magazine)

12 issues ranging from 1992 to 1996 have been analysed in full (except the advertisements). Each issue contains several reviews (art, books, cooking, music,

sports, "fiestas", etc.), two or three reports (touristic places, current issues of interest, such as the Expo, the Olympic Games, Oscar-winning films, etc.), one short story, news reports, travel advise guidelines, and occasionally an interview.

List of dates: 1992 (April), 1993 (January), 1994 (January, April and September), 1995 (January, April, July, August and December), 1996 (January and July).

Short Stories (taken from Parallel books)

El libro talonario, Pedro Antonio de Alarcón (1833-1891), trans. by Angel Flores.

El alacrán de Fray Gómez, Ricardo Palma (1833-1919), trans. by Angel Flores.

El revólver, Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921), trans. by Angel. Flores.

El sustituto, Leopoldo Alas (Clarín) (1852-1901), trans. by Angel Flores.

El marqués de Lumbría, Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo (1864-1936), trans. by Angel Flores.

San Manuel Bueno, mártir (1930) Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo (1864-1936).
Two translations available:
    1.   translated by Anthony Kerrigan (1956).
    2.   translated by Francisco de Segovia and Jean Pérez (1957).

Sansón García, fotógrafo ambulante, Camilo José Cela (1916-), trans. by Angel Flores.

La romería, Camilo José Cela (1916-), trans. by Gordon Brotherston.

La guardia, Juan Goytisolo (1931-), trans. by Angel Flores.

El arrepentido, Ana María Matute (1925-), trans. by Philomena Ulyatt.

Platero y yo, Juan Ramón Jiménez (1939)
Two translations available:
    1.   (1956) trans. by William and Mary Roberts.
    2.   (1958) trans. by Eloise Roach.

El techo, Horacio Quiroga (1878-1937), trans. by Angel Flores.

El potrillo roano, Benito Lynch (1880-1951), trans. by Angel Flores.

La forma de la espada, Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986), trans. by Angel Flores.

Emma Zunz, Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986), trans. by Donald A. Yates.

El presupuesto, Mario Benedetti (1920 -), trans. by Gerald Brown.

El coronel de caballería, H. A. Murena (1923-), trans. by Gordon Brotherston.

Monólogo de Isabel viendo llover en Macondo, Gabriel García Márquez (1928-), trans. by Richard Southern.

La prodigiosa tarde de Baltazar, Gabriel García Márquez (1928-), trans. by J.S. Bernstein.

Bienvenido, Bob, Juan Carlos Onetti (1909-), trans. by Donald L. Shaw.

La paloma, Carlos Martínez Moreno (1917-), trans. by Giovanni Pontiero.

Talpa, Juan Rulfo (1918-), trans. by J. A. Chapman.

Después de la procesión, Jorge Edwards (1913-), trans. by Hardie St. Martin.

Amalia (from *Conversación en la catedral*), Mario Vargas Llosa (1936-), trans. by Hardie St. Martin.

El gargajero, Jorge Onetti (1931-), trans. by Gudie Lawaetz.

Capitán descalzo, Norberto Fuentes (1943-), trans. by Vicky Ortiz.
Como buenos hermanos, Norberto Fuentes (1943-), trans. by Vicky Ortiz.
La puerta condenada, Julio Cortázar (1914-84), trans. by Philomena Ulyatt.

Short Stories (taken from the Iberia magazines)

La visita real, Fernando Quiñones (1931-).
El largo día viernes, Jorge Edwards (1931-).
Lisboa revisitada, José Cardoso Pires (1925).
Lucha hasta el alba, Antonio Gala (1936).
Visión lateral perfecta, Fernando Delgado (1947).
La vida nueva, Gustavo Martín Garzo (1948-).
La dama del agua, Víctor Fernández Freixanes (1951-).
Añoranzas, Antonio Mingote (1919-).
Un español en el mundo de la poesía, Angel González (1925-).

Plays:

La casa de Bernarda Alba, F. García Lorca (1945), trans. by James Graham-Lujan and
    Richard L. O' Connell (1961).
Yerma, F. García Lorca, (1934)
Two translations used:
    1.   (1961) trans. by James Graham-Lujan and Richard L. O' Connell.
    2.   (1987) trans. by John E. Lyon.
Luces de bohemia, Ramón María del Valle-Inclán (1920), trans. by John E. Lyon
    (1993).
Los cuernos de Don Friolera, Ramón María del Valle-Inclán (1925), trans. by
    Dominic Kewon and Robin Warner (1991).
El sueño de la razón, Antonio Buero Vallejo (1967), trans. by Marion Peter Holt
    (1985).