DEMONSTRATIVE CLEFTS AND DOUBLE CLEFT CONSTRUCTIONS IN SPONTANEOUS SPOKEN ENGLISH*

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Abstract. The current paper reports on the grammatical structure and discourse role of demonstrative clefts found in spontaneous, spoken language. Constructions such as that’s what I think or this is where he’s coming from, previously placed under the umbrella of reversed wh-clefts, are shown to exhibit significant differences from these. The inspection of 200,000 words of informal conversation excerpts from the Wellington Spoken Corpus of New Zealand English (WSC) shows that demonstrative clefts constitute the most frequent cleft type in the spoken data. The deictic properties of their cleft constituents, their distinctive function in discourse and prevalence in this linguistic medium set them apart from other cleft types. The paper also discusses a related construction, termed here double cleft, which exhibits syntactic un-integratedness, as in that’s what you’re supposed to do is rest and this is where he went is Auckland. It is hoped that the findings presented here will contribute to existing knowledge of the grammatical constructions used by speakers of New Zealand English and English worldwide, and to our understanding of the barriers that have to be crossed in the teaching and learning of spoken language.

1. Introduction

An investigation of excerpts of unplanned spontaneous conversation from the Wellington Corpus of Spoken New Zealand English (see Appendix A for a guide to the annotation conventions used) suggests that constructions such as those given in italics in (1) and (2) constitute the most frequent cleft type found in this linguistic genre.

(1) BD: i haven’t heard anything from him you know but i mean like you say half the time you don’t know what they’re saying <latch>
CO: no mm well i know that betty and biff’ll be putting the knife in <&> 7:00 </&>
BD: yeah but that’s just them down to a t
CO: so mm
BD: typical of them you know

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CO: so it's not really fair but just have to live with it that's why i handed in my resignation <,> i thought well bugger you
BD: mm mm <latch>
CO: why should i have to put up with that
(WSC, DPC311:0555-0615)

(2) KK: well i rang up the health department
HH: mm
AN: oh yeah
KK: and she looked up a little book sort of showing cos they would get regular updates
AN: mm
HH: mm
AN: mm
KK: of the countries
HH: mm
AN: yeah
→ KK: saying you know um this is what you need
AN: mm mm
→ KK: and then you go to your doctor and say this is what i want
AN: mm
HH: mm
AN: some doctors don’t know (WSC, DPC008:0675-0760)

This observation has prompted a more detailed analysis of the construction exemplified above, termed demonstrative cleft (following Biber et al.), whose results are reported here. The current paper makes a distinction between demonstrative clefts and other cleft types, in particular reversed wh-clefts – the type which has most frequently been understood as including demonstrative clefts (this is discussed in section 3.1). As will be argued in section 3, demonstrative clefts have distinct structural properties, as well as discourse functions. Therefore, their separate treatment will help bring to light some of these characteristics and thus provide increased understanding of the reasons for their usage in spoken language.

The analysis of some 205 demonstrative clefts shows that, structurally, the cleft construction is based on spatial deixis resulting from the demonstrative pronouns that and this1 which appear in the cleft constituent slot. The WSC data show that the demonstrative cleft has anaphoric, cataphoric, and exophoric ties to the surrounding discourse. Furthermore, it can be used to point to phrases, clauses or entire portions

1 This-clefts are extremely rare in the WSC data (only 13 examples were found) and consequently, little can be concluded about their function and usage. Previous work classifies them as cataphoric clefts, pointing to upcoming discourse (see for example, Miller & Weinert 1998).

of discourse; however, the tendency is for extended reference spanning longer, more complex clauses, rather than single phrases (section 3.). Finally, the material which the demonstrative cleft points to can be located as far prior to the cleft as three or more turns. In other words, the two elements which lie at the core of the demonstrative cleft are the notion of deixis and that of loose discourse dependencies. This intricate relationship between the demonstrative cleft and the rest of the discourse in which it is found help illustrate the give and take relation between speaker and listener, and the means by which speakers try to ensure understanding of the important parts of their message.

This brings us to the function of the demonstrative cleft in the spoken discourse. The construction is frequently used to talk about or discuss a previous act of communication, that is, outlining what someone else had said, or what the speaker or listener have said. It is also used to explain the relationship between previously mentioned ideas in discourse, or to state the speaker’s opinion about a previously stated idea or entity. Additionally, demonstrative clefts can serve as a highlighting device. Finally, the clefts constitute a means for taking the floor without committing a face-threatening act. Overall, the role of the demonstrative cleft can be summed up as a discourse organisational one, where the construction can be understood as regulating the flow of the interaction and contributing to the general comprehension of the discourse.

Given the strong relationship of the demonstrative cleft to the surrounding discourse, it is important to briefly mention some of the characteristics of the linguistic medium which it occurs in, namely spoken language (section 2).

2. Spoken and written language

Speech contrasts in many ways with writing, from the conditions under which it is produced (improptu, typically unplanned) to the kinds of constraints by which it is limited (memory and processing constraints), and the types of features it uses in order to ensure the success of the interaction (prosodic features and body language). Some of the most important properties associated with unplanned spoken language are summarized below: (from Miller & Weinert 1998, Chafe 1994 and Biber et al. 1999):

- It lacks prior planning, being produced in real time, impromptu.
- It lacks editing.
- It involves pitch, amplitude, rhythm, and voice quality.
- It is limited by short-term memory in both speaker and hearer (it has been said by psycholinguist George Miller that the short-term memory can hold 7+/−2 bits of information, cf. Miller 1956).
- It is typically used in face-to-face interaction, which allows the use of body language: gestures, eye-gaze, facial expressions and so on.
• It has an “evanescent quality” of “echoic memory” (Chafe 1994:42).
• It has no portability, cannot be preserved through time and space in its original form. Although recordings are nowadays possible, conversations are, usually, not carried out with this possibility in mind.
• It is faster than writing, but slower than reading (depending, of course, on reading ability).
• It is said to be more natural than writing, since humans are “wired up” to speak and generally people do not require instruction to pick up “speaking” (Chafe 1994:43), although as communicators, this activity is what we are engaged in most often.

In spite of such considerable differences between the two mediums, most linguistic research still concentrates on the analysis and description of written language. This may be because some linguists, Chomsky in particular, have completely disregarded the study of spoken language on the basis that speech is “scattered”, “restricted in scope”, “degenerate in quality”, and full of “non-sentences”, “fragments, and deviant expressions” (Chomsky 1965). Huddleston & Pullum (2002:12) also characterize it as comprising “sporadic interruptions and imperfections” and a high number of “disfluencies”.

However, not everyone agrees. Labov discredits what he terms the “widespread myth that most speech is ungrammatical” (1972:201). Studies by Miller (1994) and Miller & Weinert (1998) also show that “spontaneous spoken language has its own regular characteristics of grammar and discourse organization” and is therefore worth investigating in more detail (Miller & Weinert 1998:426).

Linguists have busied themselves with writing detailed grammars for how we write various languages, for example English, German and Chinese, without sparing much thought for how we speak them. This is despite the fact that we speak much more than we write, and also that we learn to speak well before we learn to write, if at all (since a significant number of people never actually learn to write). Furthermore, typologists have often overlooked the possibility that while spoken varieties of the same language exhibit numerous contrasts to their written counterparts, it is possible to find similarities between these spoken varieties and languages which have never been written, such as Australian Aboriginal languages. For instance, the Australian language Ngandi differs in clause type from written English but has certain structures in common with spoken English; cf. Miller & Weinert (1998:353).

In recent times, with the advent of technological advances, the research on spoken corpora has taken off and yielded several generalisations about the grammar of spontaneous, spoken language, as summarized by Leech in his 2000 review paper. These include the following (taken from Leech 2000:694–702):

• conversational grammar reflects a shared context;
• conversational grammar avoids elaboration or specification of reference;
• conversational grammar is interactive grammar;
• conversational grammar highlights affective content: personal feelings and attitudes;
• conversational grammar has a restricted and repetitive lexico-grammatical repertoire;
• conversational grammar is adapted to the needs of real-time processing.

The findings confirm that the syntax of spontaneous, unplanned speech reflects, on the one hand, the purpose of the spoken mode (that is, fast transfer of information, typically geared for solidarity-building and interpersonal relationship development), and on the other, the conditions under which it is produced (off-the-cuff, spontaneously produced utterances).

What is more controversial, however, is the finding that speech is not degenerate or derivative. In fact, many constructions which occur in spoken English are recurring and persistent, rather than isolated occurrences. Furthermore, these types of constructions can also be found in the spoken varieties of other languages, such as German, Russian, French and Australian Aboriginal languages (see Miller & Weinert 1998 for details).

3. The demonstrative cleft in speech

The construction which constitutes the focus of this research is the cleft. Clefts are the result of a simple (or complex, in some few cases) clause being ‘cleaved’ for the purpose of focusing or highlighting one of its constituents. For example, the clause in (3) can be cleaved to focus its subject, Mary (4a–c) or its object, a long holiday (4d–f). English is one of the richest languages when it comes to cleft types; the major ones being exemplified in (4), namely, it-clefs, wh-clefs and reversed wh-clefs.

(3) Mary asked for a long holiday.

(4) a. It is Mary who asked for a long holiday. (it-cleft, focusing subject)
b. Who asked for a long holiday is Mary. (wh-cleft, focusing subject)
c. Mary is who asked for a long holiday. (reversed wh-cleft, focusing subject)
d. It is a long holiday that Mary asked for. (it-cleft, focusing object)
e. What Mary asked for is a long holiday. (wh-cleft, focusing object)
f. A long holiday is what Mary asked for. (reversed wh-cleft, focusing object)
Cleft sentences contain three major components: the cleft constituent, which is a phrase or clause that is being highlighted or focused, the copula verb (in English, be), and the cleft clause, containing the remaining parts of the original sentence (it-clefts also involve a fourth element, namely the cleft pronoun it).

A different way of looking at clefts is to think of them as variable-value pairings, where the variable is expressed by the cleft clause, and the value by the cleft constituent. So for instance, in (4a–c), the variable is the person who asked for a long holiday, and its value is Mary. Similarly, in (4d–f), the variable is what Mary asked for, and its associated value is a long holiday.

The cleft clause is embedded and dependent on the cleft construction, thus bringing into play the notion of subordination. Evidently, when the original clause is itself complex (rather than simple), the cleft constituent may involve an entire clause, thus having a cleft construction with two dependent clauses (the cleft constituent clause and the cleft clause), as given in (5). Although exemplified by Huddleston & Pullum (2002:1422), these types of clefts are infrequent in the spoken data.

(5) [What I was wondering] cleft clause was [when Joan and Mike would come down to visit us] cleft constituent.

3.1. The demonstrative cleft

As mentioned in the introduction, the construction which this study reports on, namely, the demonstrative cleft was analysed by exploring excerpts of conversation from the Wellington Corpus of Spoken New Zealand English (Holmes 1998). The corpus was collected by a team of researchers at the Victoria University of Wellington in 1992, in the city of Wellington, which is located in the south of the North Island (New Zealand). The WSC comprises approximately one million words, and includes broadcast news, weather reports, sports commentary, judge’s summation, lectures, teacher monologues, telephone conversations, face-to-face conversations, oral history interviews, social dialect interviews, radio talkback, broadcast interviews, parliamentary debates, and speech excerpts from transactions and meetings.

The most substantial part of the corpus comes from spontaneous unplanned face-to-face conversations, totalling 500,332 words. Each recorded conversation is ten minutes long and may involve between two and four speakers. The conversations were conducted in participants’ own homes, without an interviewer present or a given topic of discussion. Speakers were given mini-disc recorders which they themselves started and left on for at least 30 minutes. Ten minute excerpts were chosen from each recording, in such a way to allow for the bias of speakers being nervous or aware of being recorded (for example, ignoring the very beginning of the conversation). As already seen in previous examples, the transcriptions of
the conversations (and the rest of the corpus data) include various discourse features, such as laughter, coughing, pauses, latches and overlaps.

An inspection of approximately 200,000 words of spontaneous unplanned conversation from the WSC (88 conversations) reveals that one particular cleft construction is much more frequent than the other major cleft types identified above. This construction is given in italics in examples (6) and (7).

(6) KT: cos you see <quietly>
   RW: see the thing is too if she does get in there i mean even if she gets in into the school with a permanent position <latch>
   KT: mm <latch>
   RW: it’s not as if she has to stay on and s STAY in kyle’s room <latch>
   → KT: no well that’s right and that’s what i was thinking IF she won the position i mean these are all big ifs eh if she won the position she would be able to if you guys were all to go
      (WSC, DPC346:0145-0190)

(7) LR: i should go on one of those programmes mind you i’m now a half hearted smoker
   QT: <laughs>
   → LR: one packet lasts me a week and manuka suggested i give it away and i said i would like to actually eventually <,> to stop altogether and then i get with friends who all puffing up large frantically puffing <,> and then i think oh that’s what i used to look like
   QT: yeah <&> 17 <&>
      (WSC, DPC334:1115-1150)

Constructions such as that’s what i was thinking and that’s what i used to look like share a number of properties with the other major cleft types. Like these, they also involve the copula be and a free relative clause (i.e., the cleft clause), and similarly to reversed wh-clefts, this relative-like clause is introduced by a wh-word.

Furthermore, these clefts can be ‘uncleaved’ to the original simple sentence (I was thinking that in 6, I used to look like that in 7).

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2 This occurrence will be quantified in the following section.
3 The exact status of the cleft clause minus the wh-word is still up for debate, with some claiming it is a relative clause (Huddleston & Pullum 2002:1414–1417), and others disputing these claims (Quirk et al. 1985:953, Miller 1999:19, Sornicola 1988:46).
4 However, similarly to a number of it-clefts, not all demonstrative clefts can be ‘un-cleaved’. This option appears to be dependent on the type of wh-word used. Un-cleaving appears to be possible only with what-clefts, as indicated above, but not with why-clefts (*Why I went home is this/that), how much-clefts (*How much it costs is this/that), or when-clefts (*When I went there is this/that).
Finally, where constructions bear focal stress, this falls on the cleft constituent. All these similarities have led to the classification of the constructions such as those in (6) and (7) as clefts (Collins 2004, Huddleston & Pullum 2002, Lambrecht 2001, Hedberg 2000, Biber et al. 1999, Miller 1996, Miller & Weinert 1998, Trotta 2000, to name just a few).

However, while there is agreement regarding their status as clefts, their more specific classification is still unclear. Most researchers have grouped them together with reversed wh-clefts due to their structural similarities (Collins 1987, 2004; Lambrecht 2001; Miller 1996a; Weinert & Miller 1996). I will come back to this issue in section 3.2.

On the other hand, Biber et al. (1999) mention the constructions separately from the other cleft types and term them demonstrative clefts. Following the logic used in labelling wh-clefts and it-clefts, an appropriate label for examples (6) and (7) may seem to be ‘th-cleft’. However, this term is already used by Ball (1977) and Hedberg (1990) to refer to clefts which have a demonstrative pronoun or third person plural pronoun as their initial element, followed by the copula verb, a foregrounded noun phrase (the cleft constituent), and a relative clause (the cleft clause). Examples include sentences like *This is my drink bottle you are using*, *That’s serious self-esteem problems he’s having* and *They’re big bucks she is earning in that job*. While these clefts may be similar to those in examples (6) and (7) in their involvement of demonstrative pronouns, they have different structure and discourse functions, and are beyond the scope of the paper. Accordingly, Ball and Hedberg place th-clefts within the broader category of it-clefts.

To complicate matters, Collins (1991a) also uses the term ‘th-cleft’. However, his ‘th-clefts’ refer to clefts whose initial element is a pro-noun (following Halliday & Hassan 1976) such as *thing, one, place, time, reason, way,* and so on, such as *The thing this car needs is a new battery* and *The way I see it is that he needs to get a new job*. Accordingly, while Ball and Hedberg’s ‘th-cleft’ belongs together with it-clefts, Collins argues that his ‘th-cleft’ belongs with wh-clefts.

In light of the confusion surrounding the term ‘th-cleft’, the label cited by Biber et al. (1999) – ‘demonstrative cleft’ – is adopted henceforth to refer to constructions such as those given in examples (6) and (7). Demonstrative clefts include only cleft constructions which have a demonstrative pronoun in initial position. Their components can be expressed by the formula given in Figure 1.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Cleft constituent} & \equiv \text{demonstrative pronoun + copula + [wh-word + wh-clause]} \\
\text{Cleft clause} &
\end{align*}
\]

Figure 1. Demonstrative clefts

As will be argued in the following section, disentangling the demonstrative cleft from other cleft types (in particular, reversed wh-clefts) uncovers unique properties of this cleft type which might otherwise go unnoticed.

3.2. *Demonstrative clefts are a separate cleft type*

The reasons for treating demonstrative clefts as a distinct construction relate to both evidence from the corpus data investigated and theoretical considerations. The 200,000 words of spontaneous, unplanned conversation taken from the WSC have been manually coded for demonstrative clefts, wh-clefts, reversed wh-clefts and *it*-clefts. The current work reports on the findings relating specifically to the demonstrative cleft, but occasionally, makes reference to the other cleft types identified.

3.2.1. *Demonstrative clefts are the most frequent cleft in conversation*

The portions of conversation analysed show that the demonstrative cleft is significantly the most frequent cleft found in speech. Interestingly, the reversed wh-cleft, the cleft type most closely associated with the demonstrative cleft, is at the other end of the scale, being the least used cleft; see figures given in Table 1.

The figures in Table 1 raise questions as to why the demonstrative cleft should be so common in spoken data. Moreover, they also question why the one cleft type which is most often associated with it, namely the reversed wh-cleft, should be so rarely found in conversation. The vast differences in usage between the various types of clefts, and in particular, between reversed wh-clefts and demonstrative clefts, suggest that these constructions are sufficiently different from each other to lead to the patterns observed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cleft type</th>
<th>Raw counts</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrative clefts</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>it</em>-clefts</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh-clefts</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reversed wh-clefts</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 A two-tailed Chi Squared test shows very strong evidence against non-randomness of the distribution given in the table; \(\chi^2(3) = 194.000, p > 0.0001\) (although equal expected counts of each cleft type were assumed).
3.2.2. Demonstrative clefts point to long portions of discourse

As mentioned in section 3.1, demonstrative clefts have been most closely associated with reversed wh-clefts. However, despite their structural similarities, demonstrative clefts involve demonstrative pronouns, whereas reversed wh-clefts contain fully referential phrases, most commonly noun phrases, but also prepositional phrases and full clauses (though these latter two are not found in spontaneous, unplanned speech); as exemplified in (8) where the cleft constituents have been underlined. This distinction between the two clefts turns out to have several important consequences, resulting in significant differences between the constructions.

(8) a. A good book is what I wish for on a cold, rainy evening.
   b. In cold winters and hot summers is when we most need good air-conditioning.
   c. That no work is required from them is what everyone wants to hear.

First, the full referentiality of the cleft constituent in reversed wh-clefts means that the cleft provides the unique variable given by the cleft clause, as well as its value, expressed by the cleft constituent. In demonstrative clefts, however, the cleft constituent is a deictic, directing the audience to the value, while not actually providing it. The value is found elsewhere, most frequently, co-textually (earlier or later in the discourse), but also extra-linguistically (either by being assumed as world knowledge, or by being physically present at the time of the utterance). Furthermore, this value is sometimes vague and altogether difficult to pin point exactly. Examples (9)–(21) illustrate the various types of values which demonstrative clefts may refer to.

(9) AT: the trees are there and this is on a kind of um thing but the wetland is sort of HERE that’s th the ditch is along the side of it really
   → BU: that’s where that green paddock is isn’t it mm
   AT: and then it comes in here

In example (9), the cleft constituent that from the demonstrative cleft that’s where that green paddock is isn’t it, points to the earlier clause the wetland is sort of HERE. We do not really know what the participants are doing exactly, but it can be deduced from the context that one is physically showing the other the location in question (i.e., HERE) on a map. In contrast, a reversed wh-cleft like the one in (10), contains the value a good holiday for the variable what we all need from time to time.

(10) A good holiday is what we all need from time to time.

In light of the deictic role of their cleft constituents, demonstrative clefts are often used to point to larger portions of discourse, typically entire
clauses or several groups of clauses. These would be difficult to integrate syntactically and cognitively (for planning and processing reasons) in reversed wh-cleft constructions. Although we are told by Huddleston & Pullum (2002:1421ff) that actual clauses (both finite and non-finite) can appear in the cleft constituent slot of reversed wh-clefts, this possibility is not realized in conversations analysed from the WSC. The examples included in (11), inspired from the basic wh-cleft sentences given by Huddleston & Pullum, (2002:1421–1422, exs. 26, 27), show some reversed wh-clefts with full clauses (given in italics) in their cleft constituent slots.

(11) a. You don’t have to come if you don’t want to is what I meant.
   b. Why they didn’t accept the offer in the first place is what I want to know.
   c. Having to fill in these forms is what annoys me.
   d. Simply repeating what his wife said is what he’s doing.

As far as clause complexes (that is, more than one clause) are concerned, these have not been attested as ever occurring in the cleft constituents of reversed wh-clefts.

According to the WSC data, demonstrative clefts are, for the most part, textually-deictic, pointing to various parts of the discourse (forwards, backwards or both at the same time, ambiguously), and in particular anaphoric, as exemplified in (12) and (13). Exact figures are given in Table 2, in what follows on p. 93. First, we consider the various possibilities found.

(12) AD: i thought you’d only done four this is your fourth
   BF: no this is my fifth it’s kirsty’s fourth would you believe it <,,>
   → AD: i thought your degree WAS four years that’s what it was <latch>
                  (WSC, DPC028:0510-0525)

In example (13), the cleft that’s what it was points back inside the previous clause, to the noun phrase four years. Similarly, in (13), the antecedent of the demonstrative pronoun is the previous clause.

(13) DV: no they don’t <,> that’s actually that’s actually <laughs> an illusion they suck in darkness <,> they’re darkness suckers they suck the darkness out of the air? <,,>
   MK: <laughs> oh BUNG
   → DV: <laughs> no it’s true there’s all this air around you know it’s all got darkness and when you turn the light bulb on it sucks the darkness out that’s why it looks brighter
   MK: <laughs> and why doesn’t other darkness rush in from outside there to still be here (WSC, DPC014:0014-1070)
After the frequent anaphoric demonstrative clefts, the second most commonly occurring clefts are those which function – at the same time – anaphorically and cataphorically. Consider example (14):

(14) UV: that’s where <,> the hip joins on to the pelvis
    BH: mm
    UV: isn’t it
    BH: sort of yeah it’s in that area <,,> 3 & >< & >
    UV: too much fat <,> on that arse
→ BH: <sighs> that’s where it all goes to
    UV: yep
    BH: straight to the hips
    UV: yep don’t know why
    BH: it’s just women

(WSC, DPC214:0435-0490)

The cleft uttered by BH is backward-oriented, in that it picks up the point made by UV about the fat going being stored on the arse, but at the same time, it is also forward-looking, in that it points to the upcoming phrase straight to the hips. Demonstrative clefts can function in this way, as bridging opportunities for speakers to take the floor or to provide encouragement and agreement with a previous comment by another speaker. They are used to manage the discourse flow, or as Oberlander & Delin (1996:220) write of reversed wh-clefts, they serve to “communicate transaction management information about the ongoing discourse”.

Additionally, demonstrative clefts can also function cataphorically, as in (15).

(15) JM: i bought a computer
    FR: did you
    JM: twenty dollars
    FR: what
    JM: well it doesn’t work <,> but i’m going
    FR: who’s going to make it work <latch>
→ II: oh that's what i forgot today i forgot to get a whole lot of printing done on my <latch>
    AG: oh yes it is

(WSC, DPC068:0975-1015)

In example (15), the cleft that’s what I forgot today is followed by its value i forgot to get a whole lot of printing done on my [...]. The value does not appear anywhere in the previous discourse. Note that this example brings evidence against the classical claim that cleft clauses are presup-

6 Their category of reversed wh-cleft includes what I term here demonstrative clefts, but their comments are more representative of and applicable to demonstrative clefts than to reversed wh-clefts since the former greatly outnumber the latter in their data sample (280 demonstrative clefts vs. 23 reversed wh-clefts.)
posed, since under these circumstances, it would be impossible for the participants to know that the speaker had forgotten something prior to hearing the cleft.

Some clefts function as spatial deictics, pointing to entities physically present at the time of the utterance; however, these are infrequent. One example is given in (16):

(16) BH: and course i was in old <laughs> track pants and sweat top and paora was in his anorak or raincoat went up to the bar and tawhai come round and saw us and there were all these people sitting around the bar in suits <laughs> and tawhai come up and goes sorry don’t serve maoris at <laughs> this bar <laughs> well these people just about choked on their drinks didn’t know where to look <laughs>

UV: yeah oh <laughs> 5</&> <,> & 21</&> what’s is that the hip no

BH: no it’s not it’s more in the <,> don’t know

→ UV: just it’s a little bit that’s where <,> the hip joins on to the pelvis

BH: mm

UV: isn’t it

BH: sort of yeah it’s in that area <,> 3</&>

UV: too much fat <,> on that arse

BH: <sighs> that’s where it all goes to

(WSC, DPC214:0365-0465)

In example (17), the participants are discussing a cartoon (from the collection Far Side). The demonstrative clefts this is what the human says, and this is what the dog understands are slightly ambiguous here since we do not know if the are used to point to the actual speech bubble drawn in the cartoon as being what the human is saying, and what the dog is understanding/hearing, respectively; or if they are used to point to the participant’s impersonations of what the cartoon was depicting. It is most likely that the person mimics the cartoon depicted, rather than actually producing the piece of paper with it – though we do not know for sure. Nevertheless, in either case, the clefts are used as spatial deictics, rather than as discourse deictics.

(17) BH: YEAH YEAH

AW: blah blah blah blah blah

BH: blah blah <laughs>

AW: cosmos <latch>

→ BH: this is this is what the human says this is what the dog understands <laughs>

AW: yeah he looked up at me before you know as much to say well i know you’re saying my name but i don’t know what else you’re doing <laughs> <,> (WSC, DPC32:0075-0110)
There are also a handful of cases, in which the reference point of the demonstrative pronoun cannot be fully recovered, either because it is not specifically elaborated on in the discourse (as in 18), or because it is only implied and never actually made known (see 19). In both cases, the precise point of reference of the cleft constituent is not relevant to the discussion; the deictic force of the demonstrative pronoun is merely there to illustrate the point being made.

(18) AS: megan’s got one
   PP: <unclear word>
   AS: or a sleeping bag
   PP: yeah
   XX: thank you very much sorry to you know <laughs> come
       and crash at short notice
   \rightarrow AS: well that’s what that’s what it’s all about
   XX: megan’s always good to me like this
   AS: yeah so how long have you got to go in your course

(WSC, DPC078:0870-0910)

In the example above, the demonstrative cleft that’s what it’s all about is a formulaic expression; the cleft constituent does not actually point to anything in particular. The cleft could be treated as an idiom, since its interpretation cannot be deduced from the individual components used. Instead, the cleft is a general means of expressing overall approval or encouragement (rather than explaining what something is literally about).

Similarly, in (19), the participants are discussing a trip to the doctor and speaker KK is detailing what actually happens, i.e., the patient explains the problem, and then the doctor suggests an appropriate prescription. This is done with the help of demonstrative this-cleft, whose precise reference is not explicitly stated, but only implied (i.e., whatever the health department has found in the book), since it the exact details are not relevant to the purpose of the explanation.

(19) AN: yeah
    \rightarrow KK: saying you know um this is what you need
    AN: mm mm
    \rightarrow KK: and then you go to your doctor and say this is what i want
    AN: mm
    HH: mm
    AN: some doctors don’t know

(WSC, DPC008:0725-0760)

What is more, in some cases, it is difficult to pin point exactly what the demonstrative cleft refers to because it may point to an entire portion of discourse, without actually making reference to one particular part of it; its reference being rather vague. For instance, in example (20), speaker BF tells the story of running late to a (music) class and having to scramble to find a seat due to the lack of available chairs. In one of her turns, the
speaker utters the demonstrative cleft *that’s what i think anyway*, without actually making clear which portion of the previous discourse she refers to. The cleft constituent points back (vaguely) to what had been discussed, without picking up any particular point made.

(20) BF: yeah especially if you’ve got classes running after one after the other and i mean yeah  
AD: <clears throat>  
BF: oh <,,> stop <„,> one class and you’ve got to piddle over to the next one really you’re bound to meet heaps of people <laughs> on the way you’ve got to push <laughs>  
AD: you’re sprinting <laughs> pushing everyone else out of the front of the line  
BF: <laughs> no  
AD: i would  
BF: <laughs>  
AD: i know <laughs> you’d just arrive late shame no seats in the aisle or <unclear word> <laughs>  
→ BF: <laughs> but then we’ve got to catch <&> 2</&> it up mm so it’s best to try and get along to every *that’s what what i think anyway* i know some people manage to cope really well missing heaps but they do heaps of r either reading or they’ve just a really good brain and they can see how it all connects but i’ve got to kind of do a bit more work  
AD: mm mm (WSC, DPC028:0090-0175)

Finally, the last possibility, which has not been, to my knowledge, mentioned in the literature, is for *that*-clefts to occur in the middle of the phrase, clause or portion of discourse to which they are pointing to. Example (21) gives a demonstrative cleft, *THAT’S what i was going to tell you*, which appears to ‘break up’ the clause *they lost for the first time in*... .

(21) DD: i just um you saw a c milan lost <latch>  
→ SM: yeah they lost to the *THAT’S what i was going to tell you*  
DD: yeah i saw that <latch>  
SM: in the northern <unclear word> (WSC, DPC172:0300-0320)

To sum up the discussion so far, we have seen that unlike reversed *wh*-clefts, demonstrative clefts have the unique ability (in some cases) of being used to point to both anaphoric and cataphoric material. Thus, it can be said that anaphoric-cataphoric demonstrative clefts are somewhat vague in their reference (since it is sometimes not clear whether the speaker is using the cleft to refer back to previous material and then realizing that the audience may not be able to pick the correct referent utters that material again, following the cleft; or whether the speaker is
simply repeating the material already referenced by the demonstrative pronoun for focusing purposes).

Table 2 summarizes the frequencies of each of the demonstrative clefts discussed above. The first column of the table shows the direction in which the demonstrative pronoun points in, the second column shows the raw frequencies with which each type occurs, followed by a percentage figure, and finally, the last column gives the number of the example(s) which illustrate each category.

Table 2. Cleft constituents and their reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Raw counts</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Example(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anaphoric</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>(12), (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cataphoric</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>(15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exophoric</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically present</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(16), (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not explicit (implied)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(18), (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One question to be asked regarding demonstrative clefts and their reference in discourse is what is type of material do they point to? We have seen that, for example, reversed wh-clefts can have phrases or single clauses (though the latter are not attested in spoken language) in their cleft constituent slots. In demonstrative clefts, the cleft constituent is a deictic demonstrative pronoun, which is typically discourse deictic (90% of the time according to the WSC data). The question is how far does the deixis extend to? Can the cleft constituent point to phrases, clauses, or whole portions of discourse? The answer turns out to be all of the above, as will be shown in what follows.

These issues have been investigated for reversed wh-clefts by Collins (1991b, 1991a, 2004). However, his category of reversed wh-clefts also includes demonstrative clefts, and in fact, similarly to the data analysed by Oberlander & Delin (1996), it is by and large made up of demonstrative clefts. Collins distinguishes between extended and non-extended reference. Although he does not specify the precise difference between extended reference and non-extended reference himself (i.e., how long the portion of discourse is required to be in order to be considered “extended”), we can refer to Halliday & Hasan (1976) for a description:

... extended reference differs from usual instances of reference only in extent – the referent is more than just a person or object, it is a process or sequence of processes (grammatically, a clause or string of clauses, not just a single nominal)... (Halliday and Hassan 1976:52).
Following the approach taken by Collins, spoken demonstrative clefts have been investigated with respect to the types of reference involved. The present investigation considers more specific types of reference, distinguishing between phrases, clauses, and complex clauses (or longer portions of discourse). Additionally, these distinctions are determined for each direction type, anaphoric, cataphoric clefts, and also clefts which are simultaneously anaphoric and cataphoric (the category labeled “both” in Table 2).

The analysis conducted by Collins has been criticized by Delin & Oberlander (1996:193) for being too rigid to be applicable to structures that are in many ways “two-faced” since they can refer the audience to “preceding discourse, but additionally cohering cataphorically with what follows”. This is a valid point, as confirmed by the data from the WSC itself (see example 14), in that it is not always clear what the demonstrative pronoun points to (note that there are several unclear cases listed in the table as well). However, in spite of these few examples, the investigation does render several interesting conclusions and is indeed worth conducting. The frequencies found are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 gives four columns, including the number of constructions which point to material coded by a single phrase (first block), or by a single clause (second block down), or finally, by a entire portion of discourse (that is, several clauses). The totals for each category are given in the fourth column in raw counts and also percentages. Finally, each of the three groups is divided up into the various subtypes coding where the value is found with respect to the cleft constructions. Thus, there are (raw) counts of clefts which point forwards, backwards, or both at the same time, or in the middle of the cleft itself, for each of the three different types of demonstrative clefts identified.

Table 3. Demonstrative clefts, direction of reference and reference material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Material</th>
<th>Direction</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phrase</td>
<td>Anaphoric</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>75 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cataphoric</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause</td>
<td>Anaphoric</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>62 (34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cataphoric</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portion of discourse</td>
<td>Anaphoric</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>49 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cataphoric</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the table concerns only *textually* deictic clefts, that is, it excludes clefts pointing to physically present entities, nothing at all, and those placed in the “unclear” category (19 examples in total).
The first observation to be made is that there does not appear to be any definitive relationship between direction in which the cleft constituent is pointing in, and the type of material it is referring to. There is an even spread over the three different categories (phrase, clause and portion of discourse) between the anaphoric, and “both” categories (anaphoric and cataphoric); that is, from each total number of constructions, roughly a third of the anaphoric clefts occur over each of the three categories, and roughly a third of the “both” clefts occur over each of the three categories as well. The two “middle” cleft constructions are concentrated in the extended reference (taken here to mean clauses or longer portions of discourse), rather than non-extended reference type; however, two examples are hardly enough to make up a representative sample. What is more telling is the fact that cataphoric clefts appear concentrated in the “phrase” group. That is, clefts pointing forward in the discourse tend to point to simple, shorter material, limited to a single phrase. Although five examples are also not enough to make a strong case, it is reasonable to assume that speakers may be using cataphoric clefts to point to less cognitively costly material, that is, single phrases. The hypothesis requires further investigation, in a bigger sample of cleft constructions.

Secondly, and more importantly for our purposes, most demonstrative clefts tend to point to either whole clauses or entire portions of discourse, in other words, they are oriented towards extended reference (60% of constructions). In other words, while reversed wh-clefts typically have cleft constituents expressed by single phrases (or at most complex phrases), demonstrative clefts provide a way of involving values (though admittedly, outside the cleft proper) which are more complex, spanning one or more clauses.

One last feature of analysis considered here has to do with the location in discourse of the value of the demonstrative cleft, with respect to the cleft construction. One way to map this location is by counting the number of turns preceding or following the demonstrative cleft where the value is found. When the value and cleft are produced by the same speaker, these often (though not necessarily always) occur together in the same turn, as in example (22).

(22) LL: well we weren’t very clear at the time
    RR: i TOLD her
    → LL: I wasn’t clear i was thinking <,> oh yeah it depends
        where it’s going to take place remember that’s what i said
    MM: <unclear word>
    RR: and then when you said that this is a greater event
        than
    LL: mhm
    RR: than her
    LL: mhm <latch> (WSC DPC007:0180-0220)
On the other hand, if the value is uttered by a different speaker, it usually occurs in the turn directly preceding the one containing the cleft construction, as in (23).

(23)\(^8\)

RR: you just want to talk to her like that
LL: yeah just tell her <latch>
RR: do you want to make her cry
LL: no that's what YOU want to do
RR: no <latch>
LL: DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO

(WSC, DPC007:0060-0085)

Additionally, there are cases when the value occurs two turns before the cleft, as in (24) below, or even a good several turns before the cleft, as exemplified in (25).

(24)

FG: you think he would have the right technique <latch>
RW: i mean i sort of feel RATHER ill at ease about the
<laughs> thought of going and trying to chat up a whole
lot of men on a building site <latch>
FG: you might not be the most appropriate person
\(\rightarrow\) RW: might not be the most appropriate person that's what i feel
<,> but it's actually k it's quite difficult and we hope the
other people from the other universities are also collecting
data

(WSC, DPC182:0370-0390)

(25)\(^9\)

OR: so one of those has got to come and make ME up eventually
but hap but gareth's opinion is the same as mine in reality is
that you go out and you take somebody out in the back yard
<&> 5:00 </&> maybe for a start off and spend a couple of
hours or so going over all the basics of things so until what
we'd like to call it a preliminary certificate’s passed where we
know that YOU can operate the ladder and from then on it
should be able to i should just be able to just go out with you
and nobody else on the ladder
WL: until yeah mm
OR: and do a training
WL: yep
OR: i want because the only way you get to know how to work the
thing is by getting out there and working it and the <latch>

\(^8\) Short interjections containing the single particles hmmm, right, or yes from other participants are not considered to break up a speaker’s turn. Similarly, long pauses are also considered to not have an effect on the counting of turns.

\(^9\) The value of the demonstrative cleft is not underlined here, as was done with the previous examples, because it would prove a distraction to the reader due to its length.
WL: yeah <latch> worst thing about it is with the senior station officer being the instructor is that the pump crew’s got to go everywhere the ladder is while we’re doing our training <sighs> yeah oh yeah like i was going to say because that changed with mind you when snoopy was made up to instructor cos thumper just used to go out and um <latch>

→ OR: with snoopy <latch> with snoop and if they had a fire call he just drove off to the fire call yeah well that’s what we hopefully we will be able to do although it’s going to be a hassle with me what i want to do is get clearance from clark to say look let wilbur take the pump (WSC, DPC291:0100-0170)

In example (25), the demonstrative cleft that’s what we hopefully we will be able to do refers to the whole portion of discourse mentioned earlier by speaker OR regarding going over all the basics of things, and introducing the training schedule for what would be termed the preliminary certificate and so on. In other words, the value of the cleft is extended and also occurs several turns prior in the discourse. It could be argued that the cleft is referentially ambiguous because it is not entirely clear where the referential portion of the discourse starts and where it ends. Furthermore, the structure of the cleft looks like an amalgam of two different constructions, namely the demonstrative clefts hopefully that’s we will be able to do, and the non-cleft version hopefully we will be able to do that.

As far as the cleft’s discourse functions goes, it is used to clarify to the other participant what has just been discussed (which would come under the title “what OR is going to do”), and to draw a line at the end of the topic, before embarking on a new one (note the marker although), concerning possible problems or hassles and where these come from.

Note that the values of demonstrative clefts never occur in any of the turns following that containing the cleft construction. One might expect that since anaphoric clefts can be used to point to material which occurs anywhere from immediately preceding the cleft construction up to several turns before it, the same could be true of cataphoric clefts in reverse direction (that is, forward in the discourse, as opposed to backwards). However, it seems that given information can be easily accessed even several minutes after it is uttered, whereas in contrast, forward planning does not go very far forward. Put another way, keeping activated material alive is less taxing on cognitive resources than planning ahead appears to be.

However, as exemplified in (26) and (27), all cataphoric clefts point to material which is directly upcoming in the discourse, in the same turn as the cleft construction itself.

In (26), the cleft value is the upcoming clause complex you shouldn’t eat before a show or you got tired, which is not mentioned previously anywhere in entire conversation excerpt.
(26) JL: yeah my head nodded er <unclear word> see the trouble
well th th
→ that’s what jim said you shouldn’t eat before a show or you got

tired or alcohol i suppose too (WSC, DPC319:0385-0400)

In example (27), speaker FN is relating stories from his childhood and what it was like to grow up with a policeman as a father. The cleft points forward to the pronominal he, to indicate where the speaker got it from, that is, what influenced his personality and behaviour (although it is not entirely clear from the conversation alone what that is, presumably the art of embarrassing people). It could be argued that the cleft may also be pointing anaphorically to the first mention of the noun phrase. However, it is only after the cleft is uttered that the speaker gets to explain the exact behaviour trait that he has acquired. It is almost as though the speaker is using the cleft as an opportunity to build-up to the climax of his stories about his father.

(27) FN: yeah<,> exactly<,> so it’s cool but he used to drop us off
 at school um when i was in sixth form <latch>
 MQ: oh yeah
 FN: and like he’s in a mufti car <latch> <&> 11:00 < /& >
 MQ: yeah
 FN: and we’d carey and i’d hop out the car and he’d put the siren
 on <latch>
 MQ: oh no<,> embarrassing
 → FN: just to say goodbye yes he did it on purpose<„> and he used
to like um<„> walk <laughs> this is where i got it from and
 um we used to walk along the street like in the hutt and he’d
 start going<„> <laughs> while he was walking along the
 street especially if we saw a friend <laughs> and like don’t
don’t you’re embarrassing me <latch>
 MQ: embarrassing oh no oh <latch> (WSC, DPC64:0840-0895)

Table 4 gives the number of turns where the values of the demonstrative clefts investigated in the WSC occur. The table gives the raw count (as well as percentages) of each of the types of clefts discussed, those whose values occur three or more turns before the cleft, two or more turns preceding it, one turn prior, and in the same turn. Recall that some clefts are used to point to upcoming as well as preceding discourse at the same time (“both” category). These clefts require a separate classification with regard to “number of turns”, since they point to two values, which are the same, but are produced in different turns (and sometimes, but not always, by different speakers), given in Table 4 under the label “multi-turn”. The figures above show that, typically, the values of the demonstrative clefts occur in the same turn as the cleft construction itself. It seems that the least common place for the cleft value to occur is two turns preceding
Table 4. Demonstrative clefts and the turns where their values occur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of turns</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three or more turns preceding cleft</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two turns preceding cleft</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One turn preceding cleft</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same turn as cleft</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-turn</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cleft construction. However, even though speakers tend to use demonstrative clefts to refer to entities within the immediate discourse (either in the same turn, or the one directly preceding it), it is interesting to note that we do indeed find some clefts (16%) which refer to material occurring so far back in the discourse as three or more turns.

3.2.3. Demonstrative clefts have distinctive roles to play in discourse

Reversed wh-clefts are said to have a summative, discourse-gathering role in discourse (Collins 2004, Herriman 2004, Miller & Weinert 1998), as illustrated in example (28), from Herriman (2004:464, ex. 22b).

(28) However, he advised the doctor to tell the local hospital that he proposed to send the patient to him and he would find that the date would be automatically advanced, which is what happened.

(B16 128 – FLOB Corpus)

Demonstrative clefts have a different role. Their macro-function (see Miller & Weinert 1998) is that of organizing the discourse, and in particular, of clarifying how parts of it relate to each other, and they are also used for managing the flow of conversation. They are, in this sense, procedural structures (Blakemore 1987).

This role explains, in part, their more frequent occurrence in unplanned, spontaneous speech in comparison to writing. Writing is (in its purest form) organized in a tight and concise manner, in paragraphs which are used to form sections that function as part of larger units, such as introduction, contents and conclusion.

Speech, on the other hand, and specifically, unplanned spontaneous speech, does not have such fixed internal structure, and special markers or constructions are needed to clarify how certain ideas link to each other, in order to ensure a smooth flow of conversation. This is precisely where demonstrative clefts come in, as will be illustrated in what follows from the WSC corpus.

There are several ways in which demonstrative clefts serve the role of organizing or regulating the discourse. Table 5 summarizes the various
discourse functions identified. The exact frequency of each function in the
data is not all that important. What is more interesting is the range of
functions found. The rest of this section will be spent discussing and
exemplifying each of the functions listed below.

The term “mode” is borrowed from Collins and is used to denote
situations which “represent the symbolic exchange of meaning that is
intrinsic to verbal communication” (1991b:502). Participants taking part
in informal, spontaneous conversation often focus on issues which have
to do with the management of the communicative transaction itself,
relating to what other people had said in the past. In other words, ‘talking
about talking’ constitutes an important part of unplanned, spontaneous
conversation. This includes direct speech, indirect speech, self-reported
thought and informing (or reminding) the hearer(s) who had previously
said something.

Examples (29) and (30) illustrate this function. In (29), speaker DN
uses the demonstrative cleft to reveal her thoughts in a particular
situation (self-reported thought).

(29) Speaker BF details an experience she had when she thought she
saw her dead mother standing by her bed, and then moves on
to talk about how she discovered that her son – mentioned here
as ‘he’ – also had this vision.

→ BT: he was it would be about fourteen or fifteen and
THEN i said to HIM oh that’s so strange because a
few days ago i saw the same thing now several years
later i picked up one of my books er cos i’ve got a lot
of um nonfiction books and this particular one i just
flicked it over and there it said a a a ball of energy
an orange light and i thought OH that might be what
happened i
must read that and i put the book BACK at that
stage and i was so busy doing other things at the
time and i went to look for it a few months later and
i looked in every book in the bookshelves and i can’t
find it (WSC, DPC121:0460-0470)

Table 5. The various types of functions of demonstrative clefts in
conversation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanatory</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighting cleft value</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Unclear</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When it comes to direct and indirect speech, demonstrative clefts are not used to actually provide portions of direct or indirect speech as such. Rather, the constructions function as markers signaling that a previous portion of discourse qualifies as direct or indirect speech, that is, in a quotative way. For instance, the cleft in example (30) mimics direct speech in that it gives an example for what BR would have been told when he approached the company about his tax statement. However, note that it is not a direct quote, but rather part of one, with some details missing.

(30) BR: i went down to where i was getting paid and they it /C213
        is a big company that <name of company> who does all my leasing
        um and they said we’ve never done a student loan before had to
        look it up so they got the book out <latch>
        JO: yeah <latch>
        → BR: oh yeah that’s how much we take off
        JO: have they got lots with the nineteen graduates that they
        <laughs> hired at mckabe’s this year
        (WSC, DPC302:0505-0535)

A second use of demonstrative clefts involves giving an explanation. Explanatory demonstrative clefts are of two types. The first type involves giving a reason for a point previously made. This is exemplified in (31), where the clefts uttered by FR, that’s what the chemist reckons, and that’s what estroscopy’s like give the reasons behind her previous utterance suggesting that she swallow a raw piece of spaghetti.

(31) MK: i’m getting claustrophobic
        DV: <laughs> claustrophobic have a piece of tubular spaghetti
        that’ll sort you out <&> 19:00 <"."> <&> 8 <&>
        → FR: i’d better try swallowing a piece when i’m before it’s cooked
        since that’s what the chemist reckons that’s what that’s what
        estroscopy’s like <laughs>.
        MK:HANG on
        DV: <laughs>
        MK: why don’t we stick that down have a look down there
        DV: oh yeah it’s got a hole
        MK: <laughs> mm
        (WSC, DPC014:0860-1585)

The second type of explanatory demonstrative cleft has a linkage function and is used to explain how two prior utterances, A and B, relate to each other, as in (32).

(32) BG: oh no she is lovely she’s gossipy though
        AT: mm
        → BG: very gossipy like bill that’s where bill gets it from
        AT: <unclear word> oh he is a little gossip talking about mike
        furley
        (WSC, DPC096:1765-1790)

The cleft *that’s where bill gets it from* helps explain the relationship between utterance A: *she’s gossipy though* and utterance B: *like bill*, that is B is the result of A.

This explanatory function is the most commonly found use of demonstrative clefts in the WSC data, with a roughly even distribution between clefts which state a reason for a prior statement (46 occurrences), and clefts indicating the relationship between two separate utterances (38 occurrences).

A related use of demonstrative clefts involves giving opinions, evaluations or assessments. In (33), RN’s demonstrative cleft *that’s just how i like it* is indicative of his assessment of the tea.

(33) Participants are having a “cuppa”, prepared earlier by RN. The talk prior to this moment revolves around SU’s job and pay, and suddenly, it switches to the drinks, presumably as RN is about to have a sip of her drink.

SU: HEY there’s yours down there <laughs>
RN: <laughs> yours is fuller you’d better drink it man <laughs> or else i’ll drink it
SU: i’m gonna drink it in a moment
→ RN: that’s nice eh *that’s just how i like it* <latch>
SU: oh <unclear word>
RN: cold
TM: cold?
SU: cold? <latch>
RN:yeah no i like it like this (WSC, DPC013:1010-1055)

Roughly 68% of evaluative demonstrative clefts (27 out of 40) express agreement with a previous comment made by another speaker (the rest express disagreement or neutral opinions). Agreement can be used for more than just merely signaling approval. At times, it is used to ensure the smooth flow of discourse and to keep the conversation going by showing solidarity and encouragement towards the current speaker. This is exemplified in (34), where FI’s agreement appears to support a continuation of the topic. The cleft has a formulaic flavour. It does not seem to have much to contribute to the contents of the conversation, and its components (*[that/this + be + happen]*) recur throughout the corpus.

(34)10 FI: so are you going to have to catch up on things when you get back
MD: yeah obviously it’s gonna be amazing eh and then next week’s just going to be so busy i mean everyone’s been apparently everyone’s been away <,,> so the payroll

10 Note that it is unclear whether the prepositional phrase *at work* belongs together with the cleft or not. The lack of a pause between the tag and the PP suggests that it does, however, the very presence of a tag, which normally occurs clause-finally, suggests otherwise.

FI: oh that’s see that’s what happens eh at work everyone g is sick at once
MD: yeah yeah i’ve been i’ve been off so many days it’s incredible
FI: oh god <latch>
MD: so it’s not going to look to good <latch>
FI: do you feel really BAD do you

(WSC, DPC023:0505-0470)

Secondly, agreement can also be a means of taking the floor in a polite manner, without threatening the face of the previous speaker, as in (35), where TS uses a demonstrative cleft to secure the floor and give her take on the situation. Note that the other participants, KA and LU do not challenge this change and concede their turn.

(35) LU: yeah we c we could kill you with over kill you with eating too much chocolate <,> overdose on chocolate <latch>
TS: oh no po poisoned <,> oh you mean just if there was just too much chocolate
KA: put a box of them out there <latch>
→ TS: actually that’s what i worry about is um <,> eating too m no is i eat enormous quantities of chocolate every day i’d have chocolate <latch>
KA: being poisoned are you addicted (WSC, DPC024:0395-0435)

One interesting point to note about this cleft is that the clause following it, eating too m is i eat enormous quantities of chocolate is still linked to the cleft, “sharing” the cleft clause with it (what i worry about is i eat enormous quantities of chocolate). We come back to these constructions in section 4.

Finally, we have the function of highlighting the value which the cleft points to. Clefts are known for their focusing properties, for example in it-clefts such as It was my work he stole, but it did not last long before he was found out, the cleft constituent is used to foreground the noun phrase my work.

Demonstrative clefts can also be used for highlighting purposes. However, they achieve this rather differently from other cleft constructions. In contrast to these, the actual value of the cleft is not specified by their cleft constituents, thus being outside the cleft construction itself. Instead of incorporating it, demonstrative clefts make use of deictic pointers to refer to it.

The way in which demonstrative clefts focus their values is as follows. The typical highlighting demonstrative cleft involves a value occurring in a clause directly preceding the cleft. The (upcoming) cleft contains a demonstrative pronoun which points back to that value, while the cleft clause restates information relating to it which is already known (or which can be assumed by the speaker). This process of “pausing” over the value and reconsidering it for a moment longer constitutes an effective means of
highlighting without cognitively burdening either speaker or hearer. Compactness of expression is not a priority in spoken language, in the way that it is in writing. However, speed and ease of production are. The formulaic nature of the demonstrative cleft allows precisely the speed and ease of production which is required in this linguistic medium.

Several examples illustrating the use of demonstrative clefts as highlighting devices are included below. In (36), speaker QT mentions nights being a weak point for her, when it is hardest to resist food cravings. She follows this up with the incomplete cleft *that’s when I usually get a ... referring back to the noun phrase, bringing it into focus again.*

(36) LR: and i think it’s a habit
→ QT: yeah it is <,> but that’s wh i must admit that’s my m my most vulnerable time now is still it’s the evenings and that’s even even though er i mean at least with m round round the corner there the the house was smoke free you know but so that’s that makes it a lot easier for me in giving up but i still find at nights i still think oh and *that’s when i get usually get a <inhales> i’ll go i wonder if i’ll have some chocolate biscuits or some*

LR: <laughs> <latch> hot toast with heaps of butter i melted butter in it
QT: but i haven’t put on any weight yet so i’ve been
LR: oh yeah
QT: i just keep drinking water eh (WSC, DPC334:1265-1315)

Similarly, in (37), AT emphasises the importance of food for her cat, Muffy, by stating the value (*food*) in an earlier clause (*if there’s food she knows*) and then refocusing on it with the help of the cleft (*that’s where her loyalty lies*).

(37) Speakers are briefly changing the topic of conversation to talk about the cat.

→ AT: muffy’s muffy didn’t even say hi to me she was just looking at the food
BG: so muffy doesn’t
→ AT: oh muffy acknowledges you but if there’s food she knows *that’s where her loyalty lies*
BG: fido acknowledges
AT: mm (WSC, DPC096:0140-0165)

Highlighting demonstrative clefts only appear to focus values uttered by the same speaker as that producing the cleft construction itself. That is, speakers use demonstrative clefts to highlight values which they themselves uttered, rather than other participants in the conversation. When a speaker intends to emphasize an element from another speaker’s turn, they typically repeat the element and then proceed to use a demonstrative cleft to highlight it, as in (38).
(38) KI: so you you guys are still just paying the rent as normal like you haven’t said you’re going to move <&> 11:00 </&>
AN: no <„> two fifty a fortnight’s a bit of a bang out of my pay
→ KI: two fifty a fortnight that’s what you’re paying or what
AN: yeah well with trina out <„> it’s an extra ninety bucks a mm
KI: oh hell yeah <„> <&> 3 </&> yeah i only get two seventy five at the nightclub <„> <laughs> a pittance <„>

Furthermore, as we have seen in the previous example, the value highlighted commonly occurs in the same turn as the cleft construction, or indeed not too distant from it. If, however, the value intended to be highlighted does occur in ‘isolation’ from the cleft construction, it is repeated after the cleft, see example (39).

(39) JN: mm <drawls> yes unlike a lot of people in the hostel i would think
BB: yeah
JN: they’re all too labelly and imagey and get on my nerves
BB: it’s even worse than last year
JN: it is when you not really blah <unclear word>
BB: but yeah
SS: <laughs> you’re the english law major <drawls> BLAH
→ JN: <laughs> you know about letting people into hostel that last year that was why it was really labelly and that
SS: <clears throat>
BB: yeah i suppose not to that extent that they are this year

This example is also interesting because it may elucidate why some researchers claim that the direction in which demonstrative clefts point in is frequently “two faced”, that is, both forwards as well as backwards (see comments by Oberlander & Delin 1996:193 relative to work by Collins 1991b, 1991a). The cleft in (39) appears to be one of these “two-faced” constructions. This classification may, however, be misguided. The cleft is understood as highlighting a value which is repeated, due to its distance to the current discourse, for clarification. In other words, it is not that the cleft points in both directions as it were; it only points backwards. What happens is that the speaker realises their audience might no longer be able to recall the value being highlighted, and therefore, decides to repeat it for clarification.

As a consequence of this analysis of demonstrative clefts as potential candidates for the “both” category, only 28 occurrences (i.e., 15% of the data) were found in which the cleft actually points both anaphorically and cataphorically at the same time. These are cases where the value is found directly (or almost directly) preceding the cleft construction and
then again directly following it (see the earlier example given in 14). In other words, in these cases, the repetition of the value after the cleft does not occur for clarification.

The last two examples discussed in this section concern demonstrative clefts whose different functions are difficult to tease apart. In such cases, one single construction appears to be used for several purposes, and it is unclear which role is dominant. Consider example (40) below.

(40) JG: i don’t care how sealed your suit is once you’ve let off a frag grenade it’s not going to be anything like as sealed as it used to be <latch>

→ TM: <drawls> yeah yeah that’s what i think they should actually say you should say i’ve fragged you and now i’m going to mm

JG: but and then i at that point you should be making some making a basic saving throw to to <&> 5 </&> go <drawls> er did we actually manage to keep the stuff out or not

(WSC, DPC073:0475-0495)

The demonstrative cleft that’s what i think they should actually say is, at the same time, used to discuss aspects of the communicative act (what people should say), and also expressing an opinion of what the speaker thinks should happen. In other words, it has both an evaluative flavour (providing a kind of agreement with the statement made by JG), as well as mode content. Furthermore, the cleft highlights the value which the cleft constituent points to, that is, the term frag used earlier by speaker JG. The “build-up” of the cleft to the upcoming utterance you should say i’ve fragged you gives it further weight and salience in the discourse.

In example (41), the cleft involves comments about what someone else had said (i.e., “mode” function). Additionally, the construction is used to take the floor by adding further support to the earlier comments made by speaker TJ.

(41) TJ: and if they don’t want to be there then they make it pretty obvious <„,> and then if they do want to be there well good environment to be in

→ DN: <laughs> that’s what my auntie said one of my aunties taught at secondary schools for twenty years oh no actually one of them one of them only taught in secondary schools for two years and then went lecturing at varsity and she said no i’m never ever gonna back to a secondary school again there there you’ve got to try and make kids learn

TJ: yeah

(WSC, DPC344:0925-0945)

In sum, we have seen that demonstrative clefts are often concerned with the act of communication itself (talking about other people’s speech, the speaker’s own speech or their internal thoughts).
They can also be used to provide explanations (either directly, or using the cleft construction to explain the relationship between two previous ideas), and to express the speaker’s opinions and evaluations of entities mentioned in the discourse. Most of the time, the latter involve expressing agreement, either with the view of facilitating the flow of conversation by encouraging the other speakers to keep talking, or with the intention of taking the floor in a polite manner, avoiding committing a face threatening act.

Furthermore, like other cleft types, demonstrative clefts can also be used to highlight the value of the cleft. Rather than achieving this by placing focal stress on the cleft constituent (which in the case of demonstrative clefts is only a deictic pointing to an external entity), the highlighting is done by the process of “pausing” on the entity (through the use of the demonstrative pronoun) and repeating the variable which identifies it (i.e., the cleft clause). As we saw earlier, this makes the value more salient in the mind of both speaker and audience.

Table 6 gives a brief summary of the various functions (and their sub-functions) of the demonstrative clefts identified in the WSC data. One common thread shared by the various roles of the demonstrative cleft is that of regulating the discourse; whether by signaling how previously mentioned ideas relate to each other, or by highlighting salient entities in the discourse, or further still by enabling speakers to take the floor in a non-threatening fashion, or finally, by encouraging the current speaker to continue talking.

A secondary role of the construction is that of providing explanations and clarifications of previous sections of the discourse. This is not a discourse management role in the sense that the other functions are. However, it does contribute to the overall comprehension of the discourse and it allows speakers to make sense of each other's contributions.

Their deictic role makes demonstrative clefts an economic and efficient tool in spoken language. They require little or no planning since they typically involve a given/inferable cleft clause and a deictic cleft constituent, and can be used at the immediate discourse level to point to recently mentioned parts of discourse (such as directly prior or directly following the cleft construction), as well as to more distant parts (mentioned up to three or more turns prior to the cleft construction). They can point to simple syntactic units such as single phrases, or refer to longer, more complex ones, involving one or more clauses and even entire portions of discourse. Finally, speakers can use them to refer to parts of their own speech, or utterances produced by others, but also to jointly constructed discourse. Such flexibility, versatility and low cognitive load makes the demonstrative cleft a useful construction for the repertoire of the English speaker.
One further remark is in order here, concerning the distinction between demonstrative clefts and reversed wh-clefts (their most closely associated cleft type). Such “type” distinctions are often a matter of convention, that is, where linguists decide to draw the line between one category and another. Therefore, the question of whether demonstrative clefts and reversed wh-clefts are really “distinct” clefts or not, may not even be worth posing. What is important, to my mind, is to consider if analyzing demonstrative clefts in isolation from reversed wh-clefts is a worthwhile exercise, that is, whether we stand to gain anything from such a separate analysis. The answer, I would argue is, yes. Demonstrative clefts have interesting and complex deictic links with the surrounding discourse, and at times, even extremely vague links with it. Furthermore, demonstrative clefts and reversed wh-clefts are used for different purposes. These properties can only be fully explored by looking at the demonstrative cleft in isolation (regardless of whether we decide to posit a whole separate category for it or not).

Finally, one question which follows the analysis is, if they are so successful and practical in speech, why are demonstrative clefts not as commonly found in writing (as reported by Biber et al. 1999 and others)?

Biber et al. (1999) attribute their wider use in spoken language to their rather informal nature. It could be the case that demonstrative clefts are perceived as being “informal” because of their “imprecise” deictic links with the surrounding discourse. This “imprecision” comes from the fact that their cleft constituents have great flexibility and as discussed above, can point to virtually anything. While the ambiguity which can arise from this flexibility can be easily resolved in spoken language (hearers can immediately ask for further clarification if they are unsure about what the cleft value is), this is not possible in writing, where the audience is not present at the time when the text is conceived.

Table 6. The functions of demonstrative clefts in conversation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Signaling direct speech</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Signaling indirect speech</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reported thought</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanatory</td>
<td>Giving reasons for a previous point A</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giving the relation between two previous points, A and B</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative</td>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-agreement (neutral and disagreements)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighting</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Unclear</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Furthermore, a second reason for the less frequent use of demonstrative clefts in written language compared to spoken language may have to do with compactness. Writing is concise and compact, and involves very specific, formalized ways of organizing the discourse. Ideas in written texts are (typically) put together into separate paragraphs, each expanding on a previous point, and in turn, paragraphs are grouped together into themes which follow one another in a logical manner. Finally, these themes begin with an introductory paragraph and end with a concluding one. There is little need for further explanations of how ideas relate to each other in a written piece and the discourse management of the text is mostly regulated by its skeleton structure.

In unplanned spoken language, however, there is no such rigid, pre-determined way of presenting the flow of ideas. Instead, this is often jointly constructed by all participants in the communication, and it is free to change and digress at any time. This is why researchers often refer to the conversation “flow” as a “stream of ideas” (see Chafe 1979, 1992, 1994, 2001). As a consequence, speakers require additional discourse management devices such as discourse markers, pause fillers, and demonstrative clefts, to name a few, in order to illuminate links between ideas already developed in the discourse, and to guide the hearer to how these may relate to upcoming ones.

4. The double cleft construction

The WSC data contains a number of un-integrated demonstrative clefts such as that's what you're told do is learn or this is why he left is for the money (and the example we saw earlier in 35). Un-integratedness, that is, loose syntactic integration, is not unknown to the grammarian of spoken language. The phenomenon has been attested for various types of constructions (such as relative clauses, conditional clauses, temporal clauses, complement clauses) in different languages (English, Italian, Finnish, German, Russian, Sochiapan Chinantec); see work by Laury (2006), Miller & Weinert (1998), Stirling (1999), Vallaurí (2004), and others.

Additionally, following Rühlemann (2006), it is proposed here that we view constructions such as those exemplified above (and upcoming ones in this section), as a different type of cleft (termed here double cleft), focusing on their internal components and structure, rather than on the lack of syntactic integration which might be posited under a written language framework of analysis.

While researchers recognize and continue to uncover further examples of un-integrated structures in spoken data, they are also still trying to come up with new ways of analysing these difficult cases, since they refuse to align themselves to existing models of syntax which assume tight constituency. Additionally, they are interested in the reasons behind the
use of un-integrated constructions, and also how these structures may arise in the first place.

Generally, un-integratedness is associated with complex constructions whose high cognitive cost has to compete against the cost of contemplating the content of the utterance for the speaker’s attention. Such pressures can lead to the speaker losing their train of thought and “deviating” from the original construction which they started out with. The resulting constructions are in some cases blends of two different structures. One way of dealing with these blends is to discard them as mere performance errors. Another way of analysing them is as optimization strategies. The first option does not lead to any further interesting insights. In contrast, by adopting the optimization approach, “we can learn more about the ways in which grammatical competence and linguistic performance influence one another”; a far more productive exercise (Brenier & Michaelis 2005:47).

The WSC data investigated contains eight instances of un-integrated demonstrative clefts, which will be discussed in the remaining part of this section. While these constructions are not frequent in the data, they are all consistent in their structure (for example, it is never the cleft constituent which is dislocated, or the copula which is repeated, as one may find with some wh-clefts, e.g. *what I was wanted to do is I wanted to go home*, or *what I wanted to do is is I wanted to go home*). Examples (42)–(44) illustrate the typical un-integrated demonstrative clefts found.

(42) Students are discussing their syntax assignment. Some parts of the discussion are left out due to space constraints, but the important thing to notice is that speaker SG mentions the role played by intuition in solving the task set by the assignment earlier on in the conversation. After some debating about what the answer might be, speaker TC picks up on this point again in the demonstrative cleft.

SG: um <,,> my intuitions would say that this should be bracketed together <,,> well in some ways i i could see an argument for THAT as much as an argument that goes this way <,,>

XX: more than <unclear word>

SG: yeah well i’m just not clear why they why they do it this why which is x bar rather than this way which is it’s not clear that there is some sort of priority <,,> ... [1 minute and 50 seconds of conversation go by]

DM: <laughs> <latch>

SG: actually <,,> or hoping to

DM: i was exploring

KL: <laughs>
→ TC: *that’s what all this stuff’s based on is intuition* «,>  
SG: that’s true  
TC: cos if it’s not grammatical it’s intuitively not grammatical not for any other reason (WSC, DPC009:0220-0420)

In (42), it is difficult to work out where the cleft ends and where a separate clause complex begins. The construction *that’s what all this stuff’s based on is intuition* can be analysed as containing a demonstrative pronoun, followed by the copula, a wh-clause, headed by the wh-word *what*, and then another copula and a noun phrase. It appears that, the cleft clause is part of the demonstrative cleft construction *that’s what all this stuff’s based on* and at the same time, it also part of the (basic) wh-cleft *what all this stuff’s based on is intuition*. What is more, the cleft constituent of the wh-cleft is in fact the value of the demonstrative cleft, since we can replace the demonstrative pronoun by the final noun phrase (and preserve the meaning of the construction): *Intuition is what all this stuff’s based on.*

Similarly, in (43), we have the same problem, namely the cleft clause is followed by a copula and an adverbial clause of reason. As before, the cleft constituent of the wh-cleft, constitutes the value of the demonstrative cleft: *because she has such a hard time is the reason roz had such a think about her ear.*

(43) DV: she’s perfect  
AL: yeah perfect there’s nothing wrong with the child blah blah blah  
BR: mm  
AL: but yeah her ears have actually «,> so she might be lucky  
CH: kids are really cruel though eh  
→ AL: because kids are cruel i mean kids ARE really cruel and roz *that’s the reason roz had such ha had such a thing about HER ear was because she’d had such a hard time*  
BR: yeah they are yeah a hard time right (WSC, DPC062:0350-0395)

Finally, in example (44), we have a copula and verb phrase following the cleft clause. Note that the speaker DN uses the un-integrated construction, *is nest*, to answer the question uttered in the immediately preceding turn by speaker AL.

(44) DN: julia told me and since then i’ve been doing it  
CH: <laughs>  
BT: <laughs>  
AL: what nesting  
→ DN: *this is what you’re meant to do is nest*  
CH: cleaning out your cupboard «,> well I never  
AL: as long as you don’t make little things of <unclear word> paper or <latch> (WSC, DPC066:1190-1225)
In other words, the speaker utters the [copula + VP] for clarity. The fact that the value _nest_ occurs after the demonstrative cleft goes hand in hand with the use of the proximal demonstrative _this_, since _this_-clefs are forward looking (as claimed by Miller & Weinert 1998).

Examples (42)–(44) have not gone un-noticed in the literature, as exemplified below from various sources. McConvell (1998) refers to them as “_is_-marking of subordinate clauses”, as exemplified in (45).

(45) a. That can’t be a very welcome outcome, is that rates will now rise. (Political commentator, ABC TV)
   b. That was what I was talking about, is that they do already do that. (Student) (from McConvell 1998, p. 302, ex. 55 and 56)

Massam (1999) analyzes double clefts as hypotactic apposition and uses the term “reduced T[thing]-i[s] constructions”. The label “T-i construction” stands for the “_Thing is_ constructions” (also appearing under the labels ISIS, double BE, and double copula), that is, constructions where the copula is systematically repeated after certain nouns (such as _thing_, _issue_, and _point_), as given in (46).

(46) The thing is is that I do not know what this construction really is.

Massam groups double clefts together with other reduced T-i constructions, such as, _I realized when he said that, is he just doesn’t care_, and _You know what, is we’ve got kids ages 7 and 10 and they’ve grown out of those videos_ (1999:345) and likens them to the general T-i construction (the term double cleft does not include these other types, hence the need for a separate term).

Finally, Ross-Hagebaum (2004) uses the label “That’s _X is Y_ construction” to denote constructions such as those given in (47), op.cit. 403, ex 2–5.

(47) a. That’s my dream I guess is to have my own darkroom. (SWE)
   b. And that’s my big area of interest in linguistics is discourse.
   c. That’s what I was about to say is that everyone needs to be tested. (SWB)
   d. That’s what I am trying to do is go back to blonde.

Like Massam’s reduced T-i construction, Ross-Hagebaum’s category also includes constructions which do not come under the umbrella of double clefts, namely those given in (47a) and (47b).

Several observations arising from this body of work are relevant here. The first and more minor point is that the copula is only attested in the singular present _is_ form, with the forms _was_ or _were_ never occurring in the data. This has led McConvell (1988:303) to hypothesize that the use of the uninflected _is_ “comes from a later stage of development when an _is_ clause-marker element has already emerged as distinct from the copula”.

However, as we have seen in example (43), the WSC data does contain constructions which use the simple past form was. With such a small data sample, it is evidently difficult to know whether the inflected is form is simply an exceptionally rare occurrence. Further research is needed to clarify this issue.

The second, and most important point concerns the unanimous consensus that double clefts (along with the various other constructions included the categories discussed) should not be regarded as performance errors and should be considered part of the (spoken) grammar of English (McConvell 1988:293, Massam 1999:345, Ross-Hagebaum 2004:403).

Finally, various analyses of the double cleft have been put forward such as, the paratactic apposition approach (Massam 1999) and various amalgam approaches (McConvell 1988, Ross-Hagebaum 2004). The motivation for such different analyses appears to rest on the individual researcher’s assumptions of which construction is most closely related to the one being analysed. Therefore, Massam’s apposition approach and McConvell’s amalgam hypothesis take the double cleft to be related to the T-i construction (though Massam (1999:346) does acknowledge that removing the demonstrative pronoun from double clefts leaves a wh-cleft construction). In contrast, Ross-Hagebaum’s analysis seems to ride on the double cleft’s resemblance to wh-clefts.

Here, I also adopt Ross-Hagebaum’s amalgam view of double clefts. The examples given in (42)–(45) show a consistent pattern whereby a demonstrative cleft is followed by what looks to be the remaining of a basic wh-cleft, minus its cleft clause. In other words, what we have is a kind of blend between two clefts – hence the term double cleft – which share one and the same cleft clause, as represented in Figure 2.

![Figure 2](https://example.com/figure2.png)

**Figure 2.** Representation of the un-integrated cleft from example (49)

A more general representation of the double cleft construction is given in Figure 3. The cleft constituent of the demonstrative cleft is as usual, a demonstrative pronoun (typically singular, and usually that), whereas, the cleft constituent of the wh-cleft can range from a noun phrase, to a verb phrase or even a whole clause. Furthermore, the cleft constituent in the wh-cleft is co-indexed with that in the demonstrative cleft.
5. Conclusions and some further thoughts

The primary aim of the current work has been to exemplify and analyse the most frequent cleft type found in spontaneous spoken language, namely the demonstrative cleft. Constructions such as *that's what I am saying* and *this is when I am coming* appear to be sufficiently distinct from these other cleft types, and in particular from reversed wh-clefts (in terms of their discourse function, deictic properties, and usage patterns) to warrant an investigation in isolation from these, as a separate cleft type.

Secondly, the paper exemplifies a related construction, which is an amalgam of the demonstrative cleft and the basic wh-cleft: *that's what you're supposed to do is nest* and *this is where she left him standing at the train station*. These constructions, termed here double cleft constructions, involve a demonstrative pronoun as cleft constituent, followed by the copula *be*, a wh-clause (serving as cleft clause), a second copula and a further cleft constituent (co-indexed with the demonstrative pronoun). As argued in previous work, these examples appear to be persistent throughout spoken language, and have a consistent structure. Therefore, they are not considered to be performance errors. An adequate analysis of their syntax and discourse function would be useful to both theoretical syntax and computational linguistics.

One question to be asked is how does the examination of constructions such as demonstrative clefts and double clefts impact (if at all) on the debate regarding the number of grammars speakers and writers make use of in their daily interactions. Do they have two distinct, though clearly largely overlapping grammars? Or do they have one single grammar which informs usage in both linguistic mediums? These positions reflect two major trends which have emerged from research concerned with comparisons between speech and writing, namely what Leech (2000) calls the “sameness of speech and writing” position and “the differentness between speech and writing” view. Researchers adopting for the first approach maintain that spoken and written language share the same
essential grammar, while still exhibiting various differences between the two different mediums. The Longman Grammar of Spoken Language edited by Biber et al. (1999) describes the nature of spoken English from this standpoint.

In contrast, Brazil (1995) and McCarthy (1998) propose instead, that the grammar of spoken language is vastly different to that of written language, so much so, that it could be regarded as a different grammar altogether. Evidence for this view comes from the fact that the grammars of the two language mediums differ even in their most basic notions. For instance, speech is often reported to do away with tight syntactic constituency. Instead, it exhibits a ‘beads on a string’ phenomenon, where phrases appear inside utterances in a linear, rather than hierarchical, fashion.

Turning back to the cleft constructions discussed here, it seems (intuitively) that they rarely occur in written language, if at all. While the demonstrative cleft may occasionally be found in written mediums (such as, for example, in portions of dialogue included in fiction), the double cleft is even more strongly confined to spoken language (Massam 1999:344–345). Can this then be taken as evidence for the “differentness between speech and writing” view? In my opinion, this is not necessarily so. A more realistic way of explaining the differences observed between the spoken and written mediums might be by means of a grammatical continuum. In this view, constructions used primarily in spoken language occur at one end of the continuum, and those belonging mostly to written language are found at the other end. What is more, the continuum may change in structure, as (essentially) spoken language constructions become gradually incorporated into the realm of written language, and in members, as some constructions fall out of use altogether while new ones are adopted.

Therefore, demonstrative clefts and double clefts belong at the spoken language end of the continuum, as they are geared up for online production, being low in informational content and cognitive load. Further research is needed to investigate the precise extent to which both these cleft types are used in written language. Are they used only in circumstances where the writer assumes readers are able to correctly pick out the referent of the demonstrative pronoun? Or is the use of demonstrative clefts more closely related to level of formality, and therefore restricted to more informal language, e.g., they may occur in written language, but mostly/only in informal e-mails, diary entries, informal letters, and so on (as hypothesised by Biber et al.). Also what other (if any) constructions may be used in written mediums to do “the job” of demonstrative clefts and double clefts?
Appendix A – List of annotations for discourse features in the WSC data.

1. Stress
CRAZY, UNbelievable  Capitals are used to indicate emphatic stress.

2. Question intonation, where unclear
? Used to signal an interrogative where it is ambiguous on paper.
E.g., “you’re going to the zoo tomorrow?” (question) versus “you’re going to the zoo tomorrow” (statement). Where the sentence structure is unambiguous, no punctuation is added, e.g. are you going to the zoo tomorrow

3. Comprehension Problems and Transcriber Doubt
<unclear word> Untranscribable or incomprehensible speech

4. Pauses
<.,> pause of up to or equal to one second
<,,> pause over one second and up to two seconds
<,,> <&> 3 <&> pause of over two seconds and up to three seconds
<,,> <&> 4 <&> pause of over three seconds and up to four seconds

5. Latching
<latch> Indicates latching, i.e., where the second utterance immediately follows the first with no discernible pause or overlap.
E.g., A: do you know what the time is <latch>
B: six o’clock

6. Features occurring through sections of speech
Features which apply to sections of speech are generally noted in angle brackets around the speech they apply to. E.g. “<quickly> we won’t talk about that” “<drawls> um but i think”
Annotations use capitals where appropriate (proper nouns, etc) and follow standard spelling.
Some of the most common features marked in this way are:
<drawls> <exhales> <inhales> <sings> <quietly> <whispers>
<paraphrases> <quickly> <shouts> <sighs> <reads> <laughs>

References

English demonstrative clefts and double clefts


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