

The Clausative-Presentative Construction in Russian and Serbian

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Abstract: This paper describes the clausative-presentative construction, a particular type of the presentative construction found in Slavic languages, using data from Russian and Serbian. The discussion is carried out within the Meaning-Text linguistic approach.

The clausative-presentative construction is syntactically headed by a special presentative lexeme that is a clausative (i.e., can constitute a clause by itself or together with its obligatory actants): Rus. *èto*/Serb. *to* 'that situation is [Y]' and Rus. *vot*/Serb. *evo* 'I indicate here [Y]'. Such a lexeme takes as its actant—the presentee—a fully independent clause (i.e., a clause without a complementizer), which is, typologically, a rare occurrence.

The semantic and syntactic properties of the clausative-presentative construction follow from the lexical meaning of the clausative-presentative lexeme that heads it. Therefore, this construction is a syntactic construction only in a very general sense (≈ 'a configuration of syntactically linked items'); in fact, it is a clausative lexeme taken with its actant. This construction is compared with the cleft construction, which is a genuine syntactic construction: it expresses communicative information by a particular syntactic configuration.

Lexical entries of Russian and Serbian clausative-presentative lexemes are supplied, together with an overview of their co-polysemous or homophonous lexical "partners".

1. Introduction: The Goal of the Paper and Underlying Notions*

This paper is dedicated to the so-called clausative-presentative construction in Russian and Serbian, illustrated with the following sentences: Rus. *Èto/Vot Ivan činit našu mašinu.* / Serb. *To/Evo Ivan popravlja naša kola.* ≈ 'This is Ivan repairing our car.'

Since this construction is present in all other Slavic languages, what we say about Russian and Serbian can be extended to the Slavic domain in general. We do not, however, provide data from those other languages, as doing so would make the paper unduly long (and overcomplicated).

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The discussion is couched in the framework of the Meaning-Text linguistic approach (Mel'čuk 1988, 2012–15, vol. 2: 259–376, 2021; Mel'čuk and Milićević 2020) and presupposes a familiarity of the reader with its basic notions, such as dependency, the semantic representation of utterances, dependency trees, deep and surface syntax, and semantic and syntactic actants. The corresponding formalisms are taken for granted. Nevertheless, a characterization of the crucial notions specific to the paper will be provided as we go along.

The goal of our paper is threefold:

1. Propose a rigorous definition of the Slavic clausative-presentative construction [Claus-PresC].
2. Formally describe this construction in Russian and Serbian.
3. Highlight the crucial differences between the Slavic Claus-PresC and the cleft construction, as the two construction types are sometimes equated in the linguistic literature.

A Claus-PresC is a particular case of presentative construction, the latter being a syntactic construction of the following form:

presentative + (copula/copula-like verb +) presentee.

The term “copula/copula-like verb” is used here to cover all BE-verb lexemes meaning ‘be identical’, ‘be an element of a class’, etc., including the genuine copula (as in *John is young*)—in order to distinguish them from the locative BE-verb (as in *John is in London*).

The notions of presentative and presentee require special discussion.

1.1. Presentatives

From a semantic viewpoint, a presentative is an expression used by the Speaker to draw the Addressee’s attention to a presentee—an entity/a set of entities or a situation to be talked about in the subsequent exchange. A presentative is a kind of linguistic demonstrating or indicative “gesture,” an ostensive introduction of a discourse participant: the Speaker is saying “You see here/there...” or “I indicate here/there...”. Presentatives thus form a small, semantically characterized lexical class.

From a syntactic viewpoint, presentatives come in two major types: standard presentatives and special presentatives.

A standard presentative is a demonstrative (= deictic) pronoun, which can be nominal or adverbial (like Eng. *it, this, that* or *here, there*). It behaves syntactically as a normal pronoun of this type should, following the usual syntactic patterns of the language.

A special presentative is a demonstrative clausative [DemClaus].¹ DemClaus lexemes exist in all Slavic languages but are absent from most other languages of the Standard Average European type, notable exceptions being, as will be seen, French and Italian.²

Special Russian and Serbian presentative lexemes are listed in Table 1; for the linguistic details of Rus. *èto/vot* lexemes and Serb. *to/vo* lexemes, see §5, pp. 83–96.

Table 1. Clausative-presentative lexemes in Russian and Serbian

Clausative-presentative lexemes						
		Descriptive lexemes: pronominal clausatives			Signalative lexemes: particle-like clausatives	
Russian	proximal	non-proximal		proximal	non-proximal	
	<i>èto</i> lit. 'this'	arch/poet <i>to</i> lit. 'that'		<i>vot</i> lit. 'I indicate here'	<i>von</i> lit. 'I indicate there'	
Serbian	proximal	non-proximal	distal	proximal	non-proximal	distal
	<i>ovo</i> lit. 'this'	<i>to</i> lit. 'that'	<i>ono</i> lit. 'that there'	<i>ovo</i> lit. 'I indicate here'	<i>eto</i> lit. 'I indicate there'	<i>eno</i> lit. 'I indicate over there'
	≈ 'this here (there, over there) is'			≈ 'I indicate here (there, over there)'		

Table 1 calls for the following three comments.

- (i) All Russian and Serbian clausative-presentative [Claus-Pres] lexemes are invariable; pronominal clausatives *èto/to* should not be

¹ A clausative (Mel'čuk 2006b: 41), a.k.a. *word-sentence* or Fr. *mot-phrase* (*phrasillon*, in Tesnière 1959: 94–99), is an element of a distinct part of speech: (i) it forms an utterance either on its own (*Yes. / Wow! / Not at all.*) or together with its actant, which can be a complete clause (*Sorry that I cannot be with you*, where the clause *that I cannot be with you* is an actant of *sorry*); (ii) it is not a verb: it does not have properties most typical of verbs in a given language (for instance, in Russian and Serbian, it does not conjugate). A demonstrative is an expression whose meaning contains a semantic component of indication, or pointing out, or else of reference to another expression in the same text; in the present article, it is the semanteme 'this' = 'which is under consideration'. Such a demonstrative is anaphoric or cataphoric.

² As F. Louis indicated to us, Breton has a presentative clausative similar to Fr. *voici*: *Setu mand eo daet Yann en-dro*. lit. 'Look.here that is come Yann in.return.' = 'Here has come back Yann.' Such clausatives probably exist in other Celtic languages.

confounded with the neuter singular forms of the demonstrative adjectival pronouns Rus. *ètot* ~ *tot* and Serb. *ovaj* ~ *taj* ~ *onaj*. Compare the following examples:

- (1) a. ['What a strange sound!'] (Russian)
Èto_(CLAUSATIVE) plačet kakoj-to rebënok.
 'This is some child crying.'
 vs.
Èto_(ADJ, pronominal)NEU.SG.ACC okno_(N, neu)SG.ACC pora myt' .
 'It is time to wash this window.'
- b. ['What a strange sound!'] (Serbian)
To_(CLAUSATIVE) plače neko dete.
 'This is some child crying.'
 vs.
To_(ADJ, pronominal)NEU.SG.NOM dete_(N, neu)SG.NOM stalno plače.
 'This child is always crying.'

- (ii) A descriptive lexical item communicates information about the extralinguistic world: *This is **disgusting!** / I find it **curious** that John is absent.*

A non-descriptive lexical item that is a signalative only signals some internal state or an opinion of the Speaker and does this in a specific linguistic form: ***Yuck!** / **Curiously**, John is absent.* A clause that contains a signalative cannot be negated/questioned: **It is not true that yuck! / *Is it true that yuck?*; it cannot be subordinated as a complement—for instance, to a verb of speaking or thinking: **Mary says/knows that yuck (that, curiously, John is absent).*³ For non-descriptive lexical units, see Mel'čuk (2001: 351ff).

- (iii) In what follows, reference is only made to the Claus-Pres lexemes that are the unmarked members of their respective paradigms (these lexemes are boldfaced in Table 1). In Russian, *èto* is unmarked with respect to *to*; the former is used across registers, the latter is appropriate only in archaic/poetic ones. In Serbian, the converse is true; it is *to* that is unmarked because it fits more contexts than *ovo/ono*. Only *to* is used to refer to a situation that is not directly perceivable, regardless of the degree of proximity, while the

³ The angular brackets in this paper indicate alternative variants.

reference to a directly perceived situation is made using any of the three DemClaus lexemes. Therefore, the proximal Rus. *èto* and the non-proximal Serb. *to* are taken as translational equivalents. Their difference in degree of proximity, seen in the glosses, is not relevant for the purposes of the present paper. (The clausatives *vo!*/*evo* in the two languages have fewer discrepancies in the degree of proximity.)

1.2. Presentees

From a semantic viewpoint, a presentee can denote either an entity/a set of entities or a situation. From a syntactic viewpoint, presentees are, like presentatives, of two major types.

A standard presentee is a noun phrase (in a broad sense); exactly which subclass of noun phrases or its syntactic equivalents is allowed for a given presentative construction (e.g., can it be a THAT-clause?, a pseudo-relative clause?, etc.) is determined by the particular presentative lexeme and can vary from one language to the next. A special presentee is a full independent clause.

1.3. Standard and Special Presentative Constructions

In accordance with the characteristics of the presentative and the presentee, two types of presentative constructions are distinguished: standard and special.

In a standard presentative construction, both the presentative and the presentee are standard, and the copula is present, for instance:

- (2) a. This/That is John's new car.
 b. These/Those are my friends.
 c. This/That/It is John repairing our car.

The standard presentative construction is probably language universal.

A detailed study of the standard presentative construction in English is found in Wood and Zannuttini (2023). Although the authors touch upon the special presentative construction only tangentially (the French and Italian subtypes, cf. our examples (6) and (7)), some properties of the standard presentative construction they point out and characterize (such as the impossibility of embedding and particular co-occurrence with the negation) are quite similar to those we have established for special presentative constructions (see §2 below).

In a special presentative construction, the presentative and/or the presentee are special or the copula is absent. One particular type of special presentative construction appears in Slavic languages; it does not include a

copula, the presentative is special, and the presentee is special or standard syntactically (depending on the presentative). In these languages, the presentative construction is syntactically headed by a DemClaus lexeme, and therefore it can be naturally called clausative-presentative construction [Claus-PresC]. Here are examples of the Russian and Serbian Claus-PresC.

- (3) a. ['What is this noise over there?'] (Russian)

Èto Ivan idët
 this.situation.is Ivan.NOM come.PRES.3SG⁴
 <činit našu mašinu>.
 repair.PRES.3SG our car.SG.ACC
 'This is Ivan coming (repairing our car).'

- b. (i) **Vot** Ivan <on>.
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM he.NOM
 'Here is Ivan (he).'
- (ii) **Vot** Ivan idët
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM come.PRES.3SG
 <činit našu mašinu>.
 repair.PRES.3SG our car.SG.ACC
 'Here is Ivan coming (repairing our car).'

- (4) a. ['What is this noise over there?'] (Serbian)

To Ivan dolazi
 that.situation.is Ivan.NOM come.PRES.3SG
 <popravlja naša kola>.
 repair.PRES.3SG our car.PL.ACC
 'This is Ivan coming (repairing our car).'

- b. (i) **Evo** Ivana <ga>.
 I.indicate.here Ivan.GEN he.CLIT.GEN
 'Here is Ivan (he).'
- (ii) **Evo** Ivan dolazi
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM come.PRES.3SG
 <popravlja naša kola>.
 repair.PRES.3SG our car.PL.ACC
 'Here is Ivan coming (repairing our car).'

⁴ A period between two semantic elements in glosses indicates that these elements are physically expressed together—by one lexical unit.

These examples illustrate a typical speech act in which a Claus-PresC is used, i.e., an affirmative-declarative sentence that is an appropriate answer to a question about a given situation, namely, a question such as *What is happening?* / *What is this?* / *What is this noise?* / *Why all this mess?*, etc. In the answer—‘This.situation.is [Y]’—the presentative expresses the semantic Theme (= Topic) of the sentence and the presentee expresses its semantic Rheme (= Comment). This is always the case with *èto/to*; but *vot/levo* can also express the semantic Rheme (see §3 below).

Sentences in (3) and (4) contrast with sentences such as Rus. *Èto Ivan* ‘This is Ivan’, which features a standard presentative construction, just like the English one illustrated in (2). Here, we see a different lexeme *èto*—a nominal demonstrative pronoun, and the sentence contains the copula *byt* ‘be’, which has a zero form in the present tense; cf. Serb. *To je Ivan* ‘That is Ivan’, where the copula is non-zero, and Rus. *Èto byl (budet) Ivan* ‘This was (will be) Ivan’. However, in the Claus-PresC, no copula intervenes because one of the senses of the verb *byt/bit* is included within the meaning of the Claus-Pres lexeme (i.e., *èto/to* and *vot/levo*): the meaning ‘be.identical’.

To avoid misunderstandings, remember that there is an important difference between a semanteme being present in the meaning of an expression and a lexeme being physically present in that expression. When in a gloss we write, for short, ‘this.situation.is’ (instead of ‘this situation is identical to or a result of’, see the lexicographic definition of *èto¹III/to¹III* on p. 84), we indicate that all the semantemes connected by periods are lexicalized together; none receives a separate lexical expression.

Special presentative constructions include, along with the Slavic Claus-PresC, other types, for instance, the one found in Mandarin Chinese (Li and Thompson 1989: 153); the sentence in example (5) is an appropriate answer to a question like *What’s happening?* or *What is this noise?*

- (5) Shì Wāng zài nàr dǎ gǔ.
 be Wang at there hit drum
 ‘This is Wang playing drums there.’

It is the presentee that makes this Chinese presentative construction special; it is a full-fledged clause without complementizer. A fundamental difference between the special presentative construction in Chinese and that in Slavic is that, in the former, the syntactic head of the construction is the copula verb *shì* ‘be’, while in the latter, the syntactic head is not verbal—it is a clausative.⁵

⁵ With Chinese being a strongly Pro-Drop language, example (5) does not overtly include a subject similar to Eng. *it/this*; however, the subject *zhè* ‘this’ is quite normal in such sentences, if the context warrants it.

Works that treat Claus-Pres lexemes and the (special) Claus-PresC in Russian and/or Serbian (although under different terms) include Browne (1976); Padučeva (1982); Junghanns (1997); Progovac (1998) and (2005: 54–56, 197–212); Kordić (2002: 93–128); Peti (2005); Reeve (2008) and (2012); Kimmelman (2009); Krylova (2014); Raković (2017); and Burukina and den Dikken (2020). For the Claus-PresC in French, see Morin (1985); Lambrecht (1988) and (2000); and Porhiel (2012), among many others. Grenoble and Riley (1996) compare discourse properties of Fr. *voici/voilà* and Rus. *vot/von*. For the corresponding construction in Italian, see Zanuttini (2017) and Wood and Zannuttini (2023: 596).

However, none of these studies explores the aspects of Claus-PresC we are interested in here, which are the formal definition of the notion, the syntactic structure of the construction in terms of syntactic dependency, and its comparison with the cleft construction. Furthermore, our approach is different from most others in the following three respects.

First, it adopts a synthesis orientation (text production, as opposed to the analysis, or text comprehension approach)—that is, a linguistic description is carried out strictly from Meaning to Text. Second, it is aimed at modeling the corresponding linguistic phenomena by means of sets of rules, understood as formal expressions that can be applied mechanically. Third, our stance is resolutely lexicalist, as we take the properties of the construction under discussion to stem directly from the lexical meaning of the DemClaus lexemes that control it. (A formal lexicographic description of these lexemes is provided in §5.) Under this view, the Claus-PresC turns out to be a syntactic construction only in a very general and rather vague sense of the term ('a configuration of syntactically linked items'), applicable to any syntactic phrase. More on this will be said below.

For all these reasons, it is difficult to compare our analysis with previous ones; we will, however, make reference to the specifics of some anterior proposals, where appropriate.

From now on, we will be using distinctive lexicographic numbers with our special Claus-Pres lexemes: Rus. *eto¹III*/Serb. *to¹III* and Rus. *vot¹*/Serb. *evo¹*.

Most of the examples are our own; we also have used some found on the Internet and in the linguistic literature on the subject. Symbols and abbreviations are presented in a table on p. 98.

2. The Clausative-Presentative Construction

Unlike a standard presentative construction illustrated in (2), whose syntactic head, i.e., the top node, is a verb (more precisely, the verb 'be'), a special presentative construction is headed by a clausative. (For the considerations used to determine the orientation of the syntactic dependency within the Claus-PresC, see below.)

DEFINITION 1: THE CLAUSATIVE-PRESENTATIVE CONSTRUCTION

A Claus-PresC is a deep-syntactic [DSynt-] subtree of the following form:

$$L_1(\text{CLAUSATIVE, presentative})-\mathbf{II}\rightarrow L_2,$$

where:

L_1 is a Claus-Pres lexeme;

L_2 is either a noun/a syntactic equivalent of a noun or a finite verb that is the syntactic head of a clause $C_{(\text{presentee})}$.

In the surface-syntactic structure, the head of $C_{(\text{presentee})}$ is either its main verb (i.e., L_2) or a semantically empty subordinating conjunction, i.e., a complementizer.

In prose, this means that a clausative-presentative construction is in fact simply a clausative-presentative lexeme taken with its deep-syntactic actant \mathbf{II} .

The presentee component in the Claus-PresC is the second actant of the Claus-Pres lexeme—both on the semantic and the deep-syntactic levels of linguistic representation. This is explained by the meaning of such a lexeme: its first actant should be the situation in question (for *èto/to* [Y], which means ‘this situation is identical to Y or a result of Y’, §5.1) or the Speaker (for *vot/evo* [Y]: ‘I indicate here something that is Y’, §5.3), but this semantic component is included (“incorporated,” as it were) in the Claus-Pres lexeme’s meaning.⁶

Outside the Slavic family, Claus-PresCs are found among Standard Average European languages, for example as mentioned above, in French and Italian. The lexemes Fr. *voici/voilà* ‘one.sees.here/there’ and It. *ecco* ‘look.here’ are Claus-Pres lexemes heading a presentative construction similar, in some respects, to the Slavic one.⁷

⁶ Clausatives lacking DSynt-actant \mathbf{I} , while having DSynt-actant \mathbf{II} , are widespread in natural languages; here are some English examples: *Down*– \mathbf{II} →*with the mullahs!*, *Kudos*– \mathbf{II} →*to everyone!*, *Off/Out*– \mathbf{II} →*with you!* But not only clausatives can have such an actantial frame: there are meteorological verbs like (to) *rain* and (to) *dawn*, verbs of physiological state of the Rus. *tošnit* ‘nauseate’ type (*Menja tošnit*. lit. ‘[It] nauseates me.’), various modal expressions, etc. For more, see Mel’čuk (2015: 67–68).

⁷ The French and Italian presentative lexemes are verb-like in that they accept a regular direct object; It. *ecco*, in particular, is similar to an imperative verb form because a clitic object follows it. (This explains different glosses we adopted for it and its French counterparts, with which the clitics precede, as is normal for non-imperative sentences in Romance.) However, these lexemes are not verbs (not even defective ones), and this is so because they lack one indispensable verbhood attribute—the capacity to control a syntactic subject. For a different viewpoint, see Morin (1985); see also Porhiel (2012).

- (6) a. **Voici** Jean. ~ Le **voici.** (French)
 one.sees.here Jean he.ACC one.sees.here
 'Here is Jean.' 'Here he is.'
- b. **Voici** Jean ~ Le **voici**
 one.sees.here Jean he.ACC one.sees.here
 qui arrive. qui arrive.
 who come.PRES.3SG who come.PRES.3SG
 'Here is Jean who is coming.' 'Here is he who is coming.'
- c. **Voici** que Jean arrive.
 one.sees.here that Jean come.PRES.3SG
 'Here comes Jean.'
- d. **Voici** arriver Jean.⁸
 one.sees.here come.INF Jean
 'Here comes Jean.'
- (7) a. **Ecco** Giovanni. ~ **Eccolo.** (Italian)
 look.here Giovanni look.here=he.ACC
 'Here is Giovanni.' 'Here he is.'
- b. **Ecco** Giovanni/lo che arriva.
 look.here Giovanni he.ACC who come.PRES.3SG
 'Here is Giovanni (*he*) who is coming.'
- c. **Ecco** che arriva Giovanni
 look.here that come.PRES.3SG Giovanni
 'Here comes Giovanni.'
- d. **Ecco** arrivare Giovanni.
 look.here come.INF Giovanni
 'Here comes Giovanni.'
- e. **Ecco** arriva Giovanni.
 look.here come.PRES.3SG Giovanni
 'Here comes Giovanni.'

The Claus-PresC in French does not admit a finite verb as the syntactic head of the $C_{(presentee)}$ clause; in Italian it accepts in this role only a few "ap-

⁸ This construction is stylistically marked.

generally speaking, is the case with all clausatives of this kind, which are the syntactic governors in the corresponding constructions.

Thus, clausative-presentative lexemes turn out to be syntactic governors.¹⁰ The resulting construction is monoclausal: it is a clausative with this presentee clause as its actant; there is only **one** subject–main verb pair. (This apparently paradoxical situation is brought about by the special nature of clausatives, which can be functionally equivalent to clauses but, in point of fact, are not clauses.)

3. The Clausative-Presentative Construction in Russian and Serbian

As illustrated in (3a) and (4a) as well as in (3b) and (4b), there are two subtypes of the presentative construction in both languages, with *èto¹III/to¹III* and with *vot¹/evo¹*. We will take them in turn.

3.1. The Clausative-Presentative Construction Headed by Rus. *èto¹III*/ Serb. *to¹III*

The clausative Rus. *èto¹III*/Serb. *to¹III* takes the $C_{(\text{presentee})}$ clause as its actant **II** at the DSynt-level and as a copular complement at the SSynt-level:

(10) [What is this mess?]

- a. *Èto* Ivan moet (myl,
this.situation.is Ivan.NOM wash.PRES.3SG wash.PAST.MASC.3SG
budet myt') posudu.
will.be.AUX.FUT.3SG wash.INF tableware.SG.ACC
'This is/was/will be Ivan washing dishes.'
- b. (i) To Ivan pere sudove.
that.situation.is Ivan.NOM wash.PRES.3SG dish.PL.ACC
'This is Ivan washing dishes.'
- (ii) To je Ivan prao
this.situation.is was.AUX.PAST.3SG Ivan.NOM wash.P.PART
sudove.
dish.PL.ACC
'This was Ivan washing dishes.'

¹⁰ The SSynt-dependency status of *èto¹III* had previously been considered as being inverse, that is, *èto¹III* was taken to be a SSynt-dependent of $C_{(\text{presentee})}$; see Iomdin (2010) and Mel'čuk (2021: 75, no. 44).

- (10) b. (iii) To će Ivan prati
 this.situation.is will.be.AUX.FUT.3SG Ivan.NOM wash.INF
 sudove.
 dish.PL.ACC
 ‘This will be Ivan washing dishes.’

The main verb of the presentee clause can be in any tense, but due to the semantics of the Claus-Pres lexemes, it is most natural in the present tense.

Moreover, in Serbian, where the past and the future tense forms use a clitic auxiliary, the clitic’s adjacency to to^1III may cause processing difficulties for the Addressee, leading to an erroneous interpretation of to^1III as the “ordinary” demonstrative pronoun; therefore, the past and the future tense of the main verb of the Serbian presentee clause tend to be avoided.¹¹

Since $èto^1III/to^1III$ are descriptive lexemes, the construction they are heading, i.e., the Claus-PresC, can be used not only in affirmative sentences, as illustrated in (3a–4a) and in (10), but also in negative sentences (see (11) with the underlying question ‘Is this the rain falling?’), and in general questions (see (12)). A sentence including this presentative can be subordinated as an object clause—for instance, to a verb of speaking or thinking (see (13)).

- (11) a. Èto ne idët dožd’ (≡ Èto ne dožd’ idët) (, èto prosto Ivan prinimaet duš).¹²
 ‘This is not the rain falling(, this is simply Ivan taking a shower).’
 b. To ne pada kiša (≡ Ne pada to kiša) (, to se samo Ivan tušira).
 ‘This is not the rain falling (, this is simply Ivan taking a shower).’

In (11), it is not the existence of the situation Y that is negated but rather Y’s identity; to put it differently, what is negated is the link ‘is’ between $èto^1III/to^1III$ and the presentee. Therefore, it is natural, and in Serbian highly desirable, for the Speaker to offer an explanation about the context of situation Y (provided in parentheses in our examples). The presentative lexeme is often

¹¹ The form *to* in the sequence *To je Ivan ...* can be interpreted in two different ways, depending on the continuation: either as the “ordinary” demonstrative pronoun *to* in the role of a fronted direct object, cf. (i), or as the clausative-demonstrative to^1III heading the ClausPresC, cf. (ii).

(i) $To_{(Pron.Dem), DirO} \leftarrow \text{dir-objectival} - [je Ivan] - uradio$.
 lit. ‘That Ivan did.’ = ‘That was done by Ivan.’

(ii) $To_{(Claus)} \rightarrow \text{copular-attibutive} \rightarrow je Ivan došao$.
 lit. ‘This.situation.is Ivan came.’

¹² The symbol “≡” indicates semantic equivalence.

repeated in the explanation (*Èto/To ne... , èto/to...*). On the particularities of the negation used in sentences with *èto¹III/to¹III*, see §5.1, p. 85.

- (12) a. Èto idët Ivan (≡ Ivan idët)?
'Is this Ivan coming?'
- b. Jel' to Ivan dolazi (≡ dolazi Ivan)?
'Is this Ivan coming?'
- (13) a. Maša govorit (znaet) → čto → èto → idët → Ivan (≡ Ivan ← idët).
'Masha says (knows) that this is Ivan coming.'
- b. ?Marija kaže (zna) da → to → dolazi → Ivan (≡ Ivan ← dolazi).
'Marija says (knows) that this is Ivan coming.'

The subordination of the Claus-PresC is less felicitous in Serbian than in Russian.

As for the communicative role of *èto¹III/to¹III*, we have already indicated that it necessarily expresses the semantic [Sem-] Theme of the sentence. Its actant, the $C_{(presentee)}$ clause, expresses the Sem-Rheme and can feature further communicative subdivisions, i.e., a secondary Rheme and a secondary Theme. Thus, from the semantic representation [SemR] in Figure 1, it is possible to produce both sentences in (14)—propositionally synonymous but with different secondary thematizations (not shown in Figure 1).

- (14) [What is happening?]
- a. [Èto]_{Theme-1} [[Ivan]_{Theme-2} [idët]_{Rheme-2}]_{Rheme-1} ≡
- b. [Èto]_{Theme-1} [[idët]_{Theme-2} [Ivan]_{Rheme-2}]_{Rheme-1}
'This is Ivan coming.'

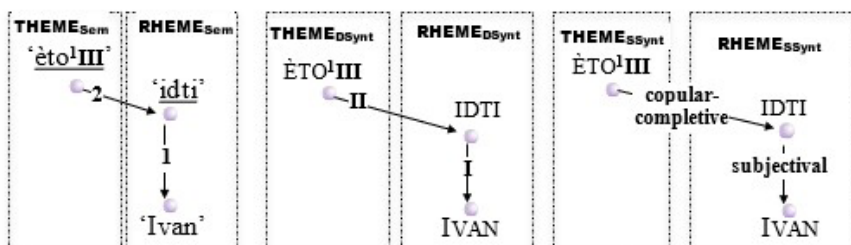


Figure 1. Partial representations of example (14) at the semantic, deep-syntactic, and surface-syntactic levels

A word of caution is in order here. Both sentences in (14), illustrating the Claus-PresC, are uttered with a specific prosody—namely, with a possible phrasal stress on *èto*, a possible pause after it, and without phrasal stress on a wordform in the $C_{(\text{presentee})}$ clause. If *èto* is unstressed and there can be no pause between it and the following wordform that carries phrasal stress, this is a different *èto*—a focalizing particle *èto*³, and the corresponding construction is completely different (see example (40), §5.2).

Quite naturally, the $C_{(\text{presentee})}$ clause can feature focalization of the secondary Rheme by means of prosody and/or word order, as in (15); **BOLD-FACE SMALL CAPS** and the acute symbol indicate prosodic emphasis—rising intonation and phrasal stress:¹³

- (15) a. [Èto]_{Theme-1} [[moet posudu]_{Theme-2} [**IVÁN**]_{Rheme-2, Focalized}]_{Rheme-1}
 this.situation.is washes dishes Ivan
- b. [Èto]_{Theme-1} [[Ivan moet]_{Theme-2} [**POSÚDU**]_{Rheme-2, Focalized}]_{Rheme-1}
 this.situation.is Ivan washes dishes

Secondary Theme ~ Rheme division within the $C_{(\text{presentee})}$ clause is possible in sentences with Serb. *to*¹**III** as well, even though the resulting word order permutations are less free than in Russian and the SVO order is strongly preferred.

In addition, in Serbian, unlike in Russian, if the $C_{(\text{presentee})}$ clause's subject that expresses the secondary semantic Theme is Focalized, it can be extracted from the $C_{(\text{presentee})}$ clause and linearly placed at the very beginning of the sentence, thus depriving *to*¹**III** of its first position (in this connection, see Progovac 2005: 55, which attributes the dislocation of the subject of the $C_{(\text{presentee})}$ clause to its being communicatively given and thus outside of the "scope" of *to*¹**III**).

- (16) [What is this noise?]
- a. [**To**]_{Theme-1} [[Ivan]_{Theme-2} [pere sudove]_{Rheme-2}]_{Rheme-1}
 that.situation.is Ivan washing dishes
 'That is Ivan washing dishes.'
- b. [Ivan]_{Theme-2, Focalized} [**to**]_{Theme-1} [[pere sudove]_{Rheme-2}]_{Rheme-1}
 Ivan that.situation.is washes dishes
 'Ivan, that is him washing dishes.'

¹³ Incidentally, the same state of affairs obtains in the Chinese special presentative construction, i.e., the focalization of the secondary Rheme is marked by a phrasal stress on one of its wordforms (boldfaced in the example below), very much like what happens in Russian and Serbian, as can be seen in (i), based on example (5) above:

- (i) a. Shì **Wāng** zài nàr dǎ gǔ. 'This is **WÁNG** is playing drums there.'
 b. Shì Wāng **zài nàr** dǎ gǔ. 'This is **THÉRE** Wang is playing drums.'
 c. Shì Wāng zài nàr dǎ **gǔ**. 'This is **DRÚMS** Wang is playing there.'

Rus. *èto¹III* can occupy a non-initial position in the sentence in highly colloquial style.

- (17) Ivan tam èto činit mašinu!
Ivan there this.situation.is repairs car

'It is Ivan who is repairing the car over there.'

In neutral style, *èto¹III* can be preceded only by one of the modal particles mentioned in §5.1 (see example (24), p. 84).

3.2. The Clausative-Presentative Construction Headed by Rus. *vot¹* / Serb. *evo¹*

In this construction, the dependent element—the actant of *vot¹/evo¹*—can be either a noun, as in (3b(i)–4b(i)), or an independent clause, as in (3b(ii)–4b(ii)).

Since *vot¹/evo¹* are non-descriptive lexemes, the sentence they are heading does not admit negation or interrogation and cannot be syntactically subordinated.

- (18) a. *Vot ne idët Ivan. / *Evo ne dolazi Ivan.
I.indicate.here not comes Ivan
Intended: 'I indicate here that it is not the case that Ivan is coming.'
- b. *Vot idët Ivan? / *Evo dolazi Ivan?
I.indicate.here comes Ivan
Intended: 'Do I indicate here that Ivan is coming?'
- c. ??Maša govorit (znaet), čto vot idët Ivan. /
Masha says (knows) that I.indicate.here comes Ivan
*Marija kaže (zna) da evo dolazi Ivan.
Intended: 'Masha says/knows that I indicate here that Ivan is coming.'

Because *vot¹/evo¹* are, so to speak, linguistic indicative gestures used in "here and now" situations, the main verb of the $C_{(presentee)}$ clause can only be in the present tense.

Unlike *èto¹III/to¹III*, which express exclusively the Sem-Theme of the corresponding sentence, the clausatives *vot¹/evo¹* appear in both communicative roles—as the Sem-Theme and as the Sem-Rheme, the latter being somewhat less natural for Serbian *evo¹* than for its Russian counterpart. Let us first illustrate the case of *vot¹*.

Lexeme *voť*¹ can express the Sem-Theme of the sentence, while its actant, the presentee (a noun or a clause), expresses the Sem-Rheme—with further communicative divisions being possible in case the presentee is a clause (see (19a) and (19b)).

Lexeme *voť*¹ can also function as the Sem-Rheme—provided the presentee is expressed by a nominal, as in (19c) and (19d). In (19d), the nominal presentee is communicatively Given (i.e., its referent is present in the mind of interlocutors). This communicative marking triggers the “split” implementation of the Sem-Theme: by the noun *Ivan*—in the SSynt-role of postlepsis or prolepsis—and the substitute pronoun *on* ‘he’, co-referential with the noun. (The arrows above the examples indicate, quite roughly, the appropriate intonation. Example (19b) does not carry any prosodic indication because the corresponding sentence is uttered with neutral declarative prosody.)

- (19) a. \searrow \searrow
 [Vot]_{THEME} [Ivan.]_{RHEME}
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM
 ‘Here is Ivan.’
- b. [Vot]_{THEME} [Ivan činit našu mašinu.]_{RHEME}
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM repair.PRES.3SG our car.SG.ACC
 ‘Here is Ivan repairing our car.’
- c. \nearrow \searrow \longrightarrow
 [Ivan]_{THEME} [-vot.]_{RHEME} ~ [vót]_{RHEME} [Ivan.]_{THEME}
 Ivan.NOM I.indicate.here I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM
 ‘Ivan is here.’ ‘Here is Ivan.’
- d. \longrightarrow \searrow
 [Vot on]_{RHEME} [Ivan.]_{THEME, Given}
 I.indicate.here he.NOM Ivan.NOM
 ‘Here he is, Ivan.’
- \nearrow \longrightarrow
 ~ [Ivan]_{THEME, Given} [vót on.]_{RHEME}
 Ivan.NOM I.indicate.here he.NOM
 ‘Ivan, here he is.’

As for *voť*₁, it is naturally used in the role of the Sem-Theme, similarly to *voť*¹ in (19a); it can also be used like *voť*¹ in (19b), but only if the word order in the presentee clause is unmarked (Subject-Verb-Object).

- (20) a. (i) [Evo]_{THEME} [Ivana.]_{RHEME}
 I.indicate.here Ivan.GEN
 ‘Here is Ivan.’
- (ii) [Evo ga]_{THEME} [Ivan.]_{RHEME, Given}
 I.indicate.here he.CLIT.GEN Ivan.NOM
 ‘Here is Ivan.’
- b. [Evo]_{THEME} [Ivan popravlja naša kola.]_{RHEME}
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM repair.PRES.3SG our car.PL.ACC
 ‘Here is Ivan repairing our car.’

However, Serbian examples (21a–b), analogous to Russian (19c–d), where *evo* expresses the semantic Rheme, are highly marked and found “bizarre” by most speakers.

- (21) a. (i) ?[Ivan]_{THEME} [–evo ga (njega).]_{RHEME}
 Ivan I.indicate.here he.CLIT.GEN he.FULL.GEN
 ‘Ivan, here he is.’
- (ii) ?[Ivan]_{THEME} [–evo ga on.]_{RHEME}
 Ivan I.indicate.here he.CLIT.GEN he.NOM
 ‘Ivan, here he is.’
- b. ?[Evo ga on.]_{RHEME} [Ivan.]_{THEME}
 I.indicate.here he.CLIT.GEN he.NOM Ivan.NOM
 ‘Here he is, Ivan.’

The representations of Russian sentences in (19) at the three relevant levels—semantic, deep-syntactic, and surface-syntactic—are featured in Figure 2 through Figure 5. The representations of the Serbian counterparts of (19), cited in example (20), can be seen in Figure 6 through Figure 8. (These representations are incomplete because irrelevant details—e.g., grammemes—are omitted.)

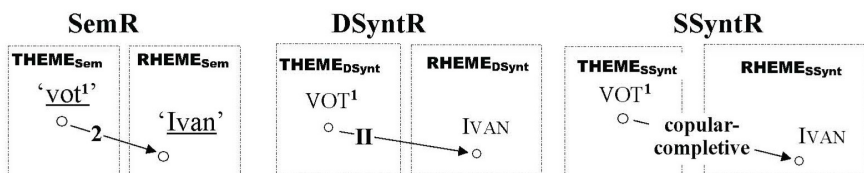


Figure 2. Representations of example (19a): *Vot Ivan.* ‘Here is Ivan.’

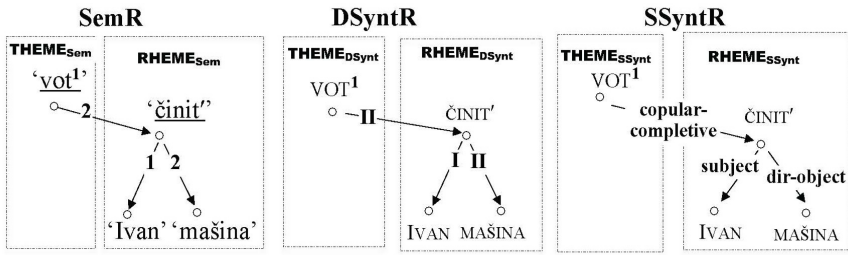


Figure 3. Representations of example (19b):
Vot Ivan činit našu mašinu. 'Here is Ivan repairing our car.'

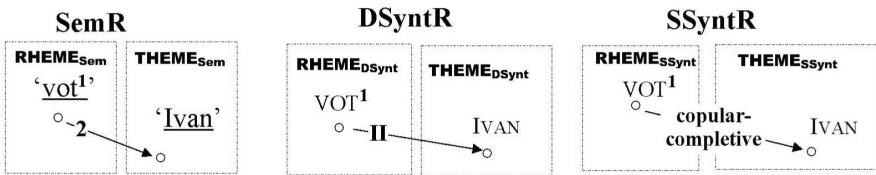


Figure 4. Representations of example (19c):
Ivan – vot. 'Ivan is here.' ~ *vot Ivan.* 'Here is Ivan.'

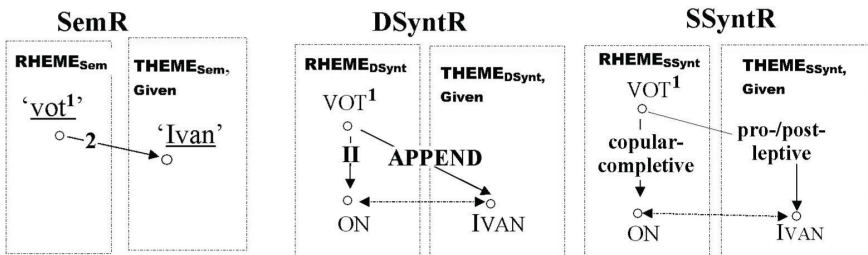


Figure 5. Representations of example (19d):¹⁴
Vot on, Ivan. 'Here he is, Ivan.' ~ *Ivan, vot on.* 'Ivan, here he is.'

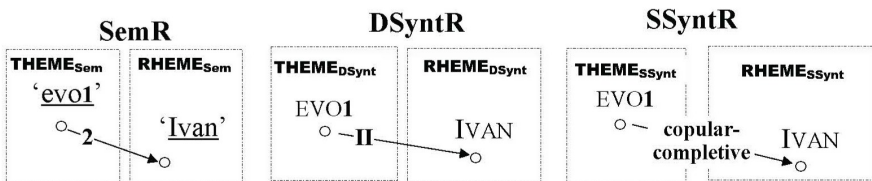


Figure 6. Representations of example (20a(i)):
Evo Ivana. 'Here is Ivan.'

¹⁴ The double-headed dashed arrow shows a coreference link.

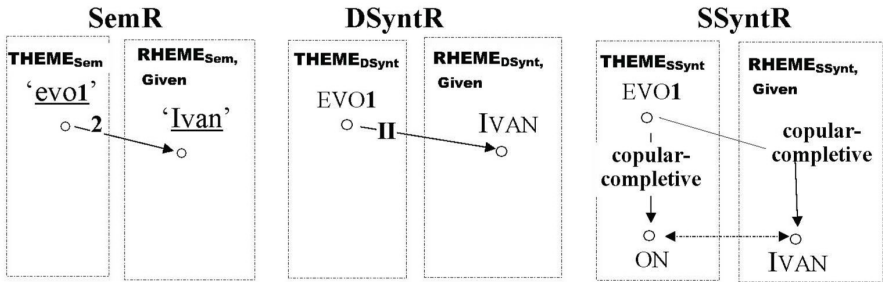


Figure 7. Representations of example (20a(ii)):
Evo ga Ivan. 'Here is Ivan.'

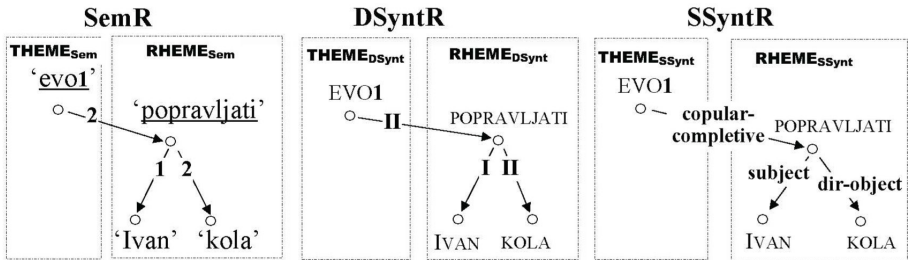


Figure 8. Representations of example (20b):
Evo Ivan popravlja naša kola. 'Here is Ivan repairing our car.'

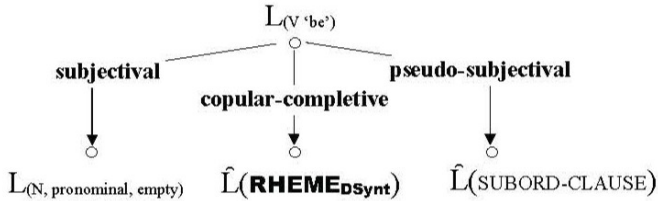
Sentence (20a(ii)) contains the resumptive (= semantically empty) clitic *ga*, the genitive form of the pronoun *on* 'he', coreferential with the proper noun *Ivan*. The use of the clitic indicates that 'Ivan' is communicatively Given. Sentence (20a(ii)) is only approximately synonymous with (20a(i)), which, however, does not prevent the interchangeability of these two sentence types.

4. Clausative-Presentative Constructions vs. Cleft Construction

Slavic Claus-PresCs are often compared and even identified with what is called the *cleft construction* in Germanic and Romance languages. The reason for this is obvious: both types of construction play the same discursive role—they serve to attract the Addressee's attention to a particular component of the Speaker's utterance. However, semantically and syntactically the Slavic Claus-PresCs and the Germanic/Romance cleft constructions are quite different; the similarity of their discourse roles—both are, in a sense, answers to a question—is not sufficient grounds for their identification.

DEFINITION 2: THE CLEFT CONSTRUCTION

A cleft construction is a surface-syntactic subtree of the following form:



where:

1. $L_{(V \text{ 'be' })}$ is a copular verb 'be'.
2. $L_{(N, \text{ pronominal, empty})}$ is a semantically empty pronoun—a dummy subject (such as Eng. *it*¹⁵, Fr. *il*, Ger. *es*; it can be zero—e.g., in Spanish and Italian).
3. $\hat{L}(\mathbf{RHEME}_{DSynt})$ is the lexeme that expresses the DSynt-Rheme or is the SSynt-head of the phrase that expresses the DSynt-Rheme; in other words, it is the focalized element.
4. $\hat{L}(\text{SUBORD-CLAUSE})$ stands for 'SSynt-head of a subordinate clause'; this head is:
 - a) either an empty subordinating conjunction, i.e., a complementizer (such as Eng. *that*²¹, Fr. *que*, Ger. *dass*);
 - b) or a finite verb that is the syntactic head of this subordinate clause and that has as a dependent a relative pronoun (such as Eng. *that*¹² or *who*).

As a particular type of linguistic sign, the cleft construction is a surface-syntactic idiom, formed by three "grammatical" words (such as IT, BE, THAT); however, it is impossible to discuss the cleft construction here (see Mel'čuk, forthcoming).

Here are stock examples of the cleft construction from English:

- (22) a. It was in May that we came to Boston.
 b. It was John who came to Boston.
 c. It is with John that we came to Boston.
 d. It was John with whom we came to Boston.

The cleft construction is not characteristic of Slavic languages. It exists, as far as we know, only in Czech and Ukrainian and has rather limited usage there.

- (23) a. Je to manželka, kdo rozhoduje. (Czech)
 is that wife who decides
 'It is the wife who decides.' (Reeve 2012: 167)
- b. To je spadok, ščo xvylyjuje joho. (Ukrainian)
 that is inheritance that worries he.ACC
 'It is the inheritance that worries him.' (Duma 2022: 1)

As is immediately seen, there are fundamental differences between the Claus-PresC and the cleft construction.

- The Claus-PresC (a) is defined on the **deep** Synt-level—its motivation is propositional-semantic; (b) it contains **no** grammatical lexemes; and (c) it is **monoclausal**.
- The cleft construction (a) is defined on the **surface** Synt-level—its motivation is communicative; (b) it contains **three** grammatical lexemes: a dummy pronoun, a copular verb, and either a complementizer or a relative pronoun; and (c) it is **biclausal**.

Of course, a researcher is free to call Claus-PresCs “Slavic clefts”, as do Reeve (2008) and Kimmelman (2009), for instance. This is, however, like calling English prepositions “English cases” because English prepositions often play the same syntactic role as cases in case languages. Therefore, we propose to avoid this terminological use: the Slavic Claus-PresC is not a cleft construction.

5. Lexicographic Descriptions of Russian and Serbian Clausative-Presentative Lexemes

As promised, we offer here the lexical entries for the Claus-Pres lexemes considered in this paper: Rus. *èto*¹**III**/Serb. *to*¹**III** and Rus. *vot*¹/Serb. *evo***I**, along with a summary and non-exhaustive characterization of other related lexemes (co-polysemous or homophonous with ours), especially those with which our presentative lexemes may be confounded. Since the equivalent Russian and Serbian presentatives are similar enough in their linguistic properties, it makes sense to describe them in parallel, which we will do. Our presentation follows the standard format of a lexicographic entry in an explanatory combinatorial dictionary (see, for instance, Mel'čuk 2012–15, vol. 2: 276–314).

A detailed description of Russian lexeme *èto* is found in Padučeva (1982); the results of this paper are used in what follows. Lexemes *vot* and *von* were described in Krylova (2014). As for Serbian counterparts of these items, they

were described, rather cursorily, in two dictionaries: Stevanović et al. (1967), and its abridged version, Vujanović et al. (2011).

5.1. The Lexicographic Entry for Rus. *èto*^{1III}/Serb. *to*^{1III}

Rus. *èto*^{1III}/Serb. *to*^{1III}: clausative, pronominal, demonstrative (anaphoric), presentative.

Definition

'*èto*^{1III}/*to*^{1III} Y' = 'this/that situation is identical to Y or a result of Y'.

1. 'This/that [E]' = '[E] which is now in the active zone of your conscience' (i.e., E is directly perceived or thought of by the Addressee).
2. The above definition is disjunctive (on such definitions and criteria for them, see Melčuk 2012–15, vol. 2: 324ff.). To illustrate, the first disjunct is implemented, for instance, in examples (28a) and (29a), and the second one in examples (28b–c) and (29b–c).

Government pattern

Y' ⇔ II
1. –copular-completive → CLAUSE _(declarative) obligatory

Syntactic properties

The only syntactic dependents (along with the $C_{(presentee)}$ clause) accepted by Rus. *èto*^{1III} are modal particles, such as *da* 'but, well', *nu* 'well', *prосто* 'simply', *razve* 'Is it the case that...?' and *ved'* 'but'/'after all' (see (24)). As for Serb. *to*^{1III}, it accepts as syntactic dependents the modal particles *a* 'well', *ma* 'but' and *samo/prosto* 'simply' (see (25)). A modal particle depends on *èto/to* via the restrictive surface-syntactic relation.

- (24) a. *Ved' èto Ivan idët/prišël.*
'But this is Ivan coming/having come.'
- b. *Razve èto Ivan idët/prišël?*
'Is it the case that Ivan is coming/has come?'
- (25) *A/Ma to se Ivan nešto ljuti.*
'Well, that (But that) is Ivan getting angry for some reason.'

Examples

- (28) a. [Čto slučilos'?' 'What happened?'] (Russian)
 Da èto Ivan uronil knigi.
 lit. 'But this.situation.is Ivan dropped books.'
 'This situation, i.e., something happened, is Y, Y being "Ivan dropped books."'
- b. [A kuda Ivan bežit? 'And where is Ivan running?']
 Èto on spešit na avtobus.
 lit. 'This.situation.is.a.result.of he hurries on bus.'
 'This situation, i.e., Ivan is running, is a result of Y, Y being "Ivan is hurrying to catch the bus."'
- c. [Ivan vinovato ulybnulsja. 'Ivan smiled guiltily.']
 Èto on xotel pokazat' nam, čto on vsë ponjal.
 lit. 'This.situation.is.a.result.of he wanted to.show us that he everything understood.'
 'This situation, i.e., his guilty smile, is a result of Y, Y being "Ivan wanted to show that he understood everything."'
- (29) a. [Šta se dešava? 'What is going on?'] (Serbian)
 To neko više na ulici.
 lit. 'That.situation.is some.people shout on street.'
 'That situation, i.e., something that is going on, is Y, Y being "people are shouting in the street."'
- b. [Kaže da će platiti, ali me izbegava. 'He.says he will pay, but he is avoiding me.']
 To on hoće da vrati samo pola para.
 lit. 'That.situation.is.a result.of he wants to return only half of.money.'
 'That situation, i.e., he is avoiding me, is a result of Y, Y being "he wants to give back only half of the money."'

- (29) c. [Upon seeing shopping bags scattered around]
 To je Tanja opet bila u kupovini.
 lit. 'That.situation.is.a.result.of is Tanja again been in shopping.'¹⁶
 'That situation, i.e., the presence of shopping bags, is a result of Y,
 Y being "Tanja went shopping again."'

Two comments seem useful here.

Since 'Y', the Sem-actant of 'èto¹III/to¹III', denotes a situation, the C_(presentee) clause must be declarative, i.e., it cannot be interrogative or exclamative. Therefore, in such sentences as (30), we find not èto¹III/to¹III, but èto²/to² (see also examples (38) and (39)).

- (30) a. Èto kto (Kto èto) zdes' šumit? (Russian)
 lit. 'This who (Who this) here makes.noises?'
 'Who is this who is making noise here?'
 b. Ko to (*To ko) ovde pravi buku? (Serbian)
 lit. 'Who this here makes noise?'
 'Who is this who is making noise here?'

In both Russian and Serbian ClausPresCs, the C_(presentee) clause often features ellipsis of the main verb.

- (31) a. Ja podumal, što èto Ivan (Russian)
 I thought that this.situation.is Ivan
 prosto tak (iz zavisti).
 just so out.of envy
 'I thought that Ivan [**did/said**] this just so (out of envy).'
 b. Niko mu ne plaća: to (Serbian)
 nobody to.him not pays that.situation.is
 on onako, za džabe.
 he like.that for free
 'Nobody pays him: he [**does**] that just so, free of charge.'

¹⁶ The *je* after *to* is not the copula but rather the auxiliary of the past tense.

5.2. Other Rus. *èto* and Serb. *to* Lexemes

Here are lexemes that are co-polysemous/homophonous partners of *èto*¹**III**/*to*¹**III**.

*èto*¹/*to*¹

Nominal demonstrative pronouns whose meanings include the semanteme 'this/that [E]' = '[E] which is now in the active zone of your conscience'; they are anaphoric.

*èto*¹**I** (entity)

- (32) a. *Èto*←**subj**–byl dom Ivana.
'This was Ivan's house.'
b. Dotronut'sja do–**prepos**→
ètogo ja ne sposoben.
'To touch this I am unable.'

*to*¹**I** (entity)

- (33) a. *To*←**subj**–su naša deca.lit.
'That are our children.'
b. *Ko* ⟨Gde, Šta⟩ je–**subj**→
to?
'Who ⟨Where, What⟩ is that?'

*èto*¹**II.1** (entity or fact)

- (34) a. *Aspirin* – *èto*←**subj**–Ø^{BYT}
sredstvo ot vsego.
'Aspirin, this is a means
against everything.'
b. *Priznat' ošibku* – *èto*←**subj**–
bylo nelegko.
lit. 'To admit the mistake this
was not easy.'
c. *Ko*–[vsemu]→*ètomu my*
privyknem.
lit. 'To all this we will get
accustomed.'

*to*¹**II.1** (entity or fact)

- (35) a. *Aspirin, to*←**subj**–je lek za
sve.
'Aspirin, that is a remedy
for everything.'¹⁷
b. *Ti to*←**dir.objectival**–
[meni]– (*kažeš*)?
'You (are saying) that to
me?'
c. *Ko bi se toga setio?*
'Who would remember
that?'

¹⁷ The noun *aspirin* in (34a) and (35a), as well as the infinitive *priznat'* in (34b), are prolepses. (Prolepsis is a fronted clause element, prosodically detached from the clause and morphologically independent of it, that syntactically depends on the head of the clause and fulfills a communicative role.)

*èto*¹_{II.2} (fact)*to*¹_{II.2} (fact)

This wordsense of *to* was described in Progovac (1998: 12–16).

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>(36) a. Marina xodit bez šapki,
i èto pri takom moroze!
lit. 'Marina is.walking.around
without a.hat, and that with
such a.cold!'</p> <p>b. On sil'no p'ët, no èto tol'ko
raz v godu.
lit. 'He heavily drinks, but
that only once a.year.'</p> | <p>(37) a. Marina uvek peva, i to lepo.
lit. 'Marina always sings,
and that beautifully.'</p> <p>b. Uskoro odlazim, i to sama.
lit. 'Soon I.am.leaving, and
that alone.'</p> |
|---|--|

Interestingly, while *èto*¹_{II.2} and *to*¹_{II.2} do not exhibit semantic differences, their syntactic behavior is quite different; thus, a literal translation of (36b) into Serbian is ungrammatical, and the same is true of the translations of (37a–b) into Russian. We cannot, however, pursue this matter further here.

*èto*²/*to*²

A modal invariable particle that syntactically depends on an interrogative pronoun and expresses the emotional or mental attitude of the Speaker in the situation in question—amazement, curiosity, disapproval, etc.—depending on the prosody. Both *èto*² and *to*² are colloquial. On the syntactic behavior of Serbian *to*² see, in particular, Browne (1976: 200–01).

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>(38) a. Kuda→èto idët Ivan? ~
Èto←kuda idët Ivan?
lit. 'Where this (This where)
goes Ivan?'</p> <p>b. Začem [ty] èto vstaës'?
lit. 'Why you this stand up?'</p> | <p>(39) a. Ko→to tamo peva?
lit. 'Who that there sings?'</p> <p>b. Ko (Gde, Šta) to?
lit. 'Who (Where, What)
that?'</p> |
|--|---|

*èto*³

A focalization-marking clitic particle introduced into the SSynt-structure by a DSynt-rule as a marker of a focalized Rheme; the focalized rhematic expression is fronted and bears a phrasal stress and a rising contour.

- (40) a. Èto³–IvÁN moet posudu, a ne Petja.
 'It is Ivan who is washing dishes, but not Pete.'
- b. Èto³–u NÁs muzyka igraet, a ne u sosedej.
 'It is at our place that music is playing, but not at the neighbors.'

Serbian has no lexeme corresponding to Rus. èto³, or any other “pure” segmental focalization marker (that is, a particle that has no propositional meaning and expresses exclusively focalization); in this language, focalization is expressed only by word order and/or prosody (which is rather the norm across the Slavic domain). Russian sentences featuring the focalizing èto³, such as the one in (40a), can be translated into Serbian as shown in (41a–b); as an approximate translation, one could also use (41c), featuring the Claus-PresC headed by to¹III.

- (41) a. Sudove pere ÍVAN, a ne Petar.
 dish.PL.ACC wash.PRES.3SG Ivan.NOM but not Peter.NOM
 'The dishes are being washed by Ivan, not by Peter.'
- b. ÍVAN pere sudove, a ne Petar.
 Ivan.NOM wash.PRES.3SG dish.SG.ACC but not Peter.NOM
 'Ivan is (the one) washing the dishes, not Peter.'
- c. To¹III–copular–completive–[ÍVAN]→pere sudove, a ne Petar.
 lit. 'The situation is that Ivan is washing the dishes, not Peter.'

While in (41a–b) the primary focalization bears on a participant of the corresponding situation (the underlying question being 'Who does it?'), (41c) is about a situation within which a participant is the (prosodically) focalized secondary Rheme (with the underlying question 'What is this situation?').

5.3. The Lexicographic Entry for Rus. *voť*¹/Serb. *evoť*

Rus. *voť*¹/Serb. *evoť*: clausative, demonstrative, presentative, signalative.

Definition

'voť¹ Y/evoť Y-a' = 'I indicate here something that is Y.'

Government pattern

<i>vot</i> ¹	<i>evo1</i>
‘Y’ ↔ II	‘Y’ ↔ II
1. -cop-compl → N _{NOM}	1. -cop-compl → N _{GEN}
2. -cop-compl → CLAUSE _(pseudo-relative) ¹⁸	2. -cop-compl → CLAUSE _(pseudo-relative)
3. -cop-compl → CLAUSE	3. -cop-compl → CLAUSE
	4. -cop-compl → PRON _{CLIT, GEN} N _{NOM} / PRON and N are coreferential
obligatory	obligatory

Syntactic properties

- (i) Rus. *vot*¹/Serb. *evo1* can express both the Sem-Theme and the Sem-Rheme of the sentence, but *evo1* is more restricted in the role of Sem-Rheme (see examples (19–20) in §3.2, pp. 78–79).
- (ii) Serb. *evo1* cannot be the host for the verbal clitic *je* ‘is’ which is [*biti*_{(locative)IND.PRES.3.SG}], see examples (45b–c) below and the corresponding explanation.

Examples

- (42) a. *Vot* Ivan ⟨moja komnata⟩. (Russian)
I.indicate.here Ivan ⟨my room⟩
‘Here is Ivan ⟨my room⟩.’ ≅
Ivan ⟨Moja komnata⟩ – *vot*.
‘Ivan ⟨My room⟩ is here.’

¹⁸ A pseudo-relative clause is a subordinated clause that has the structure of a relative clause (contains a WH-word) but is not a modifier of a noun (as a genuine relative is): a pseudo-relative clause is syntactically equivalent to a noun phrase and functions as a syntactic actant (e.g., *We will eat what you brought.*); see Mel’čuk (2021: 249ff). In French and Italian examples (6c) and (7c), p. 70, the subordinated clauses *qui arrive/che arriva* in the sentences *Le voici qui arrive/Eccolo che arriva* are pseudo-relatives.

- (42) b. Vot to, što ja tebe obeščal. (Russian)
 I.indicate.here that what I to.you promised
 'Here is (that) what I promised you.'
- c. Vot gde (s kem) Ivan činit
 I.indicate.here where (with whom) Ivan is.repairing
 našu mašinu.
 our car
 'Here is where (with whom) Ivan is repairing our car.'
- d. Vot Ivan opjat' Ø^{BYT'-cop}→bolen.
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM again ill
 'Here is Ivan being ill again.'
- e. Vot Ivan Ø^{BYT'-loc}→v kuxne.
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM in kitchen.SG.LOC
 'Here is Ivan in the kitchen.'
- (43) a. Evo Ivana (moje sobe). (Serbian)
 I.indicate.here Ivan.GEN my room.SG.GEN
 'Here is Ivan (my room).'
- b. Evo ga (njega).
 I.indicate.here he.CLIT.GEN he.FULL.GEN
 'Here is he (HE).'
- c. Evo ga (*njega) Ivan.
 I.indicate.here he.CLIT.GEN he.FULL.GEN Ivan.NOM
 'Here is he (*HE) Ivan.'
- d. Evo onoga što me najviše brine.
 I.indicate.here that.SG.GEN what I.ACC most worry.PRES.3SG
 'Here is (that) what worries me the most.'
- e. Evo gde Ivan živi.
 I.indicate.here where Ivan.NOM live.PRES.3SG
 'Here is where Ivan lives.'
- f. Evo Ivan je opet bolestan.
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM be_(cop).PRES.3SG again ill
 'Here is Ivan being ill again.'

- (43) g. Evo Ivan je u kuhinji.
 I.indicate.here Ivan.NOM be_(loc).PRES.3SG in kitchen.SG.LOC
 ‘Here is Ivan in the kitchen.’
- h. Evo su deca u
 I.indicate.here be_(loc).PRES.3PL child.PL.NOM in
 kuhinji.
 kitchen.SG.LOC
 ‘Here are the children in the kitchen.’

Some additional explanations are needed here.

The meaning of Rus. *vot*¹/Serb. *evo***1** can be easily taken as an order/request with the imperative meaning; cf. the gloss ‘look here/there’, often used for both lexemes. But this is not the case. The meaning of Rus. *vot*¹ does not include the imperative semanteme ‘I want you to...’. This is explicitly shown by the fact that *vot*¹ does not accept the particle *-ka*, which “mitigates” orders and instructions and can be attached to any verbal imperative form and to some particles that express incitement: *Na-ka!* ‘Please take!’ or *Nu-ka!* ≈ ‘Please do!’. By analogy, we draw the same conclusion for *evo***1**. At the same time, *vot*¹/*evo***1** are non-descriptive lexemes—their meanings must include the semanteme ‘I’; the above definition—‘I indicate here...’—does exactly this.

The sequence *vot gde* in (42c) should not be confounded with the sequence *vot gde* in the following sentence.

- (44) Tak vot gde Ivan činit našu mašinu!
 ‘So this is where Ivan is repairing our car!’

The meanings, prosodies, and SSynt-structures are completely different in these cases:

- *vot* in (42c) means ‘I indicate here where...’, while its formal counterpart in (44) has the meaning ‘Now I know where...!’
- Sentence (42c) is declarative, *vot gde* is uttered with neutral (= flat) intonation, and the two lexemes can be separated by a parenthetical: *Vot, kak ty vidiš, gde Ivan činit mašinu* ‘Here is, as you can see, where Ivan is repairing the car’. In contrast, sentence (44) is exclamative, *vot gde* is uttered with a falling intonation, with strong phrasal stress on *vot*, and without a possible pause between *vot* and *gde*.
- While *vot* in (42c) is our clausative-presentative, serving as the syntactic head of the corresponding syntactic construction, *vot* in (44) is a modal particle that syntactically depends on a relative pronoun (*kto* ‘who’, *čto*

'what', *gde* 'where', *kogda* 'when', *začem* 'what for', etc.), with which it forms a phraseologized combination and means ≈ 'now I know...'; cf. respectively:

vot←**copular-completive**→*činit'*←**circumstantial**→*gde*

vs.

vot←**restrictive**→*gde*←**circumstantial**→*činit'*

As shown in examples (42d–e) for Russian and (43f–h) for Serbian, the copular and the locative verbs *byt'*/*biti* 'be' can appear as the syntactic head of the $C_{(presentee)}$ clause that functions as the actant of *vot*¹/*evo*₁ (albeit the corresponding construction is best suited for event-denoting verbs). In Serbian, this allows for a variation of the type illustrated in (45a), involving the locative *biti* 'be', with the following restriction: if the locative verb appears in the third person singular of the present tense, it cannot be hosted by *evo*₁. In such a case, if the structure of the sentence allows for it, *evo*₁ must be skipped (i.e., not counted as a possible host of the locative *biti*) or else the construction with the pronoun in the genitive must be used. This is shown in (45b–c).

- (45) a. *Evo sam*_(V, loc) (*ja*) *u sobi*. or *Evo me*_{(N, pron)GEN} *u sobi*.
 'Here am (I) in the room.' lit. 'Here me in room.'
- b. **Evo je*_(V, loc) (*on*) *u sobi*. ⇒ *Evo on je*_(V, loc) *u sobi*.
 'Here is (he) in the room.' 'Here he is in room.'
 or *Evo ga*_{(N, pron)GEN} (*on*) *u sobi*.
 lit. 'Here him (he) in room.'
- c. **Evo je*_(V, loc) (*ona*) *u sobi*. ⇒ *Evo ona je*_(V, loc) *u sobi*. or
*Evo je*_{(N, pron)GEN} (*ona*) *u sobi*.
 'Here is (she) in the room.'

Serbian sentences with a locative *biti* in the $C_{(presentee)}$ —such as in (45a)—are colloquial and are deemed "substandard" by normative grammars.¹⁹

¹⁹ The ungrammaticality of the starred sentences in (45b–c) is probably explainable by the fact that *je*, the expression ambiguous between the 3SG form of the locative verb *biti* 'be' and the genitive singular form of the pronoun *ona* 'she', is preferably interpreted by the Addressee as the latter, which may result in confusion. We have here a surprising example of a highly idiosyncratic constraint on "clitic ~ host" co-occurrence—imposed on a particular host by a particular clitic. More generally, we see to what extent clitics are important in syntax, even in cases such as ours, where they are not directly involved. (For a recent publication on Serbian clitics, see Milićević 2023.)

5.4. Other Rus. *vot*/Serb. *evo* Lexemes

We will limit ourselves to indicating some of the *vot/evo* lexemes whose uses can be confounded with *vot¹/evo¹* in the Claus-PresC.

The narrative *vot/evo* ≈ 'I will describe what follows as if I were present there'

- | | |
|---|--|
| (46) Vot prixodit Ivan domoj i vidit...
'So Ivan comes home and sees...' | (47) I evo, posle mnogo godina, Ivan se vraća kući.
'And so, after many years, Ivan is returning home.' |
|---|--|

The Actor's immediate action *vot/evo* ≈ 'right away...'

- | | |
|--|--|
| (48) a. Vot on zakončit piš'mo i pojdět.
'Now he'll finish the letter and will go.' | (49) a. Evo dolazi.
lit. 'Right away (s/he's) coming.' |
| b. Vot ja tebe zadam!
'Now I'll teach you a lesson!' | b. Evo, evo!
lit. 'Right away, right away!' = 'Coming, coming!' |

The explanatory *vot/evo*

- | | |
|--|---|
| (50) a. Vot što ja xotel tebe skazat'.
'Here is what I wanted to tell you.' | (51) a. Evo šta sam hteo da ti kažem.
'Here is what I wanted to tell you.' |
| b. Vot kak ⟨počemu⟩.
'Here is how ⟨why⟩.' | b. Evo kako ⟨zašto⟩.
'Here is how ⟨why⟩.' |

The offering *vot/evo*

- | | |
|--|---|
| (52) Vot tebe kniga ⟨to, što ja tebe obeščal⟩.
lit. 'Here to you book ⟨that what I to you promised⟩.' | (53) Evo ti knjiga ⟨ono što sam ti obećao⟩.
lit. 'Here to you book ⟨that what I to you promised⟩.' |
|--|---|

The “temporal” *vot/evo*

- | | |
|---|--|
| (54) <i>Vot uže tri dnja, kak idët dožd'.</i>
<i>'It's been raining for three days already.'</i> | (55) <i>Evo već tri dana kako pada kiša.</i>
<i>'It's been raining for three days already.'</i> |
|---|--|

The conjunction *kak/kako* is necessary: without it, we have the Claus-PresC with *vot!*; *uže/već* is desirable.

The phraseologized *vot* (*evo* has similar, albeit not as rich, phraseology):

- With an interrogative pronoun, the resulting combined meaning ‘now I know where (where from, etc.): *vot + gde* ‘where’ (*kuda* ‘where to’, *otkuda* ‘where from’, *kogda* ‘when’, *kto* ‘who’, *čto* ‘what’, etc.).
- With a demonstrative locative-temporal adverbial pronoun, the resulting combination meaning ‘exactly here (to there, etc.): *vot + zdes'* ‘here’, *tuda* ‘to there’, *ottuda* ‘from there’, *sejčas* ‘this moment’, *teper'* ‘now’, *togda* ‘then’.
- In idioms such as ‘*Vot i!*’, ‘Here is [X]’, ‘*Da vot!*’, ‘But that’s how it is...’, ‘*Nu vot!*’, ‘Well then’, ‘*Tak vot!*’, ‘That’s how it is’, ‘*Vot-te/Vot tebe na!*’, ‘*Gee!*’, ‘*Vot èto da!*’, ‘*Gee!*’, ‘*Vot èto*’ [X]!, ‘What a wonderful [X]!’, etc.

This concludes the lexicographic description of the Russian and Serbian Claus-Pres lexemes.

6. Conclusions

Two general results of our research are presented, followed by several specific remarks on the Claus-Pres lexemes analyzed.

6.1. General Remarks on the Slavic Clausative-Presentative Construction

Strictly speaking, the Claus-PresC is not a construction—at least, not in the same sense in which the cleft construction is. In today’s linguistic literature, the quasi-term *construction* is liberally applied to any multiword expression having any special property. There is nothing wrong in that: such a “wild card” term proves convenient in many an informal discussion. However, at some point it is also necessary to precisely specify each object of our description which we provisionally call “construction”.

- More complex government of Serb. *evo***1**, which can take a clitic resumptive pronoun as an additional SSynt-dependent, alongside the noun co-referenced by the clitic.

A remarkable difference between Russian and Serbian, not directly linked to Claus-Pres lexemes but rather to their homophonous “partners”, concerns the means of expressing focalization. While both languages employ to that effect both the prosody and the word order, Russian has an additional means—a dedicated focalization particle *èto*³, with no counterpart in Serbian.

Abbreviations, Symbols, and Writing Conventions

ACC	accusative (grammeme of case)	LOC	locative (grammeme of case)
Aux	auxiliary verb	MASC	masculine (grammeme of adjectival gender)
CLIT	clitic (grammeme of tonicity)	neu	neuter (nominal gender)
Claus- PresC	clausative-presentative construction	NOM	nominative (grammeme of case)
cop	syntactic feature of the copular verb ‘be’	P.PART	past participle
DAT.ETH	ethical dative (syntactic role)	PL	plural (grammeme)
DemClaus	demonstrative clausative lexeme	SemR	semantic representation
DSyntR	deep-syntactic representation	SG	singular (grammeme)
FULL	full (grammeme of tonicity)	SSyntR	surface-syntactic representation
GEN	genitive (grammeme of case)	∅	zero (= phonologically null) wordform
L	the given lexeme	I, II, ...	deep-syntactic actant I , II, ... (of a lexeme)
lit.	literal gloss (of an expression)	‘x’	meaning of the expression <i>x</i>
loc	syntactic feature of the locative verb ‘be’	<i>x=y</i>	boundary between host <i>x</i> and enclitic <i>y</i>

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