

EXISTENTIAL *THERE*-CONSTRUCTION AS A MEANS
OF PRESENTATION IN NARRATIVE
(A CORPUS-BASED SYNTACTIC-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS)

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Fundamentals and the Corpus

Drawing on the Firbasian (Brno) approach towards the theory of functional sentence perspective (abbreviated FSP; summarised above all in Firbas, 1992, 1995, Svoboda, 1989, 2006), the paper is a part of a larger-scale corpus-based research in the area of the sentences implementing the so-called Presentation Scale (Pr-sentences). The research is primarily concerned with the occurrence and the syntactic-semantic typology of Pr-sentences within fiction narratives and the New Testament narratives, with special regard to the semantic as well as syntactic character of the English verb functioning within the Presentation Scale.

The present paper examines the most frequent and underlying structure that is capable of presenting a new phenomenon on the scene, viz. the existential *there*-construction, utilising Clive Staples Lewis' novel *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (in the paper, examples extracted from the research corpus are marked with N, which is followed by a number denoting pagination in the source; individual sentences on the same page are referred to by low-case letters, such as N19c). The whole text under examination consists of ca 40,000 words and their FSP analyses. Within the corpus, there are 3,067 basic distributional fields, which are technically counted as finite clauses; non-finite clauses are regarded as separate communicative units within the basic distributional fields. Since the topic of the discussion is the sentences that implement the Presentation Scale, these were excerpted, arranged and tagged in the research corpus. Out of all the 3,067 basic distributional fields in the corpus material, 247 instances of sentences that implement the Presentation Scale were identified, which represents 8.05 percent.

Table 1 Statistical Data of the Corpus

Basic distributional fields	Abs.	%
Q-Scale	2,820	91.95
Pr-Scale	247	8.05
Total	3,067	100.00

Within the interplay of the basic FSP factors (context, linear modification, and semantics), the scholarly attention paid to the syntactic nature of the transitional verb has been slightly one-sided even though the verb represents a crucial element in FSP interpretation. Whereas the verb is well-researched in the area of its FSP (i.e. dynamic semantic) qualities (among other qualities its tendency to act typically in the transition layer or the double-sided capacity to interconnect the theme and the rheme), the static (lexical) semantic character of the English verb – especially against the background of its syntactic structure – has been addressed only occasionally and usually primarily in relation to other linguistic issues (cf. Firbas, 1992, 1995; Dušková, 1998, 2008; Chamonikolasová – Adam, 2005; Adam, 2011a, 2011b and 2011c, which presents a preliminary discussion and findings antecedent to the present article).

In other words, it seems that a minute static semantic analysis of the Pr-verb may throw some light on the character of the English transitional verb operating in both dynamic semantic scales. To illustrate this, there is, as a rule, a direct, straightforward relationship between FSP tripartite functions (theme – transition – rheme) on the one hand and corresponding dynamic semantic roles (functions) on the other: for instance, the Bearer of Quality or the Setting is always thematic, or the Specification is inevitably rhematic (cf. Dušková, 2008, 71). Nevertheless, the situation is remarkably different in the case of the verb *that* – in both the Presentation and the Quality Scales – forms the transition of the sentence, or, if there is no successful competitor in the distributional field, the rheme. Thus, only the verb represents a potentially heterogeneous, double-faced element capable of fulfilling two dynamic semantic functions, viz. presentation or quality.

The role (dynamic semantic function) performed by the verb in a particular sentence in the immediately relevant context derives from the interplay of all the basic FSP factors. Apart from the semantic content of the verb (which seems to be primary), to a very large extent it depends on the contextual conditions as well as on the linear modification of the sentence. In the context of the theory of FSP, the English verb either ascribes a quality to the subject, giving its specification, or presents something new on the scene, expressing the existence or appearance of the phenomenon on the scene with "explicitness or sufficient implicitness" (Firbas, 1995, 65). As such, the verb (and its role in perspectiving the sentence either towards or away from the subject) definitely deserves a thorough treatment in terms of both dynamic and static semantics. As has been mentioned above, the present paper sets out to discuss the Presentation Scale sentences that are syntactically configured as

existential constructions, focusing especially on their syntactic and static semantic makeup. In the discussion on semantic analysis of the verbs (see section 3), logically enough, attention will be drawn to those existential constructions in which verbs other than *be* are employed.

Existential *There*-Construction

With regard to a preliminary typology of Pr-Sentences gained in recent years of research (see Adam, 2010, 2011a), the corpus data were processed in terms of different syntactic subtypes. To be precise, four separate syntactic patterns were identified and labelled as Subtypes 1–4 (see Table 2 below). Let it be said that Tárnyiková (personal communication) justifiably suggests that the four subtypes identified represent a somewhat heterogeneous set of patterns, defined according to differing criteria, be it the syntactic construction, subject semantics, or the position of selected sentence elements. She claims that one deals rather with one single type (Existential construction) with several variant subtypes. It should be noted at this point that though carried out independently, the classification acquired and presented in this paper is virtually in harmony with what Dušková offers in her study (1998) on differentiation of the syntactic forms of the Presentation Scale (see Adam, 2010, 2011b, 2001c; cf. Dušková, 1998). We believe that even if the set of subtypes is relatively miscellaneous, it is both generally derived from the syntactic picture of the sentences analysed and does reflect the state of the art of the area under discussion. Moreover, the typology is currently subject to further corpus-based research with an open possibility of a more refined modification after due consideration.

Table 2 Incidence of Individual Subtypes of Pr-sentences

Pr-Scale Sentences	Abs.	%
Subtype 1 – Existential <i>There</i> -construction	158	64
Subtype 2 – Rhematic subject in preverbal position	54	22
Subtype 3 – Fronted adverbial & S-V inversion	32	13
Subtype 4 – Locative Th-subject	3	1
Total	247	100

To complete the picture of the syntactic patterns that constitute the Pr-sentences in the research corpus, it should be pointed out that some authors (see esp. Birner – Ward, 1998, 123; 2001, 18–23, summarised e.g. in Tárnyiková, 2009, 93–100) admittedly provide a somewhat wider range of presentational constructions. First

of all, Tárnyiková, for instance, considers the term "existential sentences" to be "a rather simplifying cover-term for all the functions of *there*-sentences" (2009, 93). Deriving from Birner – Ward (1998) and thus taking into consideration the crucial difference between "hearer-new" and "discourse-new" information, she distinguishes two types of *there*-constructions, admitting that such a distinction may at times be blurred and problematic (cf. also Quirk et al., 1985, 1406; Birner – Ward, 1998, 98). Firstly, it is existential-*there*, which denotes mere "hearer-new" existence of an entity and which is prototypically realised by *there+be* constructions. Secondly, it is the presentative (presentational) *there*-construction, which denotes a more dynamic process of bringing something "discourse-new" into sight and is prototypically patterning as *there+verb* other than *be* (Tárnyiková, 2009, 96–97).

It follows that the existential *there*-constructions, apart from its prototypical *there + be + indefinite noun phrase* (NP), may be realised with a definite NP in the rhematic section. In Tárnyiková's (2009, 98) view, "in existential *there*-constructions, definiteness is not expected to signal *hearer-old* information but rather information that is *formally* definite but (...) intended to introduce hearer-new entity". Following in the footsteps of Birner – Ward (1998, 123ff), Tárnyiková (2009, 98–100) provides five subtypes of existential *there*-constructions with a definite NP: (i) hearer-old entities treated as hearer-new, i.e. "reminders"; (ii) hearer-new tokens of hearer-old types ("new instance" of a "known type"); (iii) hearer-old entities newly instantiating a variable ("list interpretation"); (iv) hearer-new entities with individuating description; (v) false "definites". Besides, the presentational *there*-constructions may be then used to usher new information to discourse (i.e. not to the hearer).

In the corpus under investigation, three source samples featuring a definite NP were detected, representing the first three subtypes with definite NPs respectively; in exx (1)–(3) the corresponding subtype is indicated at the end:

- (1) **There were the coats hanging up as usual, and a smell of mothballs, and darkness and silence, and no sign of Lucy.** (N31a) – subtype (ii)
- (2) (CONTEXT: "Why, who are you afraid of?" said Peter. "There's no one here but ourselves.") **There are the trees**", said the Beaver. (N69b) – subtype (i)
- (3) (CONTEXT: There were lovely stone shapes that looked like women but who were the spirits of trees.) **There was the great shape of a centaur and a winged horse and a long lithe creature that Edmund took to be a dragon.** (N97c) – subtype (iii)

Generally speaking, the data analysis of all the Pr-sentences shows that by far the most frequent subtype of Pr-Scale sentences is definitely represented by the exis-

tential/presentational *there*-construction (64 percent) in the corpus. Syntactically, the existential *there*-clauses constitute a somewhat specific phenomenon in the area of FSP interpretation, as the distribution of the degrees of communicative dynamism does not follow the "common" linearity principle. Firbas speaks, in this connection, of "permanent obviousness" of the *there*-constructions in the immediately relevant context (Firbas, 1992, 24). For the writer and the reader it is obvious what this *there*-element means and hence its notion is permanently present in the situational context. Firbas argues that in this construction, *there* "though semantically very weak, is not totally stripped of all meaning, ... and acts as an indicator of a scene expressed by a genuine adverbial of place" (Firbas, 1992, 24). Some authors even dispute any original semantic load of the existential *there*; what is crucial, though, is the fact that the existential construction explicitly indicates existential predication, which is a constitutive component of the syntactic-semantic structure of the Presentation Scale (Dušková, 2005). Consequently, the existential *there* is assigned the Set-function and is entirely context-dependent.

As has been said, the existential *there*-clauses are specific in their linear modification, i.e. word order arrangement: unlike most sentences that implement the Pr-scale, in the existential clauses the notional subject is usually postponed towards the end of the sentence; it may also be fronted. In other words, the Phenomenon is not typically presented in the initial part of the sentence, but on the contrary, it actually represents the culminating peak of the information structure; the English grammatical principle requiring the SVO wording is thus overridden by the linear modification FSP factor. In relation to this aspect, Dušková points out that not only is the existential construction the most frequent regarding the Pr-Scale sentences, but also "the only neutral form in the sense of being unmarked with respect to deviation from both the grammatical word order and the basic distribution of communicative dynamism" (Dušková, 2005, 17). Cf. the following existential sentences excerpted from the text under discussion:

(4) ***There'll be hawks.*** (N9c)

In example (4), for instance, the notional subject (*hawks*) is context-independent and conveys the information towards which the communication is perspectived. Thus, it carries the highest degree of CD and performs the Ph-function. The verbal element is then transitional and mediates between the theme and the non-theme (for a detailed discussion of the existential *there*-clause, see also Firbas, 1992, 24, 59 and Brevik, 1983). Prototypically, owing to the end-focus principle achieved by the existential *there* configuration, the postverbal section of existential constructions

is more developed and syntactically rich. Though the most frequent pattern is represented by the bare, "ontological" construction Th (there) – Tr (be) – Rh (indefinite NP) (Quirk et al., 1985, 1406), there are numerous existentials comprising adverbials, either in initial, medial or final positions (for details on functional effects of individual configurations see discussions below):

Table 3 Incidence of Individual Subtypes of *There*-Constructions

<i>There</i> -Constructions		Abs.	%
Without adverbials – ex. (4) above		96	60.8
With adverbials	in initial position – ex. (5) below	31	19.6
	in medial position – ex. (6) below	2	1.2
	in final position – ex. (7) below	29	18.4
Total		158	100.0

- (5) *Above the dam there was what ought to have been a deep pool but was now, of course, a level floor of dark green ice.* (N72a)
- (6) *And at the same time there came into his head what seemed a perfectly lovely idea.* (N96a)
- (7) (CONTEXT: *It's – it's a magic wardrobe.*) *There's a wood inside it...* (N28a)

In their research on FSP of existentials, also Rohrauer and Dubec (2011, 28) identified two main syntactic patterns of existentials containing an adverbial: (i) one in which the adverbial performs the dynamic semantic function (DSF) of a Diatheme, i.e. Th (*There*) – Th (Adv) – Tr (V) – Rh notional subject (NS), and, (ii) one in which the adverbial carries a higher degree of CD than the notional subject either with or without another adverbial in the thematic section, i.e. Th (*There*) – (Th (Adv)) – Tr (V) – Rh (NS) – RhPr (Adv). In harmony with the present findings, they conclude that "adverbials in both samples performed three FSP functions: transition proper oriented element, diatheme, rheme proper" (op. cit., 28). Also in our corpus, the medial adverbials (see e.g. ex. 6 above) perform the DSF of the Transition Proper oriented element or Diatheme, whereas the most frequent sub-category of adverbials, initial adverbials, are exclusively diathematic (see e.g. exx 7 and 8). The final adverbial position may alternatively be realised (if not diathematic again, i.e. due to its high degree of CD and context-independence) as a rhematic Specification (see e.g. ex. 6 above): Th (*There*) – Tr (V) – Rh (NS) – RhPr (Specification), i.e. as a construction implementing the Extended Presentation Scale (see below), but this one is much rarer (13 occurrences, 8 percent), such as in

- (8) *There are horrid little mice crawling over him.* (N156)

Interestingly, by far the most frequent initial element within existential constructions is *And*, at times, in its functional variants *And now* or *And then*. Though its relatively high incidence (17 occurrences per 158 sentences, i.e. 11 percent) probably represents a specific feature of the source sample, it might be tentatively ascribed to the narrative character of the text under examination, which typically uses such discourse markers either to cohesively link the sentence to its preceding verbal context or to begin a new portion of the narration or a new idea. On top of that, it also seems to be related to the typically abrupt, dramatic or tension-evoking way of C. S. Lewis' narration, cf.:

- (9) *And then there was a light ahead of her.* (N12a)
- (10) *And now there was no mistaking it.* (N57a)
- (11) *And there's another thing too.* (N65)

The classical *there+be* construction may be of course realised as *there+verb* other than *be* (cf. Quirk et al., 1985, 1408–1409), i.e. as the presentative *there*-construction (cf. Tárnyiková, 2009, 96). The presentational verb then actually substitutes for the existential *be* (for details on the particular set of verbs employed in this syntactic pattern and their semantics, see Section 3 of the present paper). The corpus features 12 occurrences of this alternative, i.e. 7.5 percent of all existential phrases. Cf.:

- (12) *...and there stood a jewelled cup full of something that steamed.* (N38b)

It is worth mentioning that in some sentences following this pattern, the rhematic notional subject is further specified and thus creates a sort of Extended Presentation Scale (cf. Chamonikolasová – Adam, 2005); see exx (13) and (14). In other words, the extension attached to the prototypical Presentation Scale is obviously not confined only to the subtype with rhematic preverbal subject. In the corpus, the Extended variant of Pr-Scale usually features a notional subject (rheme) further developed by Specification realised typically by an *-ing* clause, past participle clause or a comparative clause. Cf.:

- (13) *Instantly there appeared a round box, tied with green silk ribbon, which, when opened, turned out to contain several pounds of the best Turkish Delight.* (N38c)
- (14) *Across it there ramped a red lion, as bright as a ripe strawberry at the moment when you pick it.* (N108a)

Among other things, the corpus findings show that a relatively large number of existential constructions display the use of a negative element, such as *no* (which is the most frequent negative element here), *not*, *nothing*, *none*, *never*, etc. Namely, out of 158 sentences the corpus provides 37 occurrences patterning as existential

construction with a negative element in predication, which makes up a surprising proportion of 23 percent. It seems that the frequent occurrence of negation in existential constructions has to do with the presentation of something new on the scene, even if in such cases it concerns rather a non-existent element. From the point of view of FSP, also non-existence may be regarded as presentation of a certain kind, presentation with a minus (analogously to disappearance as opposed to appearance on the scene). Examples are adduced below:

- (15) *But **there's never been** any of your race here before.* (N82a)
- (16) ***There's no** good frightening the girls.* (N64b)
- (17) *And of course **there was no** chance of going back to get it now.* (N91a)

To complete the picture of the syntactic configuration of the existential sentences under examination, the following remark should be made: the existential sentences manifest a noticeable incidence of modal elements, viz. 14 modal modifications (ca 9 percent). It seems that modality represents one of the means that can modify the relatively fixed and straightforward structure. Cf.:

- (18) ***There might be** stags.* (N9b)
- (19) ***There may be** two views about humans.* (N82c)

The Pr-verbs occurring in existential constructions (other than *be*) will be now explored in terms of their capability to express the existence or appearance on the scene. Strictly speaking, the analysis will be conducted at the syntactic-semantic interface, i.e. both the syntactic properties of the verb and its semantic load will be systematically taken into consideration. It is hoped that such an integrated approach will then reveal the essential syntactic-semantic equipment of Pr-verbs serving in existential constructions.

Syntactic and Static Semantic Analysis

As to the method used, the analysis of semantic properties of individual Pr-verbs used in existential constructions will draw on the theoretical fundamentals in the field of syntax and semantics of the verb laid especially by Quirk et al. (1985, 1169ff) and Levin (1993, 111ff). The Pr-verbs will be described in terms of their syntactic and semantic structure and illustrated with an example from the corpus.

First of all, before an exhaustive list of Pr-verbs operating in existential sentences is given and discussed, the set of principal descriptors should be introduced. Table 4 below lists the symbols (i.e. abbreviations) of five basic syntactic types of verb complementation according to Quirk et al. (1985, 1169ff).

Table 4 Types of Verb Complementation

Symbol	Type of Complementation	Example
I	intransitive	John has <i>arrived</i> .
Co	copular	William <i>is my friend</i> .
M	monotransitive	The news <i>shocked our family</i> .
C	complex transitive	They <i>knew him to be a spy</i> .
D	ditransitive	He <i>gave the girl a doll</i> .

For the purpose of the following static semantic analysis of the Pr-verbs, a selected list of Levin's semantic classification of the English verb will be used (for a full account of individual verb classes along with separate verb semantic groups and subgroups, see Levin, 1993, 111ff; 250ff); Levin's key opus is traditionally taken as a cornerstone for the static semantic analysis of the English verb. It should be noted that in total she gives 48 semantic verb classes, which are further classified into a series of fine-grain categories; here, the main ones with typical verb representatives attached are given only. To illustrate, let us consider at least a selected set of possible verb classes in Table 5 below, including examples. In the table, for the sake of transparency, we deliberately focus on those verb classes that are inherently related to the idea of existence and appearance on the scene.

From the point of view of syntax, in Levin's terms, *there* + other verb than *be* represents one of the two essential alternations in which postverbal "subjects" (i.e. subjects in the deep sense) are observed. To be more specific, Levin classifies this construction as *There*-Insertion. In it, "the hallmark ... is the presence of *there* before the verb and the postverbal appearance of a noun phrase which would otherwise appear as the surface subject" (Levin, 1993, 90). Unlike the prototypical *there* + *be* construction, the corresponding configuration of *there* + other verb not only expresses the very existence but also – to a certain extent – the manner in which the entity exists (cf. *there stood* vs. *there sat* etc.). Quirk et al. (1985) describe the verbs suitable for the presentative subtype of *there*-insertion as prototypically intransitive and capable of conveying some general sense of presentation in the broadest sense (1985, 1408). Incidentally, related to this issue seems to be a relatively high proportion of initial adverbials in the *there* + other verb than *be* construction (see Table 5); such initial adverbials are diathematic (constitute the Setting) and enable the context-independent subjects to follow the end-focus principle. On top of that, unlike *there+be* constructions, functionally, they appear to be closer to the constructions with the rhematic subject in preverbal position (cf. *And then a great view came into their sight*.) and thus manifest inclination towards the initial placement of scene-

Table 5 Semantic classes of the verb (fraction) according to Levin, 1993

Semantic class	Examples + detailed classification
Verbs of Appearance, Disappearance and Occurrence	<i>Appear, arise, awake, spread, rise, etc.</i> (APPEAR Verbs), <i>manifest, show, present, etc.</i> (Reflexive Verbs of Appearance), <i>die, disappear, perish, etc.</i> (Verbs of Disappearance), <i>happen, occur, recur, transpire, etc.</i> (Verbs of Occurrence)
Verbs of Change of Possession	<i>Give, lend, loan, rent, trade, etc.</i> (GIVE Verbs), <i>contribute, donate, return, transfer, etc.</i> (CONTRIBUTE verbs), <i>present, provide, etc.</i> (Verbs of Providing), <i>equip, reward, get, buy, earn, gain, lease, etc.</i> (Verbs of Obtaining), <i>barter, change, exchange, swap, etc.</i> (Verbs of Exchange), etc.
Verbs of Creation and Transformation	<i>Build, grow, knit, sculpt, etc.</i> (BUILD Verbs), <i>bake, boil, grill, roast, etc.</i> (Verbs of Preparing), <i>coin, create, produce, etc.</i> (CREATE Verbs), <i>beat, coil, shake, squeeze, etc.</i> (KNEAD Verbs), <i>alter, change, convert, turn, etc.</i> (TURN Verbs)
Verbs of Existence	<i>Exist, linger, live, stay, etc.</i> (EXIST Verbs), <i>bloom, blow, foam, rust, etc.</i> (Verbs of Entity-Specific Modes of Being), <i>bow, creep, drift, dance, float, hover, undulate, etc.</i> (Verbs of Modes of Being Involving Motion), <i>echo, resonate, sound, etc.</i> (Verbs of Sound Existence), <i>bow, fly, hang, kneel, loom, sit, stand, etc.</i> (Verbs of Spatial Configuration), <i>meander, cascade, drop, sweep, weave, etc.</i> (MEANDER Verbs), etc.
Verbs of Motion	<i>Arrive, come, enter, go, etc.</i> (Directed Motion / Path Verbs), <i>abandon, desert, leave</i> (LEAVE Verbs), <i>rotate, bounce, swing, spin</i> (Manner of Motion Verbs), <i>canoe, bicycle, boat, taxi</i> (Verbs of Motion Using a Vehicle), <i>chase, follow, pursue, track, etc.</i> (CHASE Verbs)
Verbs of Perception	<i>See, hear, notice, see, sense, smell, taste, etc.</i> (SEE Verbs), <i>eye, glimpse, inspect, observe, scent, sight, view, watch, etc.</i> (SIGHT verbs), <i>gape, glaze, look, peep, stare, etc.</i> (PEER verbs), <i>feel, look, smell, sound, taste</i> (Stimulus Subject Perception Verbs)

setting adverbials. Incidentally, this observation is in concord with the comment on the frequent use of initially placed adverbials such as *And then* or *And now* in the *there* + other verb than *be* constructions above. In other words, the corpus analysis shows that whereas the *there* + other verb than *be* pattern tends to require an initial temporal / spatial adverbial, the *there* + *be* configuration seems to manifest certain inclination to occupy the very beginning of a sentence, or even beginnings of para-

Table 6 Existential construction with verb other than *be*

Verb	Syntax	Semantics	Example
(there) appear	I	Appearance	<i>And instantly <u>there appeared</u> a round box, tied with green silk ribbon...</i> (N38c)
(there) arise	I	Appearance	<i>About that time <u>there arose</u> a great disturbance about the Way.</i> (A19:23)
(there) come	I	Motion	<i>And at the same time <u>there came</u> into his head what seemed a perfectly lovely idea.</i> (N96a)
(there) exist	I	Existence	<i>...<u>there has long existed</u> a scheme for the exchange of visiting teachers...</i> (C 13)
(there) go	I	Motion	<i>Overhead <u>there went</u> a flurry of foul wings and a blackness of vultures and giant bats.</i> (N154)
(there) ramp	I	Motion	<i>Across it <u>there ramped</u> a red lion, as bright as a ripe strawberry at the moment when you pick it.</i> (N108a)
(there) rise	I	Appearance	<i>Among those born of women <u>there has not risen</u> anyone greater than John the Baptist.</i> (M11:11)
(there) sit	I	Existence	<i>In Lystra <u>there sat</u> a man crippled in his feet...</i> (A14:8)
(there) stand	I	Existence	<i>(But the moment it touched the snow there was a hissing sound) and <u>there stood</u> a jewelled cup full of something that steamed.</i> (N38b)
(there) stay	I	Existence	<i>Now there were <u>staying</u> in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.</i> (A2:5)
(there) stick	I	Existence	<i>And out of the hair <u>there stuck</u> two horns, one on each side of his forehead.</i> (N13c)
(there) sweep (into sight)	M	Existence	<i>And at last <u>there swept into sight</u> a sledge drawn by two reindeer.</i> (N33b)

graphs or text sections; the same observation is offered by Quirk (1987, 39 qtd. in Tárnyiková, 2009, 97).

Looking at the corpus data we may say that the variability of verbs used in *there* + other verb than *be* construction is relatively low (7.5 percent). The most expectable, prototypical verb classes of this alternation are obviously verbs falling into the category of Verbs of Existence (*exist, stay*) and Verbs of Appearance, Disappearance and Occurrence (*appear, arise*). The pure Verbs of Existence (EXIST verbs), by definition, denote the existence of an entity at some location (cf. Levin, 1993, 250) and unlike the subcategory of Verbs of Entity-Specific Modes of Being (such

as *hover, float*), these are not found in locative alternation. The verb *stick* seems to represent a somewhat different category, though being existential as well. In (20) below, the verb is definitely used as intransitive and existential. Levin ranks *stick* within the broad class of Verbs of Existence among Verbs of Modes of Being Involving Motion (similarly also *tremble, oscillate, swirl*, etc.). In her view, such verbs typically describe "states of existence of inanimate entities that involve types of motion typical of these entities" and, "reflecting this property, these verbs take a very limited range of subjects" (Levin, 1993, 252). Of course, there may appear occurrences of *stick* in totally different syntactic semantic configurations. Cf.:

(20) *And out of the hair there stuck two horns...* (N13c)

(21) *It will be inevitable to stick it to the wall.*

A few comments should be made on the existential verbs *sit* and *stand* found in the research corpus. Their semantic load does express existence at a location, nevertheless with a specific flavour of spatial configuration within the co-ordinates of some location; Levin, in harmony with this observation, gives examples such as *hang, kneel, rest, swing*, etc. (Levin, 1993, 255). Even though the use of such verbs in *there* + EXIST verb constructions is purely intransitive, in other contexts these verbs can have transitive interpretation, such as in the causative alternation (22b). Cf.:

(22a) *In Lystra **there sat** a man crippled in his feet...* (A14:8)

(22b) *Surprisingly, Ms Steinway **sat** the young boy at the very back of the room.*

There is one more Pr-verb in this section that deserves our attention, viz. *sweep*. It occurs in the following sentence:

(23) *And at last **there swept into sight** a sledge drawn by two reindeer.* (N33b)

In Levin's view, the verb *sweep* essentially belongs to the category of existential verbs of Entity-Specific Modes of Being; here, nevertheless, the verb forms a figurative collocation with the prepositional phrase *into sight* and so should not be considered in its physical sense exclusively. It does describe the manner in which the entity (*the sledge*) is coming to be in a particular state of existence, but at the same time, it, in our opinion, suggests also something about the manner of motion. In concord with this statement, Dowty (1979) labels such verbs (apart from *sweep* verbs such as *meander, twist, weave, cascade, wind, climb*, etc.) as "pseudo-motion-al locative" verbs (Levin, 1993, 256). Such verbs denote both motion and existence at the same time; even verbs that describe the location of the entity in the first plan, in this extended sense they do behave like verbs of motion as well. Levin

aply classifies them as MEANDER Verbs, i.e. verbs of motion "that are being used to describe the location of a long continuous object such as a road or a river" (Levin, 1993, 256–257). In other words, the manner in which such entities behave seems to be "long" and "continuous" – a road climbs up the hill, a river meanders along the forests, or a creek cascades down the slope.

The next verb class represented in the corpus data is – logically enough – the category of the Verbs of Appearance, Disappearance and Occurrence, which naturally denote appearance (whether in the positive or negative sense) of an entity on the scene. To simply contrast existence and appearance, e.g. Kudrnáčová, in harmony with our view, states that "the entity's appearance somewhere represents a dynamic version of the entity's being in a place" (Kudrnáčová, 2008, 91).

In the research corpus under examination the verbs *appear*, *arise*, *rise* were detected. Typically, yet not invariably, these verbs take adverbial modification by prepositional phrases, frequently fronted (see e.g. *Among those born of women...* or *About that time...* in Table 5 above and the ensuing discussion). Furthermore, such verbs are usually not used in transitive configurations with a causative interpretation. Levin adds e.g. the following class members: *awake*, *burst*, *form*, *materialise*, *result*, *stem*, etc. (Levin, 1993, 258–259).

Apparently, while the verbs collocating with existential *there* in the existential constructions discussed above represent clear-cut examples of verb denoting existence or appearance on the scene, there are others that deserve further comments, such as the remaining verb class identified that Levin labels as Verbs of Motion (Levin, 1993, 263ff). First of all, it will be necessary to map the distinction between the Verbs of Inherently Directed Motion on the one hand and the Verbs of Manner of Motion on the other. Whereas the Verbs of Inherently Directed Motion "include a specification of the direction of motion, even in the absence of an overt directional complement" (Levin, 1993, 264), the Verbs of Manner of Motion denote motion that "typically, though not necessarily, involves displacement, but none of them specifies an inherent direction as part of its meaning" (ibid.). The present corpus contains two examples of inherently directed motion (*go*, *come*) and only one example of the verb of manner of motion (*ramp*). In other words, *go* and *come* do not in any sense specify the manner of motion, i.e. the way the entity is moving; one just understands that the entity is moving in some direction. Cf. the communicative unit underlined with a dotted line in (24) below (functionally, a similar construction with the adverbial placed between the verb and the notional subject can be observed in one more example extracted from the source, viz. ex. (23) above):

(24) *And at the same time **there came** into his head what seemed a perfectly lovely idea.* (N96a)

In both the cases (exx 23 and 24), the existential configuration manifests a metaphorical load and so the adverbial needs to be linked to the verb more firmly, creating the transitional section; a final position of the adverbial would apparently distort the figurative meaning.

To put it another way, it seems that the more the verb of motion is stripped off its directionality, the more a specification on the part of other sentence elements is needed. Also Kudrnáčová proposes that "the relative sparsity of semantic information in the depiction of the motion situation in question enables us to profile the localisation with greater force" (Kudrnáčová, 2008, 91). In examples (23) and (24), the path is then construed as a directional phrase *into*, which, in logical contrast with *out of*, "represents a spatial axis with a strictly bipolar structure" (ibid.).

Levin points out that different verbs of inherently directed motion "differ as to how they can express the goal, source, or path of motion" (Levin, 1993, 264). Contrary to such verbs, *ramp* specifically denotes the manner or means of motion; in the absence of a prepositional phrase specifying direction, none of these verbs indicates the direction of motion (cf. Levin, 1993, 264–266). Levin gives the following examples of verbs of manner of motion: *bounce*, *drift*, *coil*, *roll*, *slide*, etc. Incidentally, the *ramp* sentence can serve as a suitable example of different syntactic alternations of one underlying (deep structure) idea. Compare the authentic quote from the corpus with a corresponding transformation that makes use of a preverbal rhematic subject:

(25a) *Across it there ramped a red lion...* (N108a).

(25b) *~ A lion ramped across it.*

On top of that, it is possible to trace in the corpus yet another sentence (25c) that fits the deep structure discussed above, this time an example of the locative subject. Consider the following sentence along with its classical existential alternations:

(25c) *The banner bore a red rampant lion fluttering in the breeze.* (N123d)

(25d) *~ There was a red rampant lion fluttering in the breeze on the banner.*

(25e) *~ On the banner there was a red rampant lion fluttering in the breeze.*

Conclusions

In conclusion it is possible to say that whereas the existential construction is the most frequent Pr-sentence syntactic pattern in fiction narrative, its variant with an

EXIST verb other than *be* seems to be relatively rare. In terms of occurrence in the fiction narrative corpus they appear to be rather on the periphery of Pr-sentences, scoring 7.5 percent only. It follows that, in harmony with Dušková's observations (1998, 42), they seem to be stylistically marked. In terms of syntactic disposition to serve in Pr-Scale sentences, the Pr-verbs found within the existential construction with verbs other than *be* proved to be largely intransitive, and with limited modification on the right side. From the semantic point of view, they are recruited from the following three broad semantic verb classes: Verbs (i) of Existence, (ii) of Appearance, Disappearance and Occurrence, and (iii) of Motion (above all Verbs of Inherently Directed Motion and the Verbs of Manner of Motion). A more substantial diversity of semantic verbs classes as well as their modification is, as a rule, observed in Pr-sentences featuring the rhematic subject in preverbal position (especially in cases of S-V semantic affinity or the fronted adverbial & S-V inversion (see Adam 2011a, 2011b).

From the comparative point of view, the incidence of the existential construction + verb other than *be* proved to be relatively lower in the New Testament narratives (Adam, 2011b), in which the highest occurrence among Pr-Scale subtypes is scored by the preverbal rhematic subject (*Then a teacher of the law came to him.*) and the S-V inversion (*At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus*). From the historical point of view, the latter configuration was obviously more frequent e.g. in the Early New English period. It seems that in fiction narratives the *there* + EXIST verb configuration generally compensates – to comply with the present day English standards – what is used in the highly formal and stylistically somewhat marked texts of the New Testament. Rohrauer and Dubec (2011) also examined two text types (viz. fiction and academic prose), focusing primarily on the existential constructions. Their research shows a higher occurrence of bare existential structures in fiction than in academic prose which they ascribe to "the tendency of fiction writers to achieve dramatic effect" (Rohrauer – Dubec, 2011, 31). At this stage of research in the area of Pr-sentences and Pr-verbs, it is possible to say that the incidence and typology of existential constructions are genre-specific and definitely deserve a more thorough and better-evidenced investigation.

Among other issues, further research should certainly be focused on the three remaining syntactic configurations in which the Pr-sentences appear, namely (i) the rhematic subject in preverbal position, (ii) the fronted adverbial & S-V inversion, and (iii) the locative thematic subject, as well as an updated, corpus-based fine-grained typology. The Pr-verbs occurring in these constructions should undergo

an analogous analysis fruitfully combining syntactic, and both dynamic and static semantic approach. We believe that such a functional interface would reveal vital syntactic and semantic features of English Pr-verbs, and, in more general terms, shed light on the very concept of expression of existence / appearance on the scene.

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S o u r c e

- LEWIS, C. S. (1950): *The Chronicles of Narnia. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. London, Harper Collins.

Martin Adam: EXISTENTIAL THERE-CONSTRUCTION AS A MEANS OF PRESENTATION IN NARRATIVE (A CORPUS-BASED SYNTACTIC-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS)

The present paper looks at the role of the English verb operating in Presentation Scale sentences within fiction narrative from the point of view of both dynamic and static semantics. It is a part of a corpus-based research in the area of the sentences implementing the so-called Presentation Scale (Firbas, 1992; Svoboda, 2006), which is predominantly focused on the occurrence and the syntactic-semantic typology of Presentation sentences within narratives and the semantic as well as syntactic character of the English Presentation verb. It examines the most frequent structure that is capable of presenting a new phenomenon on the scene, viz. the existential construction. For the purpose of analysis, C. S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is used. Special attention is paid to the syntactic semantic character of the Pr-verbs that operate in the existential construction *there* + other verb than *be*.

Key words: FSP, verb, existential, construction, presentation