



All-clefts in spoken discourse

Data from the London-Lund Corpus 2 (LLC-2)

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Introduction

- All-clefts are a type of pseudo-cleft¹
- We apply the categorisation² of pseudo-clefts to all-clefts and examine:
 1. Proper all-clefts, e.g. *all I did is I wrote to them all*
 2. Reversed all-clefts, e.g. *not quite as good but hydrogen is all I have*
 3. Demonstrative all-clefts introduced by this/ that, e.g. *that's a cut and and that's all you have to say*
- All-clefts have a “below-expectation reading”³, or “smallness effect”^{4,5}, where *all* is synonymous with *only*⁶

Research Questions (RQ)

- RQ1: In what contexts are all-clefts used in LLC-2?
- RQ2: What communicative functions do all-clefts serve in LLC-2?

Method & Data

- Data from the new London-Lund Corpus (LLC-2) of spoken British English
- Quantitative & qualitative analysis of 87 transcripts in .XML format using AntConc
- Search for all occurrences of *all* & analysis of instances exhibiting the “smallness effect”

Results

- 6% of *all* occurrences were found in an all-cleft
- 30 all-clefts were identified:
 - 73% Proper all-clefts
 - 23% Demonstrative all-clefts
 - 4% Reversed all-clefts

Graph 1 All-cleft functions in LLC-2

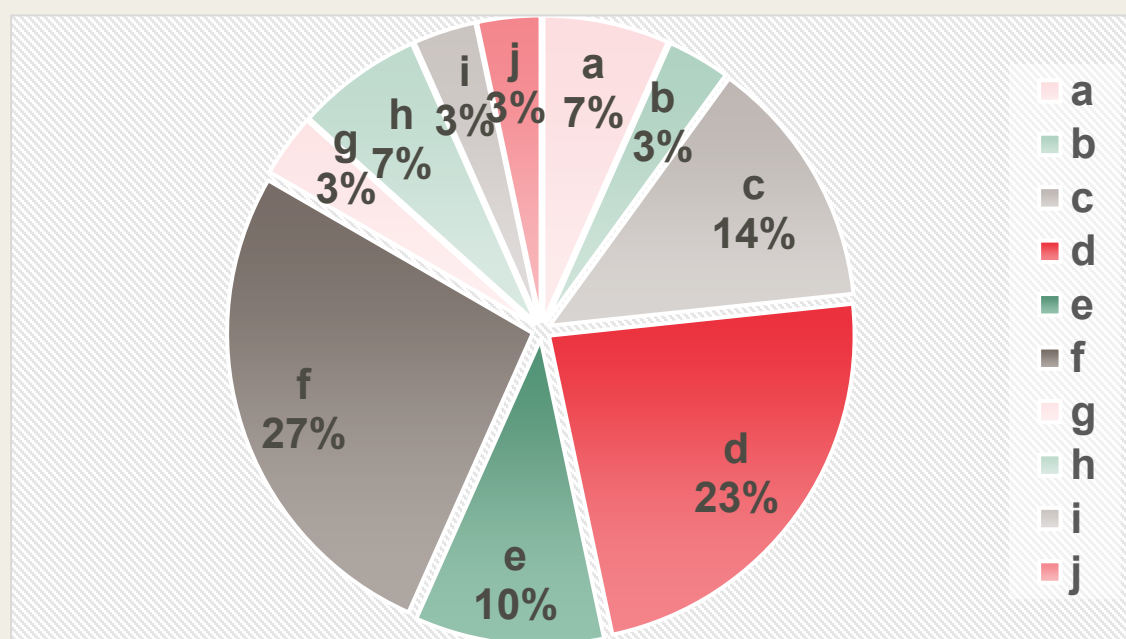


Table 1 Main discursive all-cleft functions

(a) Little effort made (neutral)	tour back to Boston and then home all all I did is I wrote to them all
(b) Compromise	it's not quite as good but hydrogen is all I have available so that's what we're
(c) Limited action/ control/ knowledge	application to UC is strong that's really all you can control yeah
(d) Little inconvenience caused by requests/ obligations	be an adult that's all I'm asking you to do like mhm
(e) Clarification	pressure is proportional to M rho over R so all I've done there is I've replaced this
(f) Instructions and presentation of scientific procedures as simple	all you need to do to demonstrate the reaction
(g) Discourse structuring	all I would say in relation to that is that is is two things firstly
(h) Insufficient action/ information complaints	he's being super vague about it yeah like it's literally all he said so like I'm like hang on what the fuck
(i) Danger indication	we we're not gonna live like well alright all it takes is one little slip tomorrow and then
(j) Accusation prevention	Brexit hard-Brexit government and that isn't democracy all we want is a one person one vote

Conclusion

- All-clefts were found in various contexts, mainly in:
- requests by the speaker presented as non imposing
 - limitation indication in consultation sessions and conversations
 - instructions in scientific demonstrations presenting a procedure as straight-forward
 - clarification of previous contributions/ actions

References

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