Voldemort phrases in generic sentences[*]

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Abstract. English provides an idiosyncratic means to express general statements about people: third person singular *he* modified by a relative clause, i.e. "Voldemort phrases" (Elbourne 2013). Given that pronouns are standardly seen as referential expressions, this use in generic sentences is puzzling: this is the central puzzle addressed in this paper. After dismissing an account that seems promising at first glance, but makes undesirable predictions, I put forth a new analysis of the semantic contribution of Voldemort phrases in terms of kind denotation (cf. Dayal 2004).

Keywords. semantics, third person singular pronouns, generic sentences, singular kinds, quantificational variability effects

1. Introduction

The linguistic expressions investigated in this paper are certain occurrences of modified third person singular pronouns in English which can be used to make statements about people in general, see (1). The bold-faced material in (1) exemplifies these expressions: a third person singular pronoun that is modified by a relative clause. Their modern name, "Voldemort phrases", was coined by Paul Elbourne (cf. Elbourne 2013).

(1)   **He who walks out of negotiations** loses.
         (Europarl Parallel Corpus, Koehn 2005)

Example (1) also illustrates the main puzzle connected to Voldemort phrases: (1) expresses a generalization about people who walk out of negotiations. The same generalization can be conveyed using a bare plural: "*People who walk out of negotiations, lose (these negotiations)*". While bare plurals are known to feature in generic statements, it is not quite clear how

this interpretation can arise for (1). The presence of the third person singular pronoun *he* inside the Voldemort phrase is puzzling: as a prototypical referential expression, *he* is expected to denote a given, single male individual. In (1), this is not the case.

The aim of this paper is to provide an analysis of the semantic contribution of Voldemort phrases in generic sentences. I start this investigation by showing that the relevant occurrences of *he* inside Voldemort phrases do not constitute genuine impersonal uses of *he* (Section 2). Section 3 provides further observations on the cross-linguistic picture, as well as on alternatives to Voldemort phrases in English. In Section 4, I present my proposal for the semantic contribution of Voldemort phrases. I build on insights from the recent syntactic and semantic literature on personal pronouns and demonstratives (Elbourne 2008, 2013), on free relatives (Caponigro 2003; Tredinnik 2005; Hinterwimmer 2008), on quantificational variability effects (Hinterwimmer 2005), and on kind-denoting expressions (Chierchia 1998; Dayal 2004). The formal proposal is put forth in Section 5, and Section 6 concludes.

A brief side note: in line with the referential function of pronouns, Voldemort phrases also occur with a referential, though name-like, interpretation. The prime example for this use is (2), the "phrase" after which Voldemort phrases were named.[1]

(2)   **He Who Must Not Be Named** has killed Lily Potter.

One central difference between the name-like use and the one discussed in this paper is that in the latter, usually only masculine *he* occurs.[2] In the referential use, both forms occur. For reasons of space, I leave aside the name-like use.

2. *He* is not used impersonally

One possible way to account for Voldemort phrases in generic sentences is to assume that in examples like (1), third person singular *he* allows for an "impersonal use" similar to English second person *you*, exemplified in (3).[3]

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[1] In the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling, Lord Voldemort, Harry Potter's main antagonist, is also referred to as "*He Who Must Not Be Named*".

[2] The use of *she* in Voldemort phrases in generic sentences is attested, but only in general statements about women. Lelia Glass (p.c.) suggests that generic statements with *she who* feel like an effort to be politically correct.

[3] Second person (singular) *you* is the only English personal pronoun that allows for an unrestricted impersonal use in which it patterns like the impersonal pronoun *one*. Plural *we, you,* and *they* only allow for a similar "vague use" (cf. Kitagawa & Lehrer 1990).

(3)   If **you** walk out of negotiations, **you** lose.

Example (3) expresses the same generalization as (1), i.e. a generalization about people who walk out of negotiations. Like *he* in (1), *you* does not seem to contribute its standard meaning to the truth-conditions of (3): neither of the two occurrences of *you* denote the addressee of the utterance (Kitagawa & Lehrer 1990; Malamud 2006).

　　Even though the idea to analyze *he* in (1) as an impersonal use seems attractive at first, it does not capture the data. The central counter-argument is that the generic interpretation observable for (1) arises only when *he* is part of a Voldemort phrase. As soon as the relative clause is omitted, the sentence can only express a statement about a specific male person, see (4).

(4)   **He** loses.

If third person singular *he* had a genuine impersonal use, the presence or absence of a modifying relative clause should not have an impact on its availability. The impersonal use of *you* (i) is available without any modifying material, and (ii) is in fact unavailable when *you* is modified by a relative clause. The first point is illustrated in (5): while (5-a) cannot express a general statement about people, (5-b) is naturally interpreted in this way.[4]

(5)   a.   **He** should respect his parents.
       b.   **You** should respect your parents.

The second point is illustrated in (6): if *you* is modified by a relative clause, it can only be interpreted referentially, and consequently, the relative clause has to be interpreted as an appositive/non-restrictive relative clause.

(6)   a.   ***You** who walk out of negotiations lose.
       b.   **You**, who walk out of negotiations, lose.

The examples in (5) and (6) also provide a further counter-argument: the sentences in (5) only differ in the choice of pronoun; (6-a) is the result of substituting *you* for *he* in (1). If *he* had a genuine impersonal use in sentences like (1), the lack of generic interpretation for (5-a) and (6-b) is unexpected. Genuine impersonal uses of personal and impersonal pronouns are substitutable *salva veritate* (cf. Kitagawa & Lehrer 1990, Zobel 2014). For instance, in varienties of English in which the dedicated impersonal pronoun *one* is still actively used, *one* and impersonally used *you* are freely interchangable, compare *you/one* vs. *he* in (7).

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[4] *You* is always ambiguous between its referential and its impersonal use.

(7)   a.   **You** should respect your parents.
       b.   **One** should respect one's parents.
       c.   **He** should respect his parents.   (= 5-a)

While (7-a) and (7-b) express the same general statement, (7-c) can only express a statement about a given male individual.

     These observations preclude an analysis of Voldemort phrases in generic sentences suggested in Elbourne (2013). Elbourne (2013:205ff) introduces Voldemort phrases as further evidence for his analysis of pronouns as definite descriptions. He assumes that all personal pronouns are semantically definite determiners with an obligatorily unpronounced NP-complement:

(8)   a.   General structure of pronouns:
          [[*pronoun* NP] s_i]
       b. $[[he]]^g = [[she]]^g = [[it]]^g = [[the]]^g =$
          $\lambda f_{<e,st>}. \lambda s: s \in D_s \ \& \ \exists! x \ f(x)(s)=1. \ \iota x \ f(x)(s)=1$
          (Elbourne 2013:193)

Since relative clauses are usually analyzed as "attaching to nouns or noun phrases", the presence of the relative clause in Voldemort phrases supports the structure suggested in (8-a). The full structure of Voldemort phrases is given in (9).

(9)   [[*he* [NP [*who…*]]] s_i]   (Elbourne 2013:207)

Based on these assumptions, Elbourne suggests that the interpretation of sentences like (10) (repeats (1)) can be derived if the generic operator *Gen* (cf. Krifka et al. 1995, Mari et al. 2013) binds the situation variable s_i that is introduced by *he*: generic quantification over situations indirectly induces generic quantification over (male) individuals that walk out of negotiations.

(10)   **He who** walks out of negotiations loses.

To my mind, it is unclear whether the account that Elbourne sketches captures the semantics of sentences like (10). The formal proposal resulting from Elbourne's suggestion requires that for every situation that is generically quantified over, there is a unique individual that walks out of negotiations. This requirement results from the uniqueness presupposition contributed by the pronoun. Since the Voldemort phrase is part of the restrictor of *Gen*, this presupposition has to be met globally, i.e. inside the discourse context. This, to my mind however, means that (10) is in fact a statement about a single individual, contrary to fact.

     Irrespective of whether this criticism is sound, though, an even bigger problem for Elbourne's suggestion exists: it predicts that the

situation variable s_i of bare third person singular pronouns should be bindable by *Gen*, as well. That is, the generic interpretation found with sentences like (10) is predicted to arise irrespective of the presence of a relative clause. In turn, (4) should have a generic interpretation. In other words, *he* is predicted to have an impersonal use, contrary to fact.[5]

In sum, the comparisons between *he* and *you/one* strongly suggest that for Voldemort phrases in generic sentences, *he* is not used impersonally. Consequently, Elbourne's suggested account does not capture the data adequately.

The central observation of this section is not about Elbourne's account, though: The relative clause plays a central role in deriving the generic interpretation for sentences like (10). This has to be captured by any analysis of Voldemort phrases in generic sentences. Before presenting my analysis of Voldemort phrases in Section 4, I discuss new data and its implications in Section 3.

3. Further observations

3.1. English vs. other European languages

Investigations into the forms corresponding to Voldemort phrases in other European languages suggest that the possibility to use them to express general statements is an idiosyncratic property of English. In other European languages, a third person singular pronoun followed by a relative clause seems to be consistently interpreted referentially: the pronoun refers to a specific (given) individual, and the relative clause is interpreted non-restrictively. This is the case for, for instance, the direct translation of (1) into German, see (11-a).

(11)   a.   ??**Er, der** sich aus Verhandlungen zurückzieht, verliert.
                he who himself out negotiations pulls-out loses
         b.   **Wer** sich aus Verhandlungen zurückzieht, verliert.
                who himself out negotiations pulls-out loses

The intended meaning of (1) is best expressed in German by translating the Voldemort phrase as a free relative, see (11-b). Another possible, but generally dispreferred translation into German is via the expression *der(jenige), der...* (Engl. 'the/that

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[5] The same problem arises if one assumes that in sentences like (10), third person singular *he* contributes an individual variable that is bound by *Gen*. Since the relative clause does not play a crucial role in this account, either, a generic interpretation for (4) is predicted, as well.

who'), i.e. a definite/demonstrative combined with a restrictive relative clause, see (12).

(12) **Der(jenige), der** sich aus Verhandlungen zurückzieht, verliert.
      dem/def who himself out negotiations pulls-out loses

Other European languages can be grouped according to which types of expressions (of those found in German) they provide and use. Crucially, none of the languages that I investigated replicates the English combination *he who*. Consider the English examples and their translations in (13) and (14) (Europarl Parallel Corpus).[6]

(13) a. **He who** goes cautiously, goes safely and goes far.
      b. **Celui qui** avance avec prudence va sûrement et va loin.   (F)
          the-one who advances with prudence goes securely and goes far
      c. **Chi** va piano va sano e lontano.   (I)
          who goes slowly goes healthily and far

(14) a. **He who** sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind.
      b. **Qui** sème le vent récoltera sans doute la tempête.   (F)
          who sows the wind will-reap without doubt the storm
      c. **Wie** wind zaait zal storm oogsten.   (D)
          who wind sows shall storm reap

In sum, the results of this small-scale cross-linguistic study suggest that the linguistic means found in other European languages as counterparts for English Voldemort phrases fall into two general classes of expressions: (i) free relatives and (ii) the combination "demonstrative/definite + restrictive relative".

Since no literal equivalent to *he who* seems to exist in other languages, the question arises whether English provides alternative expressions to Voldemort phrases that can be related directly to the expressions found in other European languages.

3.2. Alternatives to *he who* in English

Are there alternative ways in English to express the general statements expressible with sentences containing Voldemort phrases? Do these exemplify either of the two strategies found in other European languages? In this subsection, I show that (i) "ordinary" free relatives are not a viable option in English, and that (ii) the closest alternatives to *he who* are *the one who* and *those who*, which fall into the class "demonstrative/definite + restrictive relative".

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[6] Abbreviations: F… French, I… Italian, D… Dutch

The first point follows directly from the observation that in English, simple free relatives introduced by *who* are degraded in subject position to the point of ungrammaticality, see (15) (cf. Tredinnik 2005; Patterson & Caponigro 2014).

(15)   *__Who__ doesn't eat breakfast will feel hungry before
lunchtime.   (Patterson & Caponigro 2014:1)

The only type of human-denoting free relatives that can be found in subject position are *-ever* free relatives, see (16).

(16)   __Whoever__ says so is a liar.   (Tredinnik 2005:14)

The well-formed *-ever* free relatives can indeed be used as alternatives to Voldemort phrases. Example (17) illustrates this possibility.[7,8]

(17)   a. __He who__ abides in love abides in God.   (NKJV)
       b. __Whoever__ abides in love abides in God.   (ESV)
           (1 John 4:16)

Other alternatives to *he who* that fall into the class "demonstrative/definite + restrictive relative" are given in Curme (1912). He notes that the combination *he who* feels very archaic to English native speakers, and mainly occurs in bible texts, proverbs, and other sayings. In "ordinary conversation", *anyone who*, *everyone who*, *that person/man/woman/... who*, or *those who* are used instead (Curme 1912:356).

Nowadays, *he who* is still found in these contexts. In younger bible translations, a similar set of alternative variants to the one given by Curme for spoken language occur already, see (18).[9]

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[7] Bible verses are only used as linguistic examples to illustrate the variations found in English. No personal conviction of the author is communicated, and no offense is intended with their use.

[8] The Bible examples in their various English translations were taken from Bible Gateway (https://www.biblegateway.com). Amongst others, the following translations were consulted: New Kind James Version (NKJV), English Standard Version (ESV), Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB), New International Reader's Version (NIRV), Easy-to-Read Version (ERV), Expanded Bible (EXB).

[9] In older versions of the Bible, the forms *they that* and *they who* can also be found in generic sentences (e.g. Psalm 106:3, ESV). These are arguably variants of *those who*, with which they are consistently replaced in newer translations (e.g. NKJV). English native speakers judge even *they who* as either very archaic (more so than Voldemort phrases) or ungrammatical. I thank an anonymous reviewer for bringing up these forms.

(18)   a. **The one who** remains in love remains in God.   (HCSB)
       b. **Everyone who** lives in love lives in God.   (ERV)
       c. **Anyone who** leads a life of love shows that he (NIRV)
           is joined to God.
       d. **Those who** live in love live in God.   (EXB)
           (1 John 4:16)

At this point, the question arises which of the given alternative expressions is the closest to Voldemort phrases in its syntactic and semantic behavior.

One clue regarding this question is given in Curme (1912:355f), who notes that diachronically, the combination *he who* is the Modern English variant of Middle English *he that*, which patterns with other Middle English relative clause constructions that derived from Old English demonstrative based constructions, e.g. Middle English *those that*.[10,11] The Modern English substitution of *who* for *that*, Curme argues, was motivated by the clear restriction of *who* to human relative clause heads, which *that* lacks. This proposed development of Voldemort phrases strongly suggests that they should be seen as instances of the class "demonstrative/definite + restrictive relative"—provided that their diachronic development has any bearing on their synchronic behavior.

Hence of the alternative expressions given above, *the one who* and *those who* are expected to be closest to *he who*.

3.3. Voldemort phrases and QVE

The conclusion of the last subsection is further supported by the behavior of *he who*, *the one who*, and *those who*, on the one hand, and *whoever*, *anyone who*, and *everyone who*, on the other hand, with respect to quantificational variability effects (QVE) (cf. Lewis 1998 [1975], Berman 1991, Hinterwimmer 2005). In sentences that show QVE, adverbs of quantification, which are standardly used to quantify over times or situations, are used to express quantification over individuals, see (19).

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[10] Headed relative clauses with *who/which* have evolved from Old English free relatives, which already contained *wh*-expressions, rather than the demonstrative based Old English restrictive relative clause constructions. For a recent discussion, see Truswell and Gisborne (2014).

[11] Anthony Kroch (p.c.) suggests that the use of *he* in these cases can be connected to the deficient demonstrative paradigm in Middle English. At this stage in the development, the only surviving forms of the Old English demonstratives were the neuter forms, which in Old English were only used for non-human referents. Hence, the use of the personal pronoun *he* could have been a suppletion strategy for generalizations about humans.

(19)   A quadratic equation **usually** has two different solutions.
        (Lewis 1998 [1975]:7)
            ≈ Many quadratic equations have two different solutions.

He who, *the one who*, and *those who* show QVE with adverbs of quantification, see (20). This contrasts with *-ever* free relatives and *anyone who* (Caponigro 2003), see (21).

(20) a. **He who** blames others is often full of blame himself.
              ≈ Many people who blame others are full of blame themselves.
      b. **The one who** tells the lie is rarely the originator of the lie.
              ≈ Few people who tell a lie are the originators of the lie.
      c. **Those who** leave are often shunned and rejected by the group.
              ≈ Many people who leave are shunned and rejected by the group.

(21) a. **Whoever** comes from Southern Italy is rarely tall.
              ≉ Few people from Southern Italy are tall.
              (Caponigro 2003:156)
      b. **Anyone who** comes from Southern Italy is rarely tall.
              ≉ Few people from Southern Italy are tall.

For universally quantified expressions, Hinterwimmer (2005) shows that in case they have surface scope over an adverb of quantification, no QVE arises. Hence, *everyone who* in subject position also does not show QVE, see (22).[12]

(22) **Everyone who** ended up playing rarely missed the board.[13]
          ≉ Few people who ended up playing missed the board.

Apart from supporting the conclusion of Section 3.2, the observation that Voldemort phrases allow for QVE provides an important piece of evidence regarding their semantic make-up, which is picked up in Section 4.2.

To summarize this section, it was shown that Voldemort phrases are archaic expressions that are idiosyncratic for English. Their diachronic development and their QVE behavior suggest that their closest modern alternatives are *the one who...* and *those who...*, which fall into the class "demonstrative/definite + restrictive relative".

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[12] An anonymous reviewer also observes that *everyone who* differs from *he who* in its ability to license NPIs in its restrictor, i.e. the relative clause.
[13] http://dartboardreviews.com/dart-chat/playing-darts-outside/

4. Voldemort phrases in generic sentences denote kinds

4.1. The central proposal and supporting observations

The central idea that I would like to argue for is that Voldemort phrases in generic sentences denote singular kinds.[14] While this might not be the first idea that comes to mind, various observations support this claim. Before discussing these in detail, note that I do not claim that occurrences in episodic sentences, like the name-like use given in the introduction, are kind-denoting. For these variants, an analysis as individual-denoting expressions—possibly along the lines of Elbourne (2013)—is required.

For the remainder of this paper, I adopt Elbourne's syntactic structure of Voldemort phrases in Figure 1, and the assumption that *he* has the denotation in (23).[15]

(23) $[[he]]^g = [[she]]^g = [[it]]^g = [[the]]^g =$
         $\lambda f_{\langle e,st \rangle}.\ \lambda s: s \in D_s\ \&\ \exists!x\ f(x)(s)=1.\ \iota x\ f(x)(s)=1$
         (Elbourne 2013:193)

Fig. 1: Syntactic structure of Voldemort Phrases
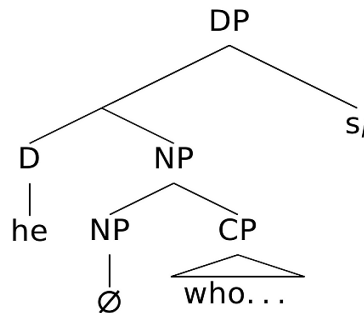
This assumption is supported by the close correspondence in meaning between *he who* and *the one who* argued for in Section 3.

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[14] This proposal is similar in spirit to the one given in Hinterwimmer (2008) for free relatives in generic sentences. This similarity fits one of the results of the cross-linguistic discussion in Section 3.1: free relatives are widely used alternatives to Voldemort phrases in European languages.

[15] Note that this assumption is also compatible with *he* being a diachronically motivated suppletive form for a Middle English demonstrative since demonstratives can be analyzed as "indexical definites" (Elbourne 2008).

Let us now turn to the supporting observations for the claim that Voldemort phrases in generic sentences denote singular kinds. The first observation concerns their contexts of use. In the literature on English kind-denoting expressions, it has been shown that given a suitable context, any English definite singular noun phrase can be used as a kind-denoting expression(cf. Dayal 1992, 2004). This contrasts with the traditional claim that definite singular noun phrases, unlike bare plurals, have to denote "well-established" kinds (cf. Krifka et al. 1995).

(24) a. #The green bottle has a long neck.
      b. Green bottles have long necks.
          (Dayal 2004:425)

Dayal observes that the contrast in (24) disappears in a context in which green bottles form a clear category of bottles. Based on this observation, Dayal (2004:fn30) argues that for definite singular kinds, an appropriate context is needed: it has to provide one or more kinds that can be contrasted with the kind denoted by the definite singular noun phrase, i.e. a "contrast set". This "contrast set" can either be explicitly given or has to be easily inferable. Chierchia (1998) similarly argues that any definite singular noun phrase can denote a "natural kind" (i.e. a singular kind), as long as "sufficiently regular behavior" can be attributed to the class of entities denoted by its descriptive content. Like Dayal, he argues that pragmatic factors and world knowledge play a crucial role.

The next step is to show that generic sentences that contain Voldemort phrases occur in these kinds of contexts. Given Dayal's and Chierchia's results, this provides support for the claim that the Voldemort phrases in these sentences denote singular kinds.

As we have seen in Section 3, the contexts of use are constrained: Voldemort phrases in generic sentences are found in older versions of the Bible and in proverbs or proverb-like generalizations. For the Bible texts, it can be observed that occurrences of Voldemort phrases are usually used in contrast with one or more other occurrences of Voldemort phrases, see (25).

(25) **The Law Concerning Violence** (Exodus 21:12–17)
      12 **He who strikes a man so that he dies** shall surely be put to death.
      13 However, if he did not lie in wait, but God delivered him into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place where he may flee.
      14 But if a man acts with premeditation against his neighbor, to kill him by treachery, you shall take him from My altar, that he may die.

> 15 And **he who strikes his father or his mother** shall surely be put to death.
> 16 He **who kidnaps a man and sells him**, or if he is found in his hand, shall surely be put to death.
> 17 And **he who curses his father or his mother** shall surely be put to death.

In (25), the title and the list of generic sentences provide enough context to infer a suitable taxonomy to understand the Voldemort phrases as singular kinds. Furthermore, for each class of people a regularity, a common punishment, is stated.

Proverbs and proverb-like expressions meet the pragmatic requirements in a different manner. Proverbs are conventionalized expressions that communicate an "established" generalization: a certain property can be attributed to anyone who falls into a certain class of people. This is a "natural kind" in Chierchia's sense. Similarly, non-conventionalized proverb-like expressions usually arise as generalizations from one or more specific cases that suggest a general pattern. That is, it is communicated that the relevant class of people denoted by the Voldemort phrase does in fact show "sufficiently regular behavior".

Another supporting observation is that Voldemort phrases occur in copular sentences with kind-denoting singular definite expressions, e.g. *the artist* in (26).

(26)   **The Artist** is <u>he who</u> detects and applies the law from observation of the works of Genius, whether of man or Nature.   (Henry David Thoreau)

Copular sentences have three possible readings: an equational, a predicational, and a specificational reading (cf. Partee 2010). In the equational and the specificational reading, the expression following the copula denotes an entity (type e); in the predicational reading, a predicate (type $\langle e,t \rangle$). For (26) to support the claim that Voldemort phrases in generic sentences are kind-denoting, it has to be excluded that (26) is predicational.[16] To show that a copular sentence is *not* predicational, it has to be the case that the expressions related by the copula are reversible. This is borne out:

(27)   <u>*He who*</u> *detects and applies the law from observation of the works of Genius, whether of man or Nature is* **the Artist.**   (= (26) reversed)

In addition to (27), naturally occurring examples that show the reverse order can be found, see (28).

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[16] Note that singular kinds are seen as entities (type e).

(28)   *He who* sins is **the slave of sin**.   (John 8:34)

This suggests that copular sentences like (26) are equational or specificational, and supports the claim that the Voldemort phrases in these sentences denote a singular kind.[17]

The final but crucial observation that supports the claim made in this section is the behavior of Voldemort phrases in connection with QVE, which is discussed in detail in the following subsection.

4.2. QVE and singular kinds

In Section 3.3 it was shown that Voldemort phrases and their closest alternatives show QVE with adverbs of quantification. Traditionally, the ability to show QVE was seen as a sign of indefiniteness (Berman 1991). So, *prima facie* the observation that Voldemort phrases show QVE seems to be a counter-argument for the claim that they are definite descriptions denoting singular kinds. Hinterwimmer (2005), however, shows that QVE and quantificational variability-like behavior can be found with definite expressions as well. Hence in this subsection, I explore whether Hinterwimmer's (2005) account for QVE with definite singular noun phrases can be adopted/adapted for Voldemort phrases, or alternatively, whether it can shed light on their contribution in generic sentences.

Hinterwimmer (2005) argues that definite singular noun phrases show quantificational variability-like effects iff

- the noun phrase bears contrastive topic intonation
- the singleton set denoted by the noun phrase in the complement of the definite determiner varies with the situations quantified over by the adverb of quantification. Crucially, the set of situations quantified over has to be characterizable by a situation predicate that observes the constraint in (29), and can be inferred from the context.

(29)   Each situation characterized by the situation predicate can plausibly be assumed to *contain exactly one individual* for the class of individuals described by the definite singular noun phrase and for each of its topic alternatives.

The examples in (30-b) and (31-b) illustrate these requirements. The contrastive topic marking of *bride* and *piano-player*, as well as normal sentential stress are indicated by upper case marking.

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[17] Since individual-denoting definite descriptions can undergo a type shift to be interpreted as expressions of type ‹*e,t*› (cf. Partee 2010), this might not be a particularly strong argument.

(30) a. The BRIDE usually wears a lovely DRESS.
      b. Mary loves <u>weddings</u>. The BRIDE usually wears a lovely
          DRESS.
      c. Mary loves <u>weddings</u>. #The bride usually wears a lovely
          DRESS.
          (Hinterwimmer 2005:111)

(31) a. #The PIANO-player usually is INTELLIGENT.
      b. I love going to <u>jazz concerts</u>. The PIANO-player usually is
          INTELLIGENT.
      c. I love going to <u>jazz concerts</u>. #The piano-player usually
          is INTELLIGENT.
          (Hinterwimmer 2005:111)

For examples (30-c) and (31-c), in which the complement of the
definite determiner does not bear contrastive topic intonation, it is
understood that the denotation of the definite singular noun phrase
is fixed, i.e. that a single unique referent is given independently.
This effectively blocks QVE. Examples (30-a) and (31-a), in which
the sentences are presented without a context, show that whether
a suitable situation predicate is inferable depends on world
knowledge: while there is a strong association between unique
brides and their weddings, unique piano-players are not commonly
associated with one single, specific type of situation.

   While Hinterwimmer (2005) convincingly argues that his
analysis captures the quantificational variability-like effects for
definite singular noun phrases, his solution cannot be adopted to
account for QVE with Voldemort phrases, see (32) (repeats (20-a)).

(32)   He who blames others is **often** full of blame himself.

   For one, the Voldemort phrase in (28) does not (have to) bear
contrastive topic stress. One possible way to account for this is to
assume that the relative clause alone suffices to generate
alternative classes of individuals: it has been observed that
restrictive modification implicates the existence of individuals that
are not members of the restricted set (cf. Partee 1975). For
instance, *a person who blames others* implicates that there are
people who do not blame others. So, the first requirement is met.
   The presence of a restrictive relative clause alone, however,
does not suffice for (32) to meet Hinterwimmer's second
requirement: inferring a situation predicate observing the
constraint in (29). Which type of situation contains one person who
blames others and one person who does not? There is no obvious
answer for this. Since (32) moreover does not need an introductory
sentence/context to be understood, the QVE found in (32) seems to
be of a different sort than that described by Hinterwimmer.

Example (32) is, in fact, representative for QVE with Voldemort phrases. None of the examples presented so far observe Hinterwimmer's restrictions: (i) the Voldemort phrases do not bear contrastive topic intonation, and (ii) no classes of situations have to be inferred for the sentences to be understood.

At first glance this result seems to be a counter-argument against the assumption that Voldemort phrases are singular definite descriptions. I argue that the result has to be considered in a different light, though: while Voldemort phrases that show QVE are definite singular DPs, they are not individual-denoting like the unmodified definite singular noun phrases considered by Hinterwimmer (2005) in (30) and (31). They denote singular kinds.

But why should unmodified definite singular noun phrases be individual-denoting expressions in the context of QVE, and Voldemort phrases be kind-denoting in these contexts?

Examples (33-a) and (33-b) show that the behavior of Voldemort phrases is not special: there are examples of QVE with unmodified kind-denoting definite singular noun phrases.

(33) a. Ancient Malagasy legend states that the aye-aye is a symbol of death, and is viewed as a bad omen by many natives. Due to this unfortunate bad press, **the aye-aye** is **often** killed on sight by superstitious locals.
≈ Many aye-ayes are killed on sight by superstitious locals.
  b. Despite being endangered and protected, **the green sea turtle** is **often** killed in Costa Rica for its meat and eggs.
≈ Many green sea turtles are killed in Costa Rica for their meat and eggs.

Neither (33-a) nor (33-b) can be analyzed as proposed in Hinterwimmer (2005). In fact, the same questions arise as for (32): Which kind of situation involves single aye-ayes or single green sea turtles? For (33-a), one possibility would be to assume that the type of situations that is quantified over are meetings of a superstitious local with a single aye-aye. But what about situations in which a superstitious local meets two or more aye-ayes?[18] These

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[18] Hinterwimmer's account cannot be generalized to capture these situations: if one were to treat meetings between locals and more than one aye-aye as a sum of situations of one local meeting a single aye-aye, Hinterwimmer's account would be trivialized. It would be predicted that (i) is acceptable: each flower-shop situation can be divided into parts containing a single flower (and other unique objects from a flower shop).
(i)   ??Peter loves flower shops: the FLOWER usually smells NICE.

situations seem to be as relevant as meetings with single aye-ayes; it would be implausible to assume that superstitious locals kill aye-ayes only when they meet a single one, but ignore groups.

Given the well-formedness of (33-a) and (33-b), the obvious difficulty regarding the task of naming the sets of situations involved in (33) (which Hinterwimmer predicts to be easy) is a clear indication that the singular definite descriptions in (33) are not individual-denoting: (33) exemplifies QVE over instances of kinds. This, in turn, points towards the same conclusion for (32).

To sum up Section 4, three pieces of supporting evidence were given for the claim that Voldemort phrases in generic sentences denote singular kinds: (i) their contexts of use, (ii) the use of Voldemort phrases in copular sentences, and (iii) QVE with unmodified kind-denoting definite singular noun phrases.

5. The formal proposal: Voldemort phrases as singular kinds

In this section, I put forth my formal proposal for the semantic contribution of Voldemort phrases in generic sentences. The proposal is based nearly exclusively on Dayal's (2004) account for definite singular noun phrases.

Dayal (2004) assumes that the source of the kind/individual ambiguity for definite singular noun phrases is the common noun: it can either denote a property of individuals or one of kind-entities. Irrespective of the type of property contributed by the noun, the definite determiner picks out the contextually unique entity from the denotation of its complement. That is, a definite singular noun phrase either denotes the unique individual or the unique kind-entity denoted by its nominal complement.

For a noun phrase to denote a property of kind-entities, its regular individual-based denotation undergoes a shifting process: the denotation is shifted from a set of individuals to a singleton set of kind-entities, see (34-b) for *the dodo* in (34-a).

(34) a. The dodo is extinct.
      b. $[\lambda x.\text{dodo}(x)] \Rightarrow [\lambda X.\text{DODO}(X)]$

As stated in Section 4.1, this shift is only licensed, if a suitable "contrast set" can be inferred. For *dodo* in (34-a), the set that is inferred arguably contains other kinds of animals.

The final step to derive the semantic contribution of *the dodo* in (34-a) is to combine the result of the shift in (34-b) with the regular definite singular determiner. The result is given in (35) modulo presuppositions.

(35) $\iota X[DODO(X)]$

Hence, kind-denoting singular definite noun phrases are grammatically atomic. In a certain sense, however, they are semantically plural since the instantiations of the kind are always accessible. This accessibility is utilized when a kind-denoting definite singular noun phrase combines with an object-level predicate, see (37). The result is a characterizing sentence that expresses a generalization about the members of the kind-entity (cf. Krifka et al. 1995, Chierchia 1998). To capture the connection between a kind and its members, Chierchia (1998) introduces a *member-of relation*, which I formalize as in (36).

(36)   Chierchia's (1998) *member-of relation*:
        $\lambda y.\lambda X.\lambda s.[member\text{-}of(y, X, s)]$

The *member-of relation* holds between an individual *y* and a kind *X* in a situation *s* iff *y* instantiates *X* in *s*, i.e. iff the property of individuals at the core of *X* is true of *y* in *s*. By adding Chierchia's *member-of relation* to Dayal's system, generalizations about members of a kind can be captured, see (37-b).

(37) a. The tiger roars.
      b. Gen x,s [member-of(x,ιY[TIGER(Y)],s) ∧ C(x,s)][roar(x,s)]

Let us now return to the formal proposal for Voldemort phrases in generic sentences. As stated in Section 4.1, I follow Elbourne (2013) in assuming that third person singular pronouns are phonological variants of the definite determiner which combine with an NP that contains an empty noun modified by a relative clause (RC). Since *who* is restricted to humans, I assume that the empty noun is interpreted as *person* or *human*.[19] The resulting denotation of the NP is given in (38).

(38) $[[NP]]^g \rightsquigarrow \lambda x.\lambda s.x$ is a person in s & RC(x)(s)

Since this NP denotes an intensionalized set of individuals, Dayal's shift can transform this set to a singleton set of kinds, see (39).

(39) $\lambda x.\lambda s.x$ is a person in s & RC(x)(s)
                        $\Rightarrow \lambda X.\lambda s.PERSON\text{-}WHO\text{-}RC(X)$

The descriptive content contributed by the relative clause is the crucial ingredient that licenses this shift: It provides "enough"

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[19] Panagiotidis (2003) argues that the empty noun found in pronouns is identical to the common noun *one*, which he argues has no descriptive content. This matches the assumption made for the empty noun, as well as the observation that *the one who...* is a close alternative to *he who...*.

descriptive content so that, in connection with the context of use, the necessary "contrast set" can be inferred. The (inferred) descriptive content of the phonologically empty noun phrase, i.e. "person", alone would not suffice.

   After applying the shifting process, the result in (39) can combine with the meaning of *he* to yield (40).

(40) $\lambda s: s \in D_s$ & $\exists!X[\text{PERSON-WHO-RC}(X)]$.
                                          $\iota X[\text{PERSON-WHO-RC}(X)]$

Next, (40) combines with s_i. The value of s_i has to be assigned contextually in such a way that the uniqueness presupposition contributed by *he* is observed, i.e. that the set of kinds denoted by the complement is a singular set in the situation assigned to s_i. Since I assume that the shifting process applied in (39) results in a situation-independent property of kinds, s_i can be set to an arbitrary situation by the variable assignment *g*. This is motivated by (i) the consideration that "which type of kind" a kind-entity is, is independent of a particular situation and (ii) the assumption that the output of Dayal's shift is always a singleton set of kinds. The result of (40) combining with s_i is given in (41-a) modulo presupposed content. This can be further simplified to (41-b), the final representation of Voldemort phrases in generic sentences.[20]

(41) a. $[\lambda s.\iota X[\text{PERSON-WHO-RC}(X)]](g(s_i))$
      b. $\iota X[\text{PERSON-WHO-RC}(X)]$

Since in most generic sentences, Voldemort phrases combine with object-level predicates—see (42)—Chierchia's *member-of relation* given in (36) needs to be employed.

(42) a. He who pays the piper **calls the tune**.
      b. He who goes cautiously, **goes safely and goes far**.

In analogy to (37), the final formalizations for (42) are as in (43).

(43) a. Gen y,s [member-of(y, $\iota X[\text{PERSON-WHO-PAYS-THE-PIPER}(X)]$, s) $\wedge$ C(x,s)] [calls-the-tune(y, s)]
      b. Gen y,s [member-of(y, $\iota X[\text{PERSON-WHO-GOES-CAUTIOUSLY}(X)]$, s) $\wedge$ C(x,s)] [goes-safely(y, s)]

Since the covert generic operator *Gen* is standardly assumed to relate two properties, similarly to the overt adverbs of

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[20] Since *he* has the same denotation as the definite article, Voldemort phrases presuppose that the kind described by the modified NP exists. The existence of instantiations is crucially not presupposed: kinds can exist without being instantiated (cf. Krifka et al. 1995, Mari et al. 2012).

quantification *usually* and *normally* (cf. Krifka et al. 1995, Mari et al. 2013), the two representations in (43) can be given the paraphrases in (44).

(44) a. For all normal members of the kind PERSON WHO PAYS THE PIPER and all normal situations that contain a member of this kind, it is the case that the member of the kind calls the tune.

b. For all normal members of the kind PERSON WHO GOES CAUTIOUSLY and all normal situations that contain a member of this kind, it is the case that the member of the kind goes safely and goes far.

6. Conclusion

Generic sentences containing Voldemort phrases convey a statement about a certain class of people in general. This interpretation is not the result of an impersonal use of third person singular *he.* I propose that it arises from generic quantification over the members of a singular kind which is contributed by the Voldemort phrase. This idea, as well as its formal implementation proposed in Section 5, capture that sentences containing unmodified third person singular pronouns cannot express statements about people in general—the relative clause is the crucial ingredient.

Furthermore, it was shown that cross-linguistically, the use of Voldemort phrases in generic sentences is an idiosyncrasy of English. Other European languages employ either free relatives or a definite/demonstrative pronoun modified by a restrictive relative clause to express the same general statements. There are reasons to assume, though, that Voldemort phrases can be counted among the latter strategy.

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