

There in Discourse-Based Context

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Park, Chankyu. 2005. *There* in Discourse-Based Context. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 13(1), 69-89. This paper attempts to account for the intrinsic properties of the *there*-subject, focusing on the discourse functions of the *there*-subject. In discourse, the *there*-subject constructions are used as natural answers to each question, while the corresponding NP-subject constructions are unlikely, or marginal expressions. In addition, definiteness NPs can substitute for indefinite NPs as notional subjects in *there*- constructions with respect to the concept of information. Based on this, I suggest that the subject *there* should not be a semantically vacuous element and that the subject *there* implies a piece of information, a speaker's recognized information. This provides evidence to assume that the *there*-subject may be a linguistic item which fulfills a pragmatic function in that it presupposes the propositional content of presupposed units in discourse. It is also asserted that the *there*-subject is a presupposition-triggering information marker. This property implies that it would be a pronoun that represents a presupposedly-sentential unit, a presupposition. Consequently, it is maintained that it is an introductory sentential pronoun.

Key words: discourse, a speaker's recognized information, *there*-subject, presupposition-triggering information marker, introductory sentential pronoun.

1. Introduction

The semantic and syntactic categories of the *there*-subject are notoriously difficult to determine. A large amount of literature in modern linguistics has touched on the nature of the *there*-subject, however, the precise nature of it is still a matter of debate. In fact, there has been some discussion in some studies on the categorial status of the *there*-subject, and the prevailing view has been that the *there*-subject is semantically an expletive and syntactically the subject of a sentence:

- (1) a. There is a mouse in the bathtub.
 b. There is a lot work to be done, isn't there?
 c. There happened an accident on the main road.
 d. *There laughed two men in the room.

As seen in (1), *there* functions only as the subject of a sentence, which is proved by the fact that it can be copied in tag questions and may undergo Subject-Auxiliary inversion, as other NP subjects do. It also occurs with the copula *be* and some narrow set of verbs,¹⁾²⁾ as seen in (1c, d). In addition, it is well-known that the subject *there* has some complex properties that signify its unique characteristics. One of these properties is the notion that a *there*-construction has a restriction to the semantic properties of the notional NP:

- (2) a. There are some books on the shelf.
 b. *There is every book on the shelves.

The unacceptability of (2b) generally shows the requirements of the Definiteness Effect, which maintains that the only possible notional NP is indefinite in *there*-constructions. Therefore, it has been said that definite NPs may not be able to take the place of indefinite NPs in *there*-constructions. However, this idea fails to preserve this kind of regulation as in the following sentence.

- (3) a. What's in that drawer?

1) As is well-known, there are two types of *there*-constructions. One is those containing *be* and the other those containing some other verb (e.g. appear, emerge, exist). In English, the majority of *there*-constructions contain a form of *be*, for which this paper will deal with *there*-constructions containing *be*.

2) The verbs which may occur in the *there*-constructions are (i) complex lexical verbs: come in, grow up, heave up, spring up, steal away; (ii) simple lexical verbs: appear, arise, arrive, begin, burst, come, develop, emerge, ensue, enter, escape, exist, flow, float, follow, grow, hang, happen, lack, linger, loom, lie, live, lurch, occur, open, pass, persist, remain, return, rise, shine, show, sprout, stand, sound, survive, tread, want (lack), etc. (Erdmann, 1976)

- b. There's the stapler, but nothing else.

As is seen in (3b), although the definite NPs are notional subjects, which basically violates the Definiteness Effect, the sentence is not problematic in that communication. In fact, the usage here of the definite NP in *there*-constructions is so common that we can dispose of the Definiteness Effect, in particular, in discourse. In addition, it has commonly been stated that *there*-constructions are transformed from NP-constructions by the insertion of *there* and NP postposing (Akmajian and Heny, 1975) and that the *there*-subject is the pro-form of the complement of the main verb *be*, the postverbal NP.

- (4) a. A boy was on the dock.
b. There was a boy on the dock.

This concept has made evident that both of the constructions are semantically so similar that *there* and NP postposing can reciprocally be substituted in the subject position of a sentence. However, our expectations of this conventional statement differ as follows:

- (5) A: Is a doctor or is there another doctor in the clinic?
B: (Yes,) There is a doctor in the clinic.
B': ?*A doctor is in the clinic.
(6) A: What is in the garden?
B: There are some flowers in the garden.
B': ?*Some flowers are in the garden.

The examples in (5) and (6) show that, in discourse, the *there*-subject constructions are used as natural answers to each question, while the corresponding sentences (NP-subject constructions) are unlikely, or marginal expressions, according to native speakers' intuition. This contrast contradicts our thinking that the meaning of both the sentences are so similar that the sentences can be used as proper responses in the same position.

This paper attempts to account for the intrinsic properties of the *there*-subject, reviewing some requirements and exploring the usage of *there*-constructions, and in which situations the *there*-subject should be used, and how it really functions in a sentence. In particular, this study focuses on the discourse functions of the *there*-subject. The necessity for a discourse analysis comes from the phenomenon that *there*-subject constructions have a different status from those with the corresponding NP-subject in practical conversation as in (5), and (6). This paper has been structured as follows: Section 2 reviews the two unique properties of *there*-constructions; one is the Definiteness Effect, and the other the predicate restrictions, aimed at deducing the property of the subject *there*. Section 3 investigates the progress of the utterance of *there*-constructions and clarifies the pragmatic and syntactic properties on the basis of discourse analysis. Section 4 concludes this paper.

2. Reanalysis of the Definiteness Effect and Predicate Restraint

2.1. The syntactic-communicative effect

In the previous section, we have already mentioned some well-known restrictions on *there*-constructions, among which is the so-called Definiteness Effect. We will focus on this for the purpose of paving the way to suggest the real properties of the *there*-subject in discourse. In fact, it is well known that only the indefinite NP can be used as a notional subject in *there*-constructions:

- (7) a. There are some books on the shelf.
 b. *There is every book on the shelves.

As is commonly stated, the contrast of the sentences in (7a)–(7b) shows the requirements of the Definiteness Effect, which maintains that the only possible NP is indefinite in *there*-constructions. Therefore, (7b) must not be standard English. However, we may often be able to see the

there-constructions with the definite NP posited at the position of notional NP.

- (8) a. What's worth visiting here?
b. There's the park, a very nice restaurant, and the library.
(Rando & Napoli, 1978)

Obviously, the acceptability of (8b) in discourse shows that the definite NP is certainly not excluded from the *there*-constructions. Also, Huddleston & Pullum (2002) state that definite NPs are admissible in *there*-constructions provided it represents information that is new to the addressee.

- (9) a. What can I get Mary for her birthday?
b. There's the new book on birdwatching we were talking about yesterday.

According to Huddleston & Pullum (2002), definite NPs in (9b) do not always stand for information already known by the addressee in discourse. In other words, when the addressee may have temporarily forgotten them, definite NPs represent a new instance of a type of information that is known, and are justified as a new entity in *there*-constructions. In this respect, *there*-constructions can be regarded as devices used entirely for presenting a piece of information to a listener. Breivik(1981) states that the subject *there* functions as signal information, relaying a kind of pragmatic information to the addressee. In addition, Breivik(1981) says that present-day English tends to introduce new information toward the end of the sentence. With respect to the communicative function of word order, Firbas(1966:240) describes this field of study, which he calls functional sentence perspective (FSP), in the following way (recited from Breivik (1981):

'The starting point of the theory [of FSP] is the assumption that it is in accordance both with the character of human thought and with the linear

character of the sentence that sentence elements follow each other according to the amount (degree) of communicative dynamism (=CD) they convey, starting with the lowest and gradually passing on to the highest.

'By the degree of CD carried by a sentence element we understand the extent to which the sentence element contributes to the development of the communication, to which, as it were, it 'pushes' the communication forward. The elements carrying the lowest degrees of CD constitute the theme, those carrying in the highest degrees, the rheme... In addition to the theme and the rheme, there is the transition, which, in regard to CD carried, ranks above the former on the one hand, and below the latter on the other. The basic distribution of CD is a consistent theme-transition-rheme³⁾ sequence.....

Based on the description, Breivik(1981) notes a difference between a NP-construction and a *there*-construction:

- (10) a. An account book is on the table.
 b. There is an account book on the table.

According to Breivik, though the sentences in (10) are completely synonymous in that they imply the same cognitive content, they are different in the way the message is coded. That is, as the communicative core is positioned initially in (10a), it deviates from the basic distribution of CD, and such sentences are extremely rare in both spoken and written English. In fact, from a pragmatic point of view, a sentence may be regarded as the construction of a message, consisting of old (or given) information and new information(Antinucci & Cinque, 1977). Then, the

3) With respect to the communicative function of a sentence, Jaszczolt(2002) distinguishes a sentence into four pairs of notions as follows:

- (i) *Theme* and *rheme* concern the structure of the sentence.
- (ii) *Topic* and *comment* also concern the structure.
- (iii) *Given* and *new* concern the information content.
- (iv) *Topic* and *focus* also concern the information content. The topic need not be unique and need not come first in the sentence.

subject of a sentence is expected to contain given information. Therefore, it can be inferred that the subject *there* also implies some information, as other subject NPs do. This deduction comes from the fact that definite NPs, in *there*-constructions, can be placed at the position in which new information is triggered when presented to a listener. So, the subject *there* can be regarded as implying a piece of information, whether it is given or not. Therefore it can be said that the information implied by the subject *there* is a certain situation or reference point that a speaker will utter. This inference is not inappropriate in that *there*-constructions are regarded as devices for presenting new information (Breivik, 1981). Information contained in the subject *there* will be dealt with in the next section. Consequently, the syntactic-communicative effect makes the definite NP qualified to take the place of the so-called notional subject.

2.2. The temporally-visual constraint

In this section, an attempt will be made to explain the syntactic and semantic properties of the complements of *there*-constructions. It is significant that all occurrences of the subject *there* show a systematic correlation between semantic and syntactic properties, in particular, in the predicate of its sentence. Apart from the requirements of *there*-constructions mentioned previously, it is also necessary to look at another classic characteristic that *there*-constructions show with respect to the concept of the discourse as follows:

- (11) a. There is something visible.
- b. ??There is something invisible.
- c. There began a riot.
- d. There appeared a girl in front of us.
- e. *There disappeared a girl in front of us.
- f. *There died a fisherman in that village.

Obviously, it can be inferred from the examples in (11a) and (11b) that *there*-constructions seem to make us visualize an entity by bringing

something before our eyes. To put it differently, the complements of *there*-constructions convey the visual existence of an entity. This effect also comes from the sentences in (11c), (11d), (11e), and (11f). The sentences in (11c)-(11d) indicate that the verbs which may occur in *there*-constructions belong to the group of verbs whose meaning is to specify the onset or occurrence of an event. This result is supported by the unacceptability of (11e) and (11f). In other words, they indicate that a group of verbs is possible whose meaning is 'to appear', 'to come into being' or 'to be visible' (Bolinger, 1977). From this phenomenon, we can make an assumption that *there*-constructions do pragmatically make sense only when something visually exists to the speaker.⁴⁾

Likewise, another character of *there*-constructions is the predicate constraint as seen in the following pair:

- (12) There is one thing certain.
 (13) *There are salesmen intelligent.

The contrast between (12) and (13) has traditionally been explained under the assumption that *there*-constructions cannot occur with the

4) With respect to the difference between *there*-constructions and NP-constructions, Bolinger (1977) maintains that NP-constructions present something on the immediate state or brings something literally or figuratively before our presence whereas *there*-constructions present something to our minds or bring a piece of knowledge into consciousness:

- (i) As I recall, across the street there's a grocery.
 (ii) As you can see, across the street is a grocery.

In other words, Bolinger says that sentence A represents a piece of information, whereas sentence B is factive, citing Atkinson's note that, according to the presence or absence of *il* (there), the implication of each sentence in the following differs:

- (iii) Vint un homme.
 (iv) Il vint un homme.

According to Atkinson, the sentence (iii) refers to 'staged activity', informing a reader or hearer not of what is happening but of being "on stage" him or herself. In other words, the sentence (iii) describes a fact on stage whereas sentence (iv) is a piece of information of which the speaker utters to inform the listener.

adjectives of relatively permanent properties⁵⁾ -*Individual Level* properties in the sense of Carlson (1977)⁶⁾ - which indicate the abstractness of an entity. Carlson refers to predicate adjectives allowed in *there*-constructions as Stage-level properties, following Quine's findings(1960), which state that a stage is conceived of as being, roughly, a spatially and temporally bounded manifestation of something. In other words, the noun modified by the stage-level adjectives in *there*-constructions is expected to be a temporally-occurred entity before a speaker's eyes. This interpretation is possible based on the syntactic property of *there*-construction's complement as in the following sentences:⁷⁾

- (14) a. *There is a student noisy.
 b. There is a student being noisy.
 c. *There is a student mean.

5) Milsark characterized the difference between the two lists of adjectives in the following ways. He looks upon predicative adjectives not allowed in *there*-constructions as 'properties', and those allowed 'states'.

"Properties are those facts about entities which are assumed to be, even if they are not in fact, permanent, unalterable and in same sense possessed by the entity, while states are conditions which are, in principle, transitory, not possessed by the entity of which they are predicated, and the removal of which cause no change in the essential qualities of the entity".(p. 212)

6) With respect to the postmodifying adjectives in *there*-constructions, Carlson (1977) pointed out that the distinction in predication between *individual level* properties and relatively transitory *stage level* properties correlates with an even more dramatic difference in interpretation in "bare NPs":

(i) Salesmen are intelligent.

(ii) Salesmen are knocking on the door.

(i), with an individual level predicate, can only mean that salesmen in general are intelligent, a quasi-universal reading. On the other hand, (ii) means that some particular salesmen are knocking on the door, an existential reading. Therefore, in *there*-constructions bare NPs have only their existential readings.

(iii) There are salesmen knocking on the door/*intelligent.

In summation, it can also be inferred from this view that the condition on the utterance of *there*-constructions is the awareness of the speaker of an entity or event on the immediate stage.

7) The sentences (14) have been checked by some native speakers who are teaching English in Korea.

- d. There is a student being mean.
- e. *There is a student healthy.
- f. ?*There is a student being healthy.

From the selective acceptability of the sentences in (14), we may also grasp the semantic and syntactic property of *there*-constructions. As seen in (14), only the active APs can be the predicate of the subject in a small clause, with restrictions on which adjectives can occur with the progressive in *there*-constructions.⁸⁾ As is seen in (14), the appearance of progressive *be* between the notional NP and the predicate makes ungrammatical sentences like (14a) and (14b) completely grammatical and the one example like (14e) somewhat marginal. In fact, as is well known, the progressive is closely associated with a certain period and indicates a happening in progress at a given time. Therefore, (14b) refers to a student's noisiness on a particular occasion or during a particular period. Likewise, the implication of (14d) can presumably be that a student's being mean is intentional in a certain period. This interpretation defines the concept of temporariness.⁹⁾ Therefore, this fact makes it more definite that *there*-constructions are temporally-bound, in that *there*-constructions consist of the subject *there* plus the complement of temporal property.

This semantic and syntactic property observed prompts us to apply the distinction to the following pair of sentences.

- (15) a. There are students sick.
- b. *There are students tall.

As is well known, the restriction on the adjective after the post-copular NP forces us to decide the acceptability of each sentence in (15). Then, only

8) Drawing a distinction between active and stative APs and DPs, Lakoff(1970) states that only the former can be placed in the complement of the progressive *be*.

9) The meaning of the progressive can be separated into three components: a) the happening has duration, b) the happening has limited duration, and c) the happening is not necessarily complete. The first two components add up to the concept of temporariness (Quirk, et. al. 1981: 198)

the sentence (15a) can be accepted as a grammatical structure. In other words, only the stage-level adjectives, which denote a temporal property, are allowed to be the predicates of the post-copular NPs. This means that the students' sicknesses are not a general event, but a temporal event at the time of utterance. Namely, the students' sicknesses may be restricted to that particular occasion.¹⁰⁾ This leads us to make a conclusion that if the complement of the copula is the small clause, it is a progressive clause without the progressive aspect, as seen in the following:

(16) There are students (being) sick.

This syntactic property is supported by the selective acceptability of (14). In contrast, the sentence of (15b) is ungrammatical in spite of putting the progressive *being* in front of the predicate of notional NP:

(17) *There are students (being) tall.

Obviously, this distinction seems to be associated with the properties of *there*-constructions. That is, the temporal property of the complement is necessary in *there*-constructions, causing only *there* to be placed at the position of subject. Note that *there*-constructions function as devices for presenting new information. In this respect, the condition on presenting

10) Rothstein (2001) analyzes the semantic difference of the copula in the progressive. Accordingly, the sentence (i) is semantically divided into two classes of the sentences in (ii) as is shown in the following examples cited from Rothstein(2001):

- (i) Jane is polite.
- (ii) a. Jane is polite.
- b. Jane is being polite.

According to Rothstein (2001: 283), the implication of (iia) is that the subject, *Jane*, is generally a polite person, that is, the complement represents the permanent property of *Jane*, while the implication of (iib) is that Jane is intentionally behaving in a polite way, and indicates that Jane's politeness is temporal in a certain situation. Namely, the complement of the progressive indicates agentive implication and politeness is an activity which will be stopped after a certain period. Additionally, in the progressive sentence, the copula *be* is said to take certain predicates as its complement.

new information is to take a sentence with the linear order of the subject *there* plus the complement of implicating the progressive. Therefore, it can be asserted that with the discourse condition, a *there*-construction consists of a speaker's recognized information as well as new information to a listener. This means that a *there*-construction is typically speaker-originated and listener-oriented. I refer to this characteristic of the *there*-construction as a temporally-visual constraint.

3. The Function of the Subject *There*

3.1. The pragmatic function

In the previous section, we deduced the property and meaning of the subject *there* based on the Definiteness Effect and the syntactic property of the predicate, especially, on the discourse-based concept. In particular, it was assumed that the subject *there* contains a certain information which is recognized by a speaker. This concept places some condition on the utterance of *there*-constructions. Let's take a look at some examples as follows below:

- (18) a. A doctor is in the clinic.
 b. It is certain that a doctor examines one's health in the clinic.
 c. There is a doctor who examines one's health in the clinic.
- (19) a. Some flowers in full blossom are in the garden.
 b. It is certain that some flowers in full blossom are in the garden.
 c. There are some flowers in full blossom in the garden.

The examples in (18) and (19) show that, when uttering the *there*-subject constructions in communication, the speaker is certain to recognize the situation, such as (18a,b) and (19a,b), respectively. This indicates that the *there*-subject constructions like (18c) and (19c) may be uttered based on the condition that the speaker responding to a question is aware of the situation of presupposition presented as in (18a,b) and (19a,b). In other words, the presupposition presented must be a recognized situation to the

speaker prior to the utterance. This concept also proves the assumption that the *there*-subject may be a linguistic item which fulfills a pragmatic function that presupposes the propositional content of presupposed units in communication.

In other words, these presuppositions can be regarded as pragmatic phenomena affecting the conditions of utterances and pragmatic conditions on the appropriateness of utterances of *there*-constructions. This suggests that the *there*-subject is the propositional content of a presupposition,¹¹⁾ which is recognized by a speaker.

Now, we have taken other empirical data to deduce certain presuppositions under which *there*-constructions can naturally be uttered to convey new information in communication. Let's take a look at a practical conversation (20):

(20)A: Hello, Ted.

Do you have any books in your office related to what I am studying?

B: What kind of books do you need?

A: I need some books about chemistry. Do you have any?

B: Yes, I do.

A: How many do you have?

B: There are two or three books in my office.

*Two or three books are in my office.

A: Can I go get them now?

B: Sure.

(21) a. Some books, which are related to chemistry, exist.

And Ted has those books.

b. It is certain that some books related to chemistry are in Ted's office

As noted in the dialogue (20), a *there*-construction is uttered as a natural

11) Abbott(2000) states that presuppositions are best seen as background information or the common ground assumed in a discourse.

reply to the question, *how many books do you have about chemistry?*, on the assumption that speaker B is aware of the situations which presuppose the propositional content of (21a) and (21b), whereas NP-construction cannot be appropriate in this communication, regardless of its grammaticality.

When it comes to the acceptability of *there*-constructions in discourse, Huddleston & Pullum (2002:1396) state that *there*-constructions, referred to as existential constructions by the authors, are naturally used due to the characteristic of the construction to introduce addressee-new entities into the discourse, which causes the associate NP to be indefinite. In addition, according to the authors, the presence of an indefinite NP makes a *there*-construction pragmatically obligatory in that the corresponding NP-construction is infelicitous:

- (22) a. There is a serious flaw in your own argument.
 b. *A serious flaw is in your own argument.

As for the unacceptability of the NP-construction (22b) pragmatically, Huddleston & Pullum (2002) maintain that the property of the indefinite NP determines the acceptability of the NP-construction in discourse. That is, when the indefinite NP denotes a physical entity, the NP-construction is also felicitous, but when it denotes an abstract entity, only a *there*-construction is generally used, as is shown in the following contrasts of (23) and (24):

- (23) a. A furniture van was in the driveway.
 b. There was a furniture van in the driveway.
 (24) a. *Plenty of room is on the top shelf.
 b. There's plenty of room on the top shelf.

However, in practical conversation, we find their argument incomplete in that the NP-construction is still inappropriate in discourse, in particular, in terms of the concept of information, as shown in the following dialogue:¹²⁾

12) The dialogue (25) has been checked by six native speakers who are

(25) (In the library)

A: Hi, Todd. What are you doing? Would you like to get some dinner?

B: Oh, sorry. I have no time to eat right now.

A: Why? What's up?

B: I lost my linguistics book and I'm looking for a copy of it to check out. You know, I have to take a linguistics exam this Wednesday. I need that book. But I don't know where it is here.

A: Todd, in the Olin library there's a copy of Chomsky's Aspect (*A copy of Chomsky's Aspect is in the Olin library). I saw it in the morning.

B: Really? Thank a lot.

As noted in (25), the NP-construction with the subject denoting a physical entity is pragmatically infelicitous or a marginal expression. Most of the native speakers who helped check the acceptability preferred the *there*-construction to the NP-construction in this dialog. In other words, this empirical data leads to the conclusion that when the speaker informs the listener of new information or an event, the *there*-constructions are much more natural than the NP-constructions, regardless of the property of the associate NP.¹³ This implies that the *there*-subject constructions are an assertion of the existence or position of something, while the NP-subject constructions are merely a description, so they are rare in communication. Therefore, in discourse, the preference of a *there*-construction to a NP-construction seems to be a matter of implying information rather than describing content. This is critical evidence that the *there*-construction is typically a situation-presenting construction.

In this sense, we assume that the *there*-subject triggers a pragmatic presupposition in the situation of utterance, with the fact that the speaker

teaching English at a university in Seoul.

13) Just two of six native speakers uttered both constructions. However, they also stated that the *there*-construction sounded much more natural than the NP-construction, adding that the NP-construction is rarely used in discourse.

is certain to recognize the situation. On the basis of this evidence, it can be claimed that the *there*-subject is a *presupposition-triggering information marker*.¹⁴⁾ Thus, it is probably the case that the *there*-subject is typically an item that is in the process of being introduced, and which is therefore naturally positioned at the front of its sentence. This kind of property of the *there*-subject makes it possible to predict what type of predicate will be introduced in *there*-constructions. Basically, the complement of the main verb in *there*-constructions has commonly been recognized as a small clause, the linear order of NP and predicate. So, given the notion of *there*'s triggering some presupposition, which is expected to be a new of information to a listener, we may be able to predict the composition of the complement.¹⁵⁾

It is fairly clear that the property of the *there*-subject as a marker cannot be described in morpho-syntactic terms, but is rather of a functional-pragmatic nature, which contributes to the propositional content of the utterances in which it appears. This means that a linguistic item which is capable of taking its own function may indicate the specific nature of that function explicitly.

At this point, we need to take into account some other viewpoints to expound on the nature of linguistic items. On the container view of linguistic meaning (Moore and Carling, 1982: 150), which is more or less the traditional conception of linguistic semantics, words inherently express certain meanings, which are independent of their use in concrete utterances. They therefore, in a metaphorical sense, function as a container for these meanings, which in a dialogue are simply transferred from speaker to listener. Meanings are conceptualized as discrete entities that can be specified precisely and exhaustively, so that even in cases where a word or expression may have more than one meaning, the different senses can be clearly distinguished and listed in the lexicon.

In addition, linguistic meanings are not the property of the individual

14) Han(2004) takes the subject *there* to be a semantically fully-fledged item, treating it as an existential operator. See Han(2004).

15) As is well-known, the definite NP can be placed at the position of notional subject in *there*-construction, with the implication of addressee-new entity.

language user, but rather of the linguistic community as a whole (Wittgenstein, 1971; Burge, 1989). In other words, language use is no different from other forms of organized social activity in displaying a distinction between more or less established routines and the particular situated behavior of individuals (Hansen, 1998). The precise meaning of these words is determined by their interaction with both the other words of the sentences in which they occur, and with the extralinguistic context. From this concept, it is apparent that the *there*-subject may be considered a linguistic item which has its own certain meaning and functions as the subject of a sentence, but not as an expletive to be a placeholder.¹⁶⁾

3.2. The syntactic function

So far, it has been observed that the *there*-subject functions as an information marker to fulfill a pragmatic function to presuppose the propositional content of presupposed units in communication. Using this property, it can be argued that the *there*-subject would be a pronoun which represents a presupposed unit, a presupposition. This leads us to naturally assume that the *there*-subject implies the definite meaning which is the intrinsic property of a pronoun.

In general, it is widely accepted that the *there*-subject plays a role of a pronoun as a subject in English. This phenomenon is even observed in the history of English. We can take some empirical data to show the syntactic function of the *there*-subject.

First, *there* as a subject plays the same role as that of pronoun in the tag question and *so* initial construction as follows:

- (26) Anderson was eating apples, wasn't he?
- (27) There is a lot of work to be done, isn't there?
- (28) a. Ted said he would buy a bottle of whisky, and so he did.
b. Ted said he would buy a bottle of whisky, and *so did he.

16) Moro(1997) also treats *there* as a meaningful element. In his analysis, *there* is a small clause predicate and raises to subject position via Locative Inversion.

- (29) a. Avery said there would be trouble, and so there was.
 b. Avery said there would be trouble, and *so was there.

Next, in the clause structure of Old English, we can also see some evidence that the *there*-subject occupies the same position as that of a pronoun in the main clause introduced by topic elements.

- (30) a. *topic - Vf - nominal subject*

on twam þingum hæfde God þæs mannes sawle gegodod
 in two things had God the man's soul endowed
 'with two things God had endowed man's soul'

(Hulk and Van Kemenade, 1997: 186)

- b. *topic - pronominal subject -Vf*

be ðæm we magon suiðe swutule oncnawan ðæt
 by that we may very clearly perceive that
 'by that we may perceive that very clearly'

(Hulk and Van Kemenade, 1997: 187)

- c. *topic - there subject - Vf*

on ðæm dagum þær wæron twa cwena
 in these days there were two queens
 'there were two queens in these days'

(Van Kemenade, 1987: 111)

It is certain that the *there*-subject has the properties of a pronoun. As shown in (30), the introduced topic elements invert its nominal subject and finite verb form. However, this process doesn't happen in the clause with the pronominal subject and the *there*-subject. In other words, as in (30b) and (30c), both the pronoun subject *we* and the *there*-subject remain in situ without exchanging their positions with their respective finite verbs. Based on this critical evidence it is certain that the *there*-subject belongs to the category of pronoun. Considering the conditions on the utterance of *there*-constructions, in other words, it is not the *there* as the pro-form of the moved associate NP, but the *there* as a pronoun which contains at least a recognized unit, such as (18a), (18b), (19a), and (19b). On the basis of the

usage and position of the *there*-subject, it can be said that it is an introductory sentential pronoun. In other words, as illustrated previously, the subject *there* is expected to trigger more than one sentence, a presupposition, which seems to allow the pronoun *there* to take the place of the subject as a meaningful item in English.

4. Conclusion

So far, this study has shown the property of the *there*-subject as an information marker, in particular, on the basis of reanalysis of the Definiteness Effect and Predicate Restriction of *there*-construction. As is well-known, the subject *there* has been one of the main topics in the field of linguistics. However, a lot of literature on it has mainly focused on the syntactic property, treating the subject *there* as a meaningless placeholder. As stated in this paper, the subject *there* plays an important role in the syntactic and semantic property of *there*-constructions. This suggests that *there* is a linguistic item and should not be treated as an expletive. This also suggests that *there* implies a certain situation which indicates a propositional content of presupposition. In the course of discussion, it was suggested that the subject *there* is an information marker and presupposes a speaker's recognized units, presuppositions under which a *there*-construction is uttered. They convey a piece of information to a listener, called a presupposition-triggering information marker. In addition, based on the pragmatic and syntactic property, it is suggested that *there* is an introductory sentential pronoun. That is, it is not the *there* as the pro-form of the moved associate NP, but the *there* as a pronoun which contains at least a recognized unit. Consequently, it is important in language research also to capture pragmatic functions, and not just the syntactic and semantic functions of lexical items. The *there*-subject preface utterances that the speaker believes represent information new to the addressee.

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