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**The Study of Existential Clause in Hawthorne's
Scarlet Letter**

**A Paper Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful

((بل هو ايث بينت في صدور الذين أوتوا العلم وما يجحد با بينا الا الظلمون))

صدق الله العلي العظيم

"Rather, the Qur'an is distinct verses [preserved] within the breasts of those who have been given knowledge. And none reject Our verses except the wrongdoers".

سورة العنكبوت الآية 49

Dedication

- To the fountain of patience ,optimism and hope.
 - To each of the following in the presence of God and his messenger my dear mother.
 - To those who have demonstrate to me what is
 - To the big heart my dear father.
- the most beautiful of my brother's life.

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Abstract

This research paper is called The Study of Existential Clause in Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* . There are two types of there existential and locative there so it is difficult to recognize which there is used. This study tackles the main points about existential clause ,its definitions and properties and presenting an analysis of existential clause in Nathaniel Hawthorne novel *The Scarlet Letter* .The study consists of four sections . The first section is an introduction about the subject, section two tackles definitions and the main properties of Existential "There. " Section Three is an analysis of existential clause in Nathaniel Hawthorne novel *The Scarlet Letter* . Section four is a conclusion, which is that the writer uses the existential clause to introduce new information ,that sum up the research paper

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Section One Introduction

An existential clause is a clause that refers to the existence or presence of something, such as "There is a God" and "There are boys in the yard".

The use of such clauses can be considered analogous to existential quantification in predicate logic, which is often expressed with the phrase "There exist(s).

Many languages form existential clauses without any particular marker by simply using forms of the verb *be*, the subject being the noun (phrase) referring to the thing whose existence is asserted. For example, "There are boys in the yard", is literally "On the yard is boys".

1.1 Problem of the Study

In English grammar, an existential sentence is a sentence that asserts the existence or nonexistence of something. For this purpose, English relies on constructions introduced by *There* (known as the "existential *there*"). The verb most often used in existential sentences is a form of *be*, though other verbs (e.g., *exist*, *occur*) may follow the existential *there*.

The problem which is raised here is that

1. What is meant by existential clause?
2. What are the main properties of Existential Clause?
3. How can it be used ?

1.2 Aim of the Study

1. The Study tackles the main points about existential clause, its definitions and properties.
2. Presenting an analysis of existential clause in Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter*.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

It is hypothesized that "there" can be understood in different situations with different interpretations either to be existential "there" or not. It is also hypothesized that writers use existential clause a lot in their writing since it helps them to introduce the new information and develop the theme.

1.4 Procedures of the Study

The steps adopted to fulfill the aims of the study are as follows:

1. Presenting a theoretical part about the definition of existential clause and its properties .
2. Analysis of existential "there" at its syntactic and discoursal levels in English novel *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne.
3. Writing the findings of the Study.

1.5 Value of the Study

This study is valuable for students, teachers, book designers of English.

1.6 Limit of the Study

This study is limited to the existential clause in English language.

Section Two: Literature Review

2.1 What is an Existential Clause

Grammarians differ as to how a "there" sentence should be defined. some of them see those sentences which contain a form of be as having the semantic status of existential sentences. "there" as an existential derived both synchronically and diachronically from an adverbial of place. Existential "there" asserts the existence or non existence of something when the subject has not already been defined. For this purpose English relies on constructions introduced by "there" (known as the existential clause. A clause with existential "there" has the following structure:

There + be + indefinite NP(+place or time position adverbial).

The noun phrase following be is usually indefinite and referred to as the notional subject. (Biber et al , 1999:944-945)

Indefinite noun phrases are the only kind normally used after existential expressions (there is or there are) as in :

There are some grey hairy things at the back of the fridge.

This is exactly what we would expect , that "there is " construction is used to state the existence of something. The noun phrase that comes after (Be) in the existential construction as the "lower subject", to distinguish it from "there" that serves as the subject of the sentence as a whole. For example :

A. There is a fly in my soup.

b. There is a cat on the mat.

Thus, "a flay" and a "cat" are the lower subjects. (Baker, 1989:356)

The noun phrase is often complex for example:

There is something extra and a little heroic about him.

Existential clauses often contain a time or place adverbial because things exist or happen in the context of time and place for example :

There are no trains on Sundays.

2.2 Variation in the Verb Phrase

In fact, most of the existential clauses contain a form of the verb "be", which may be preceded by auxiliaries or semi-models: has been, have been, had been, will be, shall be, will have been, is to be, is supposed to be, used to be. "Be" may also appear in a to infinitive complement of a lexical verb with the force of a hedge: happen to be, appear to be, is said to be, etc. For example:

There used to be a house on the end of the common up at Clarendon road.
There is supposed to be a plot between you and me to get hold of his wealth.

There seem to have been a lot of people who took up painting for a while and then dropped it.

There is said to be a mismatch between the mother tongue and the target language at these points. (Biber et al, 1999:244-245).

Verbs other than be sometimes occur in existential clauses, mainly intransitive verbs denoting existence or occurrence. For example: There seems no likelihood of a settlement.

There came a roar of pure delight as it closed around him and carried him on.

In all such relations there exists a set of mutual obligations in the instrumental and economic fields. (ibid)

2.3 The Main Properties of Existential "There"

Generally, existential "there" can be expressed according to syntactic, semantic, phonological and discoursal properties

2.3.1 Syntactic property.

Syntactically, existential "there" behaves like a grammatical subject, it occurs before the verb in declarative clauses and can be used in question tags for example:

There's still no bead [there], is there? (Freeze 1992:221)

Grammatically, existential sentences contain only those "there" sentences which have a form of the verb (be). According to this opinion, cases which have a lexical verb like "begin", "move", "seem", "come" or "occur" are distinguished from existential "there" sentences. They are known as "there_ presentatives". Existential "there" has a unique syntactic role; "there" is no other word in English which behaves in the same way. It is somehow described as an anticipatory subject.) ibid)

2.3.2 Semantic property

The semantic definition of existential sentences is not derived from the presence of "there" plus one of the verbs (be, begin, move, occur, ..., etc), but from the content of the verb itself. The semantic property of existential sentences as one where the verb expresses the existence of something, or its coming – into- existence. This means

that an existential sentence explicitly refers to semantic property, i.e., to a sentence whose meaning is to describe the (non -) existence of something. (Breivik , 1982:5)

2.3.3 Phonological property

Phonologically, existential "there" is reduced to /ð (r)/ i.e. Unstressed. However, minimal pairs in the verb + there discourse construction were discovered suggesting that stress is contrastive and signals meaning differences. In this construction , a stressed "there" for example (Sit There) refers to a particular space whereas an unstressed "there" for example (sit there) refers to a more subjective type of space. (Diana, 2005:1)

2.3.4 Discourse functional properties

Existential "there" typically manifests most or all of the following functions of discourse. First, it is used to introduce new elements into the discourse. This agrees with the typical occurrence with an indefinite notional subject. Secondly, existential there comes in handy as a device to bring attention to things which are to be done. Thirdly, existential "there" is used to focus on the existence or occurrence of something (including the non_ existence or non-occurrence of something). It is most typically used with indefinite notional subject. The use of existential "there" is in agreement with the information principle. It serves to delay, and prepare the ground for, new information later in the clause. Fourthly, another way of using existential "there" is to develop the text by using it to introduce a series of items. This seems to focus particularly on the fact that there is a sequence of items, rather on each individual item. Fifthly, definite notional subjects should occur in existential "there" constructions. In some of these cases, the effect of the existential "there" is to bring something already known back to mind.(McNally(2005:3)

One of the discourse functions of existential "there" is the intuition that existential "there" serves primarily to introduce a novel referent into the discourse. It also serves not only to introduce novel discourse referents but also to reintroduce or focalize referents that have already been mentioned. (McNally(2005:3)

Section Three

The Analysis of Existential " There" in Scarlet Letter

In this section, texts are chosen from the Scarlet Letter to be analyzed. The choice of this novel of the seventeenth century Puritan New England reflects clearly the use of existential there. We find that the use of the existential " there" is very clear in this novel since it deals with the existence or presence of sin, sham, and guilty of adultery.

In the way of furniture, there is a stove with a voluminous funnel; an old pine desk, with a three-legged stool beside it; two or three wooden bottom chairs, exceedingly decrepit and infirm; and, - not to forget the library,- on some shelves, a score or two of volumes of the Acts of congress, and a bulky Digest of the Revenue laws. (p.39)

This text is taken from the " Custom House " . Hawthorne ascribes there construction by using(there) with the form of the verb (be).In this text, existential 'there' is used to describe the place, the Custom House, its furniture, stove , desk , three legged stool, chairs and library. He wants to develop the text by introducing a series of elements

Text (2)

There would have been something sad, unutterably dreary, in all this, had I not been conscious that it lay at my own option to recall whatever was valuable in the past. It might be true, indeed, that this was a life which could not, with impunity, be lived too long ; else, it might make me permanently other than I had been, without transforming me into any shape which it would be worth my while to take.(p.23)

In this text, the narrator uses existential there which behaves like a grammatical subject and a form of the verb (be) which is preceded by (would have) . It is typically an indefinite noun phrase, (something sad). The narrator remembers, imagines the sadness of his life and notes that upon losing his job as the custom Surveyor, the difficulty of his life is increased. Here, the effort of the existential there is to bring something already known back to mind, rather than asserting that it exists.

Text (3)

There were traces about it of gold embroidery, which, however, was greatly frayed and defaced; so that none, or very little, of the glitter was left. It had been wrought, as was easy to perceive, with wonderful skill of needlework; and the stitch gives evidence of a now forgotten art, not to be recovered even by the process of picking out the threads. This rage of the scarlet cloth,___for time and wear, and a sacrilegious moth, on careful examination, assumed the shape of a Letter. It was the capital letter A. (p. 61)

Hawthorne uses the existential "there" with the form of the verb (be) to present or introduce new element into the discourse when he discovers a scarlet letter "A" on a small piece of cloth along with the set of papers that become the foundation of his novel. This text also presents the scarlet letter "A" which stands for sin, sham and adultery.

Text (4)

There used to be a swarm of these small apparitions, in holiday time; and we called them children of the Lord of Misrule. But how gat such a guest into my hall? (P.132)

The speaker " Governor Bellingham " uses the existential There to show focus of interest, and it is then picked up by later references in the text. He sees pearl dressed lavishly in her scarlet out fit, standing in front of him. She introduces herself and tells them her name " pearl". The point of interest here is the parallelism between pearl, the scarlet letter, and the red rose. Thus pearl is called a " Red Rose" .In this text " there" is used as a grammatical subject with the form of the (be), which is preceded by (used to).

Text (5)

" Indeed hath he " , answered the magistrate, " and hath adduced such arguments, that we will even leave the matter as it now stands; so long , at least, as there shall be no further scandal in the woman. (p.137)

In this text, existential " there" is used with the form of the verb (be) which is preceded by an auxiliary (shall) to express the non –existence or non – occurrence of something. This conversation between Hester and the Governor Bellingham who suggests that it would be better for the child to remove from her mother's care. He indicates also that the Scarlet letter is precisely the reason they want to remove Pearl from her mother's care.

Text(6)

There is no good for him,___ no good for me,___ no good for thee! There is no good for little pearl! There is no path to guide us out of this dismal maze!. (p.191)

The speaker " Hester" here uses existential there in another way to enrich the text. Here, existential there constructions comes in a series. The use of there in this way to focus on the fact that there is a sequence of items, rather than on each individual item. Hester tells Mr. Chillingworth that she plans to reveal his true identity to Mr. Dimmesdale. He is unmoved by this, telling her that they cannot change anything . In fact, it is clear that definite notional subjects occur at all in existential there constructions of this

Section Four : Conclusions

Existential sentence is a sentence which stating that something exists, usually consisting of there, the verb be, and an indefinite noun phrase. Existential "there" is a formal device used together with an intransitive verb to predicate the existence of something .Existential "there" sentence conveys what we want to say. Existential clauses simply form by using forms of the verb be and the subject being the noun (phrase) referring to the thing whose existence is asserted. Existential "there" enriches literary texts by developing the theme ,like the novel of The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne . The writer uses the existential clause to introduce new information.

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