Information Structure of *It*-clefts

Soon-Young Park
(Seoul National University)

Park Soon-Young. 2003. Information Structure of *It*-clefts. *SNU Working Papers in English Language and Linguistics 2.* 41-60. It has been generally accepted that *it*-clefts serve to cleave information into focus and presupposition, which is based on the assumption that new information is focused and old information or shared knowledge is presupposed. However, a number of examples show that new information can also be presupposed in *it*-clefts. It means that approaches based on the distinction between focus and presupposition are too restricted to explain information packaging of *it*-clefts and that the shared knowledge view of presupposition needs to be reconsidered. In this papers, I depart from the shared knowledge view of presupposition and instead resort to Delin (1995) and Abbott (2000) who claim that what is presupposed in *it*-clefts is a nonasserted proposition and try to explain information packaging of *it*-clefts in terms of the distinction between assertion and nonassertion. Furthermore, I will show that nonassertion view of presupposition can explain the three discourse functions of *it*-clefts, i.e., specification, thematization, and stativization **(Seoul National University)**

1. Introduction

It-clefts have been traditionally considered one of the strategies to reflect information cleaving and to mark focus or contrast. In (1a), for instance, *John* is in the focus and has the contrastive interpretation. Therefore, (1a) and (1b) have been traditionally considered to convey the equivalent information.

(1) a. It is John who left.
    b. JOHN left.

The simplistic observation above easily leads us to consider *it*-clefts as structures consisting of "focus, which represents new information and is heavily stressed and contrastive and a *wh/that* clause which represents presupposed or old information (Declerck 1984:254)." Such focus-presupposition approach can explain the normal type of *it*-clefts like (2),

(2) It was JOHN who ate the beans.

In (2), *it*-clefts presupposes the old information 'someone ate the beans' and brings into focus JOHN from 'someone was John'. However, we can observe that (2) is not the only type of *it*-clefts. Consider the following example, in which presupposition in cleft clause, however, cannot be considered necessarily to convey old or given information.

(3) Is it John who writes POETRY? (Chomsky 1971:70)

Rather, it can be assumed that it is "non-shared" or "unfamiliar" information.

    Prince (1978) argues against the traditional account of *it*-clefts and divides *it*-clefts into two categories. She terms the first category "Stressed--Focus *it*-clefts, which means only focus has strong stress and the focus represents new,

often contrastive information (Prince 1978:896)." The examples in (1) and (2) above exemplify such simplest cases. However, the second category shows different (or contrary) information structure, as illustrated in (4).

(4) It was just about 50 years ago that Henry Ford gave us the   weekend. (Prince 1978:898)

In (4), "not only is the hearer not expected to be thinking about the information in *that*-clause, but the hearer is not expected even to know it (Prince 1978:878)." This second type of *it*-clefts is termed "Informative -Presupposition (hereafter IP) *it*-clefts." It is not plausible to insist that we should have already known the fact that Henry Ford gave us the weekend even before we came across this sentence. In a word, *that*-clause in *it*-clefts can convey information considered to be "new" or "informative" by the reader or the hearer.

As shown above, traditional focus-presupposition approaches fail to explain information packaging of *it*-clefts. In fact, a number of examples show that new information can also be presupposed in *it*-clefts. It means that the shared knowledge view of presupposition needs to be reconsidered. In this thesis, I resort to Delin (1995) and Abbott (2000) who claim that nonasserted propositions are presupposed and try to clarify *it*-clefts in terms of the distinction between assertion and nonassertion. At the same time, I will try to explain their three discourse functions, i.e., specification, thematization, and stativization in terms of assertion and nonassertion.

2. Previous Approaches to Presupposition

It is commonly assumed that *it*-clefts are presuppositional constructions and their information structure is characterized by properties of presupposition. We can say that *it*-clefts (5a) and (5b) presuppose (5c).

(5) a. It was his keys that John lost.
　　b. It wasn't his keys that John lost.
　　c. John lost something. (Prince 1978:883)

As mentioned above, however, an analysis based on the distinction between focus and presupposition is too restricted to explain *it*-clefts. Therefore, we will reconsider the notion of presupposition and provide an alternative view of *it*-clefts.

2.1. Presupposition as shared knowledge

A variety of pragmatic theories on presupposition have been offered. Among them, Stanlaker's (1974) notion of 'Pragmatic presupposition'
was the most influential one. According to him, a presupposed proposition is related to the "background information, shared knowledge, or the common ground." However, it should be noted that this 'common ground' view of presupposition often led to the misunderstanding of information structure. In many cases, the distinction between assertion and presupposition fairly maps directly onto the "distinction between new

information and old information (Abbott 2000:1420)." As a
result, frequent misconception on the information structure of
an utterance is processed in the following way: 'New
information is asserted and old/ given information is
presupposed.'

Lambrecht's definition of presupposition and assertion ,
for instance, is based on the direct mapping of presupposition
to old information. That is, presupposition is "old information"
contained in, or evoked by a sentence and assertion is "new
information" expressed or conveyed by a sentence (Lambrecht
1994:52). As discussed before, many of presupposed parts of
it-clefts seem to convey wholly or partly new information.
Thus, Lambrecht tries to extend his concept of presupposition
to cover the cases in which new information is presupposed.
First, he refers to the pragmatic presupposition as knowledge
presupposition (K-presupposition). To the K-presupposition,
he adds two kinds of speaker assumption as follows:

(6) Consciousness presupposition:
     An entity or proposition is consciousness-presupposed
          C-presupposed) if the speaker assumes that its
mental   representation has been activated in the
interlocuters' short   term memory at the time of the
utterance. (Lambrecht 2001:475)
     Topicality presupposition:
     An entity or proposition is topically presupposed
          T-presupposed) if at utterance time the speaker
assumes that   the hearer considers it a center of current
interest and hence

a potential locus of predication. A topical denotatum is by definition a relatively predictable element in a proposition.

(Ｌａｍｂｒｅｃｈｔ 2001:476)

He tries to explain the presuppositions of *wh*-cleft example in (7a) as shown in (7b).

(7) a. A: What do you need?
    B: What I need is a sheet of paper and a pencil.

(Ｌａｍｂｒｅｃｈｔ 2001:474)

  b. Presuppositions of (7)a
    K-Presupposition: 'speaker needs x'
    C-presupposition: 'the K-presupposed proposition has
                      been activated'
   T-presupposition: 'the K-presupposed proposition is of
                      current   interest'   (Lambrecht 2001:476)

   In fact, Lambrecht seems to extend his notion of presupposition to support the claim that all *it*-clefts are focus-presupposition structures. However,   Lambrecht's notion of presupposition has some problems. First, his notions of presupposition are self-contradictory. His original claim was based on the idea that presupposition is shared (mutual) knowledge or old information. T presupposition, however, seems to convey wholly or partly new information. They are

not likely to be 'shared knowledge' at all. He contradicted his own idea by extending the notion of presupposition. Therefore, he cannot maintain mapping of presupposition to old information any more. Second, C-presupposition and T- presupposition have quite different properties from that of K-presupposition. They are not dependent upon or affected by whether or not the speaker can assume that the hearer already knows or has access to the information. Therefore we must distinguish K-presupposition from C-presupposition and T-presupposition. Third, his extended notion of presupposition itself shows that K- presupposition (Shared knowledge) is not prerequisite for presupposition. As Lambrecht himself pointed out in the explanation of (7), A does not have to assume that B needs something. Moreover, other factors like activation or discourse topic are more important requirement for felicitous utterance.

2.2. Presupposition as non-shared knowledge

In the last section, we outlined Lambrecht's view of presupposition and pointed out the problems of his analysis. In this chapter, we will discuss two views, whose main claim is that the function of presupposition is not to convey shared knowledge.

2.2.1. Presupposition as a speaker's requirement

Delin focuses on Prince's (1978) observation of IP *it*-clefts "which appear to presuppose information that is at least

partially new to the hearer, that is information that is not currently shared knowledge (Delin 1995:104)." She argues that we cannot maintain that the function of cleft presuppositions is to specify current shared knowledge since presupposing non-shared information is not deviant or strange. Delin (1995) suggests that presupposition and indicators of shared knowledge should be understood to have separate functions, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Utterance	Shared knowledge	New information	Presupposed	Asserted
JOHN left	left(x)	x=**j**	−	left(j)
John LEFT	P(j)	P=**leave**	−	left(j)
It was JOHN who left	left(x)	x=**j**	left(x)	x=j
It was John who LEFT	P(j)	P=**leave**	left(x)	x=j
It was JOHN who LEFT	P(x)	P=leave, x=j	left(x)	x=j

(Delin 1995:100, my emphasis added)

Delin's distinction between shared knowledge and presupposition reflects the separation of discourse functions between them. She suggests that "indicators of shared knowledge, including prosody, are related with the speaker's

assumptions about the state of the hearer's knowledge and attention (Delin 1995:100)." On the other hand, presuppositions generated on the basis of syntactic form is considered to indicate "a speaker's requirement for what should be included within the hearer's discourse model (Delin 1995:97)." As Delin's examples illustrate, presupposed information can stand in more or less any relationship with the preceding discourse or the discourse situation. That is, a speaker's use of presuppositions via *it*-clefts is not directly related with "whether the hearer or reader is assumed by the speaker to be already aware of the presupposed proposition, or currently think about, or able to infer it (Delin 1995:115)." Delin suggests that "one function of *it*-clefts is to mark information as intended to be treated in a certain way (1995:115)" However, she does not discuss the relationship between *it*-clefts and their certain effects in detail. Thus, we will deal with Abbott's account of presupposition, which seems to explain the "certain effect" of *it*-clefts.

2.2.2. Presupposition as nonassertion

Abbott argues against the general assumption that the "assertion-presupposition distinction maps fairly directly onto the distinction between new and old information (2000:1419)." She points out that such assumption leads us to conclude easily that "all new information must be asserted and anything that is not asserted is old or familiar, or at least being treated as such (2001:1422)."

Abbott reviews five constructions which trigger presupposition but are not part of the common ground, i.e., Definite descriptions, IP *it*-clefts, Reverse *wh*-clefts, Embedded announcements and Non-restrictive clauses and illustrates the failure of presupposition to be part of shared knowledge. Abbott attempts to provide answers for the following questions: If presupposition is not reflection of shared knowledge, or common ground, then why does a speaker use the presuppositional constructions? Her solution derives from the multipropositionality of information in Givon's term (Givon 1979). That is, almost any information to be expressed will involve many atomic propositions and there is "a tendency to limit assertion to one atomic proposition per rooted sentence (Abbott 2000:1419)."

Her claim is based on a simplistic idea that an ideal assertion is one atomic proposition. Moreover, she indicates that "there is some kind of a limit on how much can be asserted in an utterance (Abbott 2000:1431)." Lambrecht's example in (8) seems to reflect such tendency to limit assertion to one atomic proposition.

(8) I hope we will meet again for more than five minutes.
   (Lambrecht 1994:237)

Lambrecht notes that the utterance of (8) with a focal stress on either *minutes* or *again* produces an unintended interpretation, and the stress on both of them would be odd. In order to express his hope that 'they will meet again and for

more than five minutes,' clearly, the speaker is required to cleave (8) into two parts as in (9).

(9) I hope we will meet AGAIN and I hope it'll be for more than five MINUTES. (Lambrecht 1994:238)

In the same vein, Abbott proposes that a speaker will presuppose (i.e., nonassert) anything else except an asserted proposition. According to her suggestion, presupposed new information suggests that they do not have to be asserted. For example, in (10), non-restrictive relative presupposes new information, which is not asserted.

(10) Kim Sneadworthy, whom I hereby appoint as my successor, is known to you all as a valued colleague. (Abbott 2000:1433)

 In (10), the main point of the utterance is "Kim Sneadworthy, is known to you all as a valued colleague. And "I hereby appoint as my successor" is ancillary to this utterance.

Abbott's nonassertion view of presupposition seems to provide a clue for explaining the function of *it*-clefts presupposition. Still, it seems that she cannot make clear what kind of factors affect which information is asserted Therefore, we will explain the discourse functions in terms of the distinction between assertion and nonassertion and it will shed light on information structure of *it*-clefts.

3. The Proposal
3.1. *It*-clefts in terms of assertion and nonassertion

Abbott's nonassertion view of presupposition seems to solve some problems presented by the focus-presupposition analysis of *it*-clefts. Abbott, however, does not provide a detailed discussion of *it*-clefts itself and the properties that differentiate *it*-clefts from other presuppositional constructions. In this section, I will show which element is asserted and which is not in *it*-clefts specifically. Table 2 below demonstrates that information packaging of *it*-clefts can be analyzed in terms of assertion and nonassertion, and the discourse functions of *it*-clefts show what is actually asserted and nonasserted.

Table 2

Information Packaging Discourse Functions	assertion	nonassertion
specification	specifier	specified
thematization	theme	rheme
stativization	CS (Created State)	OE (Original Eventuality)

An analysis based on focus-presupposition could not explain

these functions effectively. However, in terms of the distinction between assertion and nonassertion, these functions can be successfully explained.

3.2. Discourse functions of *it*-cleft
3.1.1. Specification (Identification)

As well known in linguistic research, copula performs two types of function. They are called "predicational vs. identificational (Akmajian 1970)." 'Predicational' means that the sentence is serving more to assign a property to some individual, as Huddleston's example below shows.

(11) James Bacharach was a thorough rogue. (Huddlestone 1984)

On the contrary, the identificational function is "identifying the variable by specifying the value." The variable and the value can be termed the specified and the specifier, respectively. Declerck (1984) argues that the function of the following examples are identificational, or specificational, not predicational.

(12) The bank robber is John Thomas.

In (12), the specifier 'John Thomas' is identifying the variable (the one who is) 'the bank robber'. The latter function has been central to the analysis of *it*-clefts. Declerck points out that

it-clefts belongs to a type of sentence that has been variously called 'specificational', or 'identificational' (Declerck 1984:252). The following example demonstrates the typical use of *it*-clefts.

(13) a. Who broke that window?
     b. It was John who did it.

An *it*-cleft in (13b) is identificational in that 'was' is serving to identify who did it, and which is impossible in the noncanonical version. As will be discussed later, problems of contrastiveness or exhaustiveness are related to the specificational property of *it*-clefts.
Comparing the predicational and specificational sentence, we can observe the role of specification in information packaging of *it*-clefts.

(14) a. John has murdered Fred.
     b. John is the murderer of Fred.
     c. The murderer of Fred is John.
     d. It is John who murdered Fred. (Declerck 1984:269)

(14a) and (14b) can be either specificationally or predicationally interpreted. Other factors such as prosody determine which interpretation is selected. However, (14c) and (14d) are interpreted only identificationally.
The above observation leads to the question as follows: Why

does a speaker prefer to use specificational sentence? First, it should be noted that predicational sentences convey only single, monopropositional information. However, specificational sentences enable a speaker to convey information in a more complex way. When we hear (14c) and (14d), for example, we can get two kinds of information. i.e, " Someone murdered Fred." and " Someone=John"

That is, specification via presupposition makes possible the function of information cleaving. Through *it*-clefts, the variable (the specified) is nonasserted (i.e. presupposed) and specification of the value (the specifier) is asserted. The most stressed point here is that in these examples, "Someone murdered Fred" need not be old information or shared knowledge. Information cleaving was not to mark distinction between focus and presupposition, but to cleave information into assertion (the value) and nonassertion (the variable). Note that (14c) and (14d) have overlapped with functional similarities in that they are serving to cleave the information into assertion and nonassertion. Then what factors motivate a speaker to use cleft sentence rather than noncleft ones? I suggest that contrastiveness and exhaustiveness can be the two main factors for preference for *it*-clefts. Of course, the features of contrastiveness and exhaustiveness derive from the combination of the assertion part and non-assertion parts of *it*-clefts. For instance, (14d) can have two kinds of implications, which are impossible in the noncleft specificational sentence (14c).

(15) a. Not Mary but John murdered Fred.
    b. Only John murdered Fred.

(15a) and (15b) demonstrate the contrastive and exhaustive interpretation of *it*-clefts respectively.
Contrastiveness has been generally considered the most typical function of *it*-clefts. However, we do not have clear pictures of contrastive function of *it*-clefts. This is partly because earlier accounts of focus-presupposition assumed that focus was closely related with contrast. Instead, I argue that contrast itself can be discussed independently. Moreover, I argue that *it*-clefts derive the contrastive function from their information structure, i,e., assertion (the value) and nonassertion (the variable). The most important point here is that the variable needs not be old information or shared knowledge, which have been considered to be essential to the contrasting function in *it*-clefts. I suggest that the combination of presupposed (old information) variable and new value does not result in contrast. Rather, both the order of value and variable and the distinction between assertion and nonassertion through *it*-clefts are essential to the contrastiveness of it-clefts. To support this suggestion, I will give some examples.

    In (16), it is the speaker's role to infer what is in contrast relation with 'an outside meter' from implication.

(16) I've been bit once already by a German shepherd. It was
    really scary. **It was an outside meter the woman had**. I
was   reading the gas meter and was walking back out....

　　(Weinert and Miller 1996:186)

The use of an *it*-cleft adds the contrastive meaning to the cleft
constituent "an outside meter". That is, the sentence means
that if it had been an inside meter he would not have been bit
by the dog in the outside. Declefted version), however, does
not have such implication. According to Weinert and Miller
(1996), (16) is considered to support the claim that when the
cleft clause carries new information, the specificational aspect
of clefts becomes considerably weakened. However, I point out
that when new information is presupposed (nonasserted), there
still remains the specificational property. In addition, the
implication of contrast becomes much stronger. One more point
stressed here is that contrastiveness is not a common property
of *it*-clefts. A careful observation shows that a specified value
assigned to the variable makes a contrastive relationship with
all the other candidate values which were not chosen. Going
back to (14), suppose that the murderer of Fred can be John
and Mary. To the question "Who murdered Fred?", the speaker
answers "It is John who murdered Fred.", which conveys an
implication that not Mary." If there are more suspects than one
hundred, however, the same sentence cannot imply a strong
contrastive meaning. In sum, contrastiveness is a kind of
implication, which does not operate automatically.
In the previous analyses, like contrastiveness, exhaustiveness
has also been discussed in relation with the notion of focus.
For example, the cleft sentence 'It was John who came to the
talk' necessarily means 'John and only John came to the talk

(Weinert and Miller 1996)." It is clear that the feature of exhaustiveness also derives from the specificational function of *it*-clefts. In *it*-clefts, the specificational sentence, the value assigned to the variable will be a set which contains all the elements satisfying the variable. Declerck (1984) points out that from an *it*-cleft (17) we can get implication (18).

(17) It was John and Bill who ran away.
(18) Only John and Bill ran away. No more people ran away.
     (Declerck 1984:271)

This implication is called Exhaustiveness, Exclusiveness or Maximality. (Weinert and Miller 1996) However, a more careful observation shows that the implication of exhaustiveness is sometimes cancelled. The following example in (19) demonstrates cancellation of exhaustiveness.

(19) It was not only John and Bill that ran away. At least three other   boys ran away as well. (Declerck 1984:272)

Similarly, such cancellation of implicature occurs in the context in which *also*-phrase is acceptable.

(20) A: Bill danced with Mary.
    B: No, it was Sam that danced with Mary.
    C: It was also John that danced with her. (Katalin 1998:252)

B uses an *it*-cleft to identify Sam as the member of the set of the boys who danced with Mary. In addition, C's use of *it*-cleft is serving to identify John as an additional member of boys and at the same time excluding the rest of the boys.

In conclusion, implication of contrastiveness and exhaustiveness motivates the use of *it*-clefts to some extent. However, we cannot claim that the properties can apply *to it*-clefts in every context.

3.2.2. Thematization

Theme is understood here, following Halliday (1967, 1985, etc.), as "the first constituent in a clause, the element which serves as the point of departure of the message" and the remainder of the sentence, which develops the theme, is known as rheme. It should be noted that *it*-clefts enable the thematization of elements which would not be theme in unclefted alternatives. In general, theme in *it*-clefts has been considered as the focused element. Collins (1991) points out that there is a widespread misconception that the highlightened elements of clefts always carry focus. However, my discussion rules out the direct relation between theme and focus. Rather, I suggest that thematized elements do not necessarily serve the focusing function. Theme may get the "salience" merely by being in the first position in the clause, but it does not necessarily mean that theme is focused. Rather, thematization, which cleaves the sentence into theme and rheme, contributes to the coherence of thematic organization. In addition,

thematization will be reconsidered in terms of assertion and nonassertion.

 Declerck (1984) draws attention to pragmatic factors which may cause speakers to prefer particular constructions (e.g. cleft and noncleft sentence) in a certain context. In general, when a series of sentence constitute the discourse, the same theme tends to be held constant. In this respect, Halliday's thematic structure is related with a question of whether a particular part of the sentence is processed as 'theme' and 'rheme'. Particularly, "theme" is the "communicative point of departure of the clause and is therefore put in initial position (1967)." We will observe that elements that continue the thematic line of the preceding discourse are preferred to be placed in the initial position in a cleft. In Halliday's terms, this simply means that an element that is already thematic in the preceding context will preferably also be the theme of the following specificational sentence (i.e. *it*-cleft). This is completely compatible with the general assumption that "in a stretch of discourse, the same theme tends to be held constant (Bates 1976:169)."

Declerck (1984)'s examples below demonstrate that the primary topic of the clause preceding the *it*-clefts is also processed as the first element of the cleft. In the following example, for instance, 'to that evidence' is asserted through *it*-clefts,

(21) However, it turns out that there is rather interesting
      independent evidence for this rule, and it is to that

evidence   that we must now turn. (Declerck 1984:263)

From the above observation, we can derive a principle determining the selection of construction: an NP will preferably be put at the beginning of a clause if it continues the primary topic of the preceding clause (Declerck 1984:275).

In a word, the principle of theme continuity plays an important role in the choice of construction and *it*-clefts serve to assert theme and it contributes to the thematic structure. In particular, the use of *it*-clefts serves to maintain the coherence in the discourse. Following examples demonstrate that *it*-clefts are not focus markers but devices for organizing thematic structure.

(22) The boat was rolling heavily and it was with the greatest difficulty that we managed to keep our foothold.
(23) I know that the nomination is a great honor. It is with great   pride that I accept it.
(24) The first brigade was quickly on the spot but it was with the greatest difficulty that they managed to put out the fire.
     (Declerck 1984:276)

In (22)-(24), cleft constituents do not seem to be focal elements. Rather, the use of cleft marks the theme and rheme part. The use of *it*-clefts derives from the speaker's motivation to construct a stretch of discourse in which the sentences logically link up with the preceding ones. That is, *it*-cleft

allows "with difficulty/pride" to link up with the previous links in the logical line. For this reason, the speaker will preferably process it as the first element of the second part of the sentence. As pointed out above, theme does not necessarily convey new information or focused elements. Rather, thematization via *it*-clefts illustrates assertion of thematic element, which is one of the properties of *it*-clefts information packaging.

Declerck claims that the account of *it*-clefts can explain the difference in acceptability between (25B).

(25) A: But why are you so interested in Paris?
     B: (a) Paris is the place where I met my wife.
        (b) ?? The place where I met my wife is Paris.
        (c) Paris is where I met my wife.
        (d) ?? Where I met my wife is Paris.
        (e) It is in Paris that I met my wife. (Declerck 1984:277)

In sum, one of the factors determining the speaker's choice of a particular cleft or noncleft construction consists in a tendency to continue the thematic line of a stretch of discourse by processing the most continuous topic at the beginning of the clause.

3.2.3. Stativization

In the previous approach to *it*-clefts, the copular 'be' has

been considered to have no semantic meaning. However, Delin and Oberlander (1995) propose an interesting notion, state-making function of 'be'. That is, the presence of copula and the resulting stative aspect of the construction have important semantic and pragmatic effects and state-making through *it*-clefts plays an important role in constructing temporal structure of a narrative.   They emphasize the fact that *it*-clefts serve to "subordinate this content to the main state description (1995:411)." *It*-clefts can cleave an existing eventuality description in two, presenting the state description introduced by the copula as the main eventuality of the sentence. Cleaving into main and secondary eventuality corresponds to my assumption that *it*-clefts make assertion-nonassertion cleaving possible. That is, CS is asserted and OE is nonasserted.

Examples in (26) and (27) illustrate the cleaving into main and secondary eventuality.

(26) a. I stirred the yolk up with the hash.

b. The fries were golden-brown.

(27) a. It was the yolk that I stirred up with the hash.

b. It was the fries that were golden-brown.

(Delin   and   Oberlander 1995:476)

Noncleft sentences in (26a) and (26b) denote event and state respectively. Via clefting, (27a) denotes state and event, and (27b) denotes two states. From the above observation, we can

find that *it*-clefts do not simply convert an event into a state but create a new state. Delin and Oberlander refer to the new state as the Created State (hereafter CS) to distinguish it from the Original Eventuality(hereafter OE). In the next section, we will discuss the effect such CS in *it*-clefts has on the sentence. Following discourse illustrate the use of *it*-clefts in terms of the temporal development of the discourse.

(28) 1. Mr. Butler, the Home Secretary, decided to meet the challenge of the "Ban-the-Bomb" demonstrators head-on.
    2. Police leave was cancelled.
    3. and secret plans were prepared.
    4. It was Mr. Butler who authorized action which ended in   32 members of the Committee of 100 being imprisoned.
    5. The committee's president and his wife were each jailed   for a week. (Delin and Oberlander 1995:488)

The effect of clefting is to cause the "background" information about the authorization of action to be interpreted as occurring prior to the events introduced in 1-3, i.e., the decision, the cancellation of leave, and the preparation of secret plans. Noncleft version of the same sentence, however, does not have the same temporal interpretation. Actually, we can see that the temporally regressive effect of *it*-clefts is removed and "Mr. Butler's authorized action" is interpreted as occurring in simple temporal progression from the "cancellation of police leave", or after the events introduced in 1-3.   We can assume that

the temporal regression effect derives from the cleaving of eventuality into CS and OE. However, CS is not interpreted as occurring simply at the established reference time in the previous discourse. Also, we should note the role of OE. Actually, OE can have "subsidiary or secondary reference point". In this respect, we can say that *it*-clefts are similar to other stative devices in that their main eventuality, a state, overlaps with an established reference time. That is, like other stative devices, *it*-clefts do not update reference time. *It*-clefts, however, serve additional function in the temporal structure. To prove this assumption, we go back to the temporal regression effect of *it*-cleft in (28). First, it should be noted that *it*-clefts serve to cleave one event into two eventualities, the OE (Someone authorized action) and the CS (Mr. Butler was that authorizer). We have one event and two states and the reference time is R1, just after the decision event. OE forms its own subsidiary reference time R2 since it is a simple event. On the other hand, CS, a state, contains OE and R2. Consequently, they do not update the main reference time. Here, it seems clear that Mr. Butler's being the authorizer must have been initiated by an authorization event. As a result, OE has occurred before R1; that is, the authorization precedes the decision. For this reason, *it*-clefts can have an effect on the temporal regression.

In the same vein, *it*-cleft in (30) has a different function from that of non-cleft (29),

(29) Victoria turned over the body. She knew the killer's

identity.

(30) Victoria turned over the body. It was she who knew the
   killer's name.

(29) is usually interpreted in terms of cause and effect. We
infer from this sentence that Victoria came to know the killer's
identity on account of turning over the body. The use of
it-clefts creates extra state without changing the stative
aspect. In both of cases (29) and (30), we first have reference
time R1 after processing 'Victoria turned over the body.'
However, the use of *it*-clefts in (30) results in somewhat
different coherence relations. In (30), the second eventuality
overlaps R1 and CS also overlaps with R1. Thus, OE occurs
at its own subsidiary reference time R2, which is contained in
CS. As a result, OE is considered to precede R1 and it cannot
maintain the same cause and effect relation. For this reason,
in (30), it no longer seems that Victoria knew the killer's
identity because she just turned over the body. In sum, the
stativization of *it*-clefts serves to cleave the single eventuality
into two and the cleaving results in the change in the temporal
structures and the cause and cause-effect relationship in the
discourse.

4. Conclusion

So far, we have attempted to explain information structure of
it-clefts and discourse functions focusing on information
packaging in terms of assertion and nonassertion. In this paper,

we reconsidered the shared knowledge view of presupposition and provided an alternative account of *it*-clefts. As an alternative, I resorted to nonassertion view of presupposition and tried to explain the discourse functions of *it*-clefts in terms of assertion and nonassertion. I dealt with three functions of *it*-clefts, that is, specification, thematization, and stativization. In conclusion, the nonassertion view of presupposition can analyze the information structure of *it*-clefts properly and explain three discourse functions of *it*-clefts more precisely.

References

Abbott, Barbara (2000). Presuppositions as nonassertions. *Journal of Pragmatics* 32, 1419-1437.

Collins, Peter C. (1991). Pseudocleft and cleft constructions: a thematic and informational interpretation. *Linguistics* 29, 481-519.

Declerck, Renatt (1984). The Pragmatics of it-cleft and wh-clefts. *Lingua* 64, 251-289

Delin, Judy (1992). Properties of *it*-cleft presupposition. *Journal of Semantics* 9, 179-196.

Delin, Judy (1995). Presupposition and shared knowledge in *it*-clefts. *Language and Cognitive Processes* 10-2, 97-120.

Delin, Judy and Oberlander, Jon (1995). Syntactic constraints on discourse structure: the case of *it*-clefts. *Linguistics* 33, 465-500.

Dowty, David R. (1986). The effects of aspectual class on the temporal structure of discourse: semantics or pragmatics? *Linguistics and Philosophy* 9, 37-61.

Lambrecht, Knud, (1994). *Information structure and sentence form. Topic, focus, and the mental representations of discourse referents.* Cambridge University Press.

Lambrecht, Knud, (2001). A framework for the analysis of cleft constructions. *Linguistics* 39-3, 463-516.

Prince, Ellen F. (1978). A comparison of *wh*-clefts and *It*-clefts in

Discourse.   *Language* 54, 883-906.

Vallduvi, Enric and Elizabet Engdahl, (1996). The linguistic realization of
    information packaging. *Linguistics* 34, 459-519.

Weinert, Regina and Miller, Jim. (1996). Cleft constructions in spoken
    language.   *Journal of Pragmatics* 25, 173-206.

Soon-young Park
irene88@hanmail.net