



Forum: Grammar i'¼ æ-¸æ³•i'¼%o

Topic: There is/There are

Subject: Re: There is/There are

Posted by: Elinor

Posted on: 2007/8/22 21:14:12

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Elinor: tim about "there is and there are" the answers should be singular? according to the rules

Tim: those rules do not really apply in daily lives

Elinor: only in tests??

Tim: it depends on the speaker's focal point

Tim: u can say so

Elinor: they could be singular or plural

Tim: yep

Elinor: what is the speaker's focal point?

Tim: if the speaker used the singular, that means the items are treated separately

Tim: if the plural form is used, all the items are counted at the same time

Elinor: i got it

Tim: or u can say, when the singular is used, the speaker might not have a total idea of what is going to be said

Tim: the person says and counts it at the same time

Elinor: i see

Elinor: if it is a test, which is the best answer to chose?

Tim: depends on what kind of test it is

Elinor: formal one

Tim: if it's really formal, it shouldn't test this kind

Tim: traditionally, only plural forms should be used for questions 1 and 2

Tim: using singular forms is a recent development

Tim: and somehow some people think this usage is the correct one

Tim: the use of singular shows the speaker is not too clear-minded indeed

Elinor: i see

Elinor: maybe the speaker is counting

Tim: u can say so

Tim: u can even see "there's many...." in daily conversation

Tim: <http://www.crn.com/it-channel/188701715>

Tim: u can see even from the topic of that article

Elinor: i can see that, thanks

Elinor: tim, this one: 3. There ____ only one or two chaps there.

Elinor: were

Tim: using the plural means the speaker treated the two items as a whole

Tim: but singular is more proper in this case

Tim: http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/grammar/archive/thereis_are.html

Tim: Note that in informal speech, we often use there is with plural nouns:

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There's some people coming in the front gate.

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There's some biscuits in the tin in the pantry.

Elinor: tim i got it

Elinor: thanks

Tim: if those grammar writers want to admit the use of "there is a..., a....", they should also mention this use

Tim: this is a good one on there is/are

Tim: <http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2002-02/a-2002-02-06-10-1.cfm>