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Expletive *there* Structures: A Minimalist Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Expletive structures can be recognized by the presence of there at the beginning of the sentence. Previous studies claim that there is not present through merge operations at the numeration level, but it enters into the syntax structure at the interface level of the Logical Form through Expletive Insertion Rules (EIR). There is a claim that there is no subject-to-subject movement in the expletive structure because there is generated directly to the subject position [Spec,TP]. Therefore, this study aims to re-evaluate this view and present an analysis based on morphosyntactic feature research. The data used in this study was taken from a corpus of three selected online novels based on the highest number of readers. The data type selected is the expletive construction of there only. The selected data is analyzed through the Minimalist Program (Chomsky, 2015). Through the corpus, this study found two expletive structures that are rarely discussed, namely BE-post-Expl and V-post-Expl. In vP Shell analysis, this study found that there is actually generated at the [Spec,vP] position due to the feature checking requirements [uExpl] brought by the small v node. However, subject-to-subject movement occurs when there moves to the subject position [Spec,TP] due to the need to check the feature [uExpl] assumed to be brought by the Tense. This proves that there is not generated at the Logical Form interface level, but rather there is a merge operation at the numeration level in the computational system. Thus, this study contributes to the understanding of the expletive structure based on morphosyntactic feature research.

Keywords: expletive; there; morphosyntactic features; subject raising; vP shell

INTRODUCTION

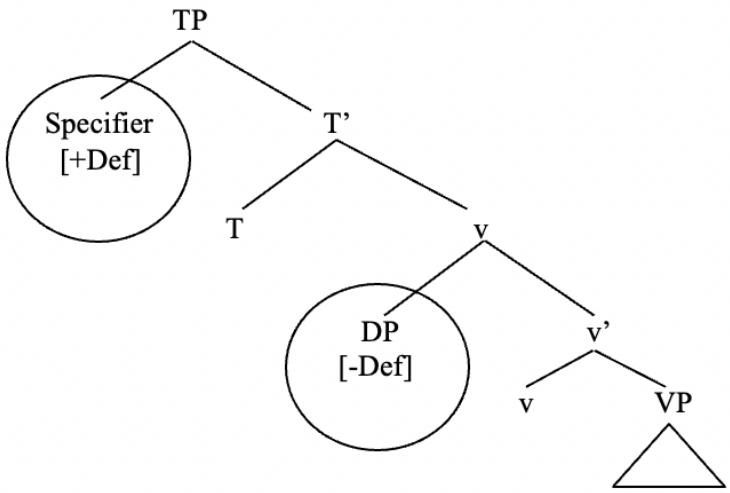
Typically, a canonical declarative sentence structure is SVO, which means the Determiner Phrase (DP) occupies the position of spesifier in tense phrase [Spec,TP] as the subject of the sentence. However, not all declarative constructions begin with a DP at the beginning of the sentence. This is because there are structures that begin with other grammatical constituents. For example, in existential sentences, weather sentences, or feeling sentences, all of these sentences begin with *there* or *it*. In this context, *there* and *it* are known as expletive (Expl). Examples are provided in (1a) to (1f).

(1) a. **There**'s a white cat in the garden. (Cruschina, 2012 p.81)
b. **There**'s a child laughing in the hallway. (Deal, 2009 p.15)
c. **There** are black swans in Australia. (Cruz, 2018 p.79)
d. **It**'s raining. (Carnie, 2006 p.172)
e. **It'**s a pity that she can't come. (Radford, 2009 p.290)
f. **It** was horrified to solve this problem alone. (Zimmerling, 2009 p.5)

Sentences (1a) to (1f) show that the initial position of the sentence is filled by the *there* or *it*, which is a position that is typically filled by the constituent DP as the subject of the sentence. According to Crystal (2008 p.179) and Matthews (2007 p.132), the term expletive is a Latin term meaning *'to fill up'*. This is because Expl in (1) occupies the canonical position of the subject of the sentence that is empty in the phrase structure. Therefore, the expletive structure is stated by McNally (2016) as an non-canonical structure.

The presence of DP in (1a) to (1c) is post-Expl, because it appears after the Expl. However, it is not denied that there are discussions among scholars regarding this post-Expl DP. For example, Nomoto (2006), Deal (2009), McNally (2016), and Svenonius (2002) claim that the post-Expl DP occupying the position [Spes,vP] can function as a syntactic subject that is the focus of the sentence. This is defined by previous scholars as a *pivot* subject. However, Zawawi et al. (2022) claim that DP that appears post-Expl cannot function as the subject of the sentence. This is because the post-Expl DP appears as an indefinite. The definite constraint [+Def] prevents the post-Expl DP from occupying the position [Spec,TP] in the syntax structure. This is presented in (2).

(2)



(Zawawi et al., 2022 p.125)

The study by Zawawi et al. (2022) in (2) proves that there is a default definite feature constraint on the position [Spec,TP] that prevents any form of indefinite constituent from occupying it. According to Zawawi et al. (2022) and Zawawi and Sultan (2023), any constituent that does not occupy the position [Spec,TP] cannot be considered a subject. Therefore, Zawawi et al. (2022) has rejected previous scholars' analysis of the *pivot* subject DP that was claimed to function as the subject of the expletive sentence. Thus, in the expletive structure, the empty position [Spec,TP] is filled by the Exp *there* or *it* to comply with EPP (Biberauer, 2010; Chang &

Mikkelsen, 2005; Håkansson, 2017; Holmberg & Nikanne, 2002; Light, 2015; Lozano, 2012; Radford, 2009; Wesseling, 2018).

According to Zimmerling (2009), Kayne (2020), Deal (2009), and Svenonius (2002), expletives do not have any meaning that can be interpreted literally except for interpretations given to the entire sentence. This is because expletives are not marked with any θ-role given by the verb (Carnie, 2006; Gluckman & Bowler, 2016; Holmberg, 2000; Kayne, 2020; Light, 2015; McNally, 2016; Müller & Ørsnes, 2011; Radford, 2009; Saito, 2006). However, the Expl construction *there* in (1a) to (1c) is also known as existential sentences or *there*-sentences.

Specifically, previous scholars have divided *there*-existential sentences into three types. The first type is copular-based existence sentences (Huumo, 2003 p.3-5; Marten, 2013 p.61; McNally, 2016 p.8; Partee & Borschev, 2007 p.2). This is because a sentence with the copula BE can be converted into an existent sentence by positioning the *there* at the beginning of the sentence. For example, as in (3) to (6).

(3) a. A boy is in the yard.
b. **There** is a boy in the yard. (Huumo, 2003 p.3)

(4) a. A doctor was in town.
b. **There** was a doctor in town. (Partee & Borschev, 2007 p.2)

(5) a. A guest is in a room.
b. **There** is a guest in a room. (Marten, 2013 p.61)

(6) a. No students were at the concert.
b. **There** were no students at the concert. (McNally, 2016 p.8)

In examples (3a), (4a), (5a), and (6a), DP *'a boy'*, *'a doctor'*, *'a guest'*, and *'students'* are the subjects in the canonical position because of their position at the beginning of the sentence. These DP are followed by the copula BE (verb to be) in the present (is/are) or past (was/were) form. This structure is known as copular structure because BE is the linking verb between the subject DP and the complement PrepP. However, the non-canonical position is shown when *there* is positioned at the beginning of the sentence and forms an existent sentence. These existential sentences are based on copular structure because BE follows Expl consecutively as in (3b), (4b), (5b), and (6b).

The second type is possession-based existence sentences (Creissels, 2014; Czinglar, 2002). For example, in (7) and (8).

(7) a. The children have spinach.
b. **There** are children who have spinach. (Czinglar, 2002 p.19)

(8) a. The room has two beds.
b. **There** are two beds in the room. (Creissels, 2014 p.25)

It can be observed that the possessive sentence (7a) and (8a) with the verbs *have/has* can be turned into possession-based existential sentences (7b) and (8b) when the Expl is positioned at the beginning of the sentence. However, the position of Expl at the beginning of the sentence has changed the possessive sentence into an existential sentence.

The third type, as discussed by previous scholars is personal reference-based existential sentences. For example, the use of the personal pronoun *'my'* as a personal reference in (9).

(9) a. **There** are many daisies in *my* garden. (Czinglar, 2002 p.2)
b. **There** are mice in *my* bathtub. (Platzack, 1983 p.1)

The fact that *there* is not a locative pronoun Loc in this kind of use is shown by the impossibility of replacing it by locative *here* or questioning it by the interrogative locative *where?* For example, in Table 1.

TABLE 1. The difference between *there* as an Expl and Loc

There Expl	*There* Loc
1. a. **There** are many daisies in my garden. *Where are many daisies in my garden? *There. b**. There** is a boy in the yard. *Where is a boy in the yard? *There.	1. a. Someone has eat the cake **there**. Where did someone eat the cake? There. b. I brought Nufayl **there** last week. Where did you brought Nufayl last week? There.
2. a. **There** are many daisies in my garden. *Here are many daisies in my garden. b**. There** is a boy in the yard. *Here is a boy in the yard.	2. a. Someone has eat the cake **there**. Someone has eat the cake here. b. I met my wife **there** last week. I met my wife here last week.

The phenomenon of Expl exists not only in English, but also in various cross-linguistic studies related to *dummy* subjects in other natural languages. For example, Abdel-Ghafer and Jarbou (2015) stated that the Expl *'fii'* exists in the Jordan-Arabic language, as in (10).

(10) a. *kaan-ø fii banaat barrah*
be.PST-3 there girls outside
'**There** were girls outside.'

b. *(kaan-ø) fii walad b-id-daar*
be.PST-3 there boy in-the-house
'**There** was a boy in the house.'

c. *fii muʃkileh (b-il-ħaara)*
there problem (in-the-neighborhood)
'**There** is a problem (in the neighborhood).' (Abdel-Ghafer & Jarbou, 2015 p.168)

Additionally, the phenomenon of Expl also exists in Spanish language studies. According to Lozano (2012 p.39), Spanish does not have an explicit Expl, which is marked by '∅' and is considered as one of the Expl element that present abstractly and not pronounced. In this context, Lozano (2012 p.40) argues that expl-∅ has two functions: as a null subject and null expletive. For example in (11).

(11) *expl-∅ hay muchos estudiantes en la clase.*
EXPL is a lot students in the claaroom
'**There** are a lot of students in the classroom.' (Lozano, 2012 p.40)

Furthermore, the phenomenon of Expl was discussed in Germanic languages. According to Biberauer (2010), Barðdal and Eythórsson (2003), Light (2015) and Müller and Ørsnes (2011), Germanic languages have *'da'* / *'der'* / *'es'* which are differentiated by three different dialects as Expl. For examples, as shown in (12).

(12) a. *Hvem der var så heldig at bo der.* (Germanik Danish)
who Expl was so lucky to live there
'**There** was so lucky to live there.'

b. *Es geyn mentshn*. (Germanik Yiddish)
Expl walk people
'**There** are people walking.'

c. *Es kamen drei Männer zum Tor herein*. (Germanik German)
EXPL came three man to the door in
'**There** were three man entering the door.'
(Müller & Ørsnes, 2011 p.170-176)

In addition, the Korean language is also said to have an Expl *'iss'*, as studied by Chang and Mikkelsen (2005), Ihm et al. (2001), and Jun (2000). For examples as shown in (13).

(13) a. *san-e namu-ga iss-da*
mountain-LOC tree-NOM EXPL
'**There** is a tree on the mountain.' (Chang & Mikkelsen, 2005 p.2)

b. *chaegsang wi-e eotteon chaeg-i iss-eo*
desk on-LOC some book EXPL
'**There** is some book on the desk.' (Jun, 2000 p.273)

According to Halevy (2018), the phenomenon of Expl also exists in Hebrew, where the particle *'yeš'* is present to support the function of Expl as in example (14).

(14) a. yeš *rak* 'et *Sarah*
EXPL only is Sarah
'**There** is only Sarah (left).

b. *yeš šinuy-im ba-toxnit*
EXPL change.PL in program
'**There** are changes in the program.' (Halevy, 2018 p.8-9)

In Italian, there is a specific lexical item that functions as Expl, which is '*Ci'* (Kayne, 2008 p.109). Like English, *Ci'* can be present in two functions, either as Expl or as Loc. An example of an expletive sentence in Italian is presented in (15).

(15) a. *C'è un libro sul tavolo*
EXPL is book.SG on table
'**There** is a book on the table.'

b. *C'è una sorella di Gianni*
EXPL is a sister of Gianni
'**There** is a sister of Gianni.' (Kayne, 2008 p.109-111)

The structure of Expl also exists in Icelandic and Norwegian (Håkansson, 2017; Svenonius, 2002). According to Svenonius (2002 p.3), expletives are also known as *dummy* subjects or *pleonastic* subjects. In Icelandic, the lexical item '*það*' is present at the beginning of the sentence as a pleonastic subject (Barðdal & Eythórsson, 2003), while in Norwegian, '*det'* supports the same function (Svenonius, 2002). Examples are presented in (16).

(16) a. *Det var mus på badekaret. (Norwegian)*
EXPL were mice in bathtub.Def
'**There** were mice the the bathtub.' (Svenonius, 2002 p.11)

b. *það er úldinn fiskur eldaður í eldhúsinu*. (*Icelandic*)
EXPL is rotten fish cooked in kitchen
'**There** has been rotten fish cooked in the kitchen.'
(Barðdal & Eythórsson, 2003 p.17)

The study of Expl is also conducted in Dutch, which is spoken in the Netherlands and some places in Belgium. According to Wesseling (2018, p.16) and Broekhuis and Keizer (2012, p.1080), Expl *'er'* is used as an expletive subject to refer to the same meaning as Expl *there* in English, as in (17).

(17) a. *er een vrouw in de tuin is*
EXPL a woman in the garden is
'**There** is a woman in the garden.' (Wesseling, 2018 p.16)

b. *er gastsprekers op het congres waren*
EXPL invited.speakers at the conference were
'**There** were invited speakers at the conference.'
(Broekhuis & Keizer, 2012 p.1080)

For French, Expl *'il'* is present at the beginning of the sentence, but its translation in English is the same as *it* (Djuikui et al., 2020 p.1; Wolfe, 2018). Interestingly, Expl *'il'* in French has the option to be present in sentence structure. An example is shown in (18).

(18) a. *Il faut. prendre l' auto*
EXPL necessary take the car
'**It** is necessary to take the car.'

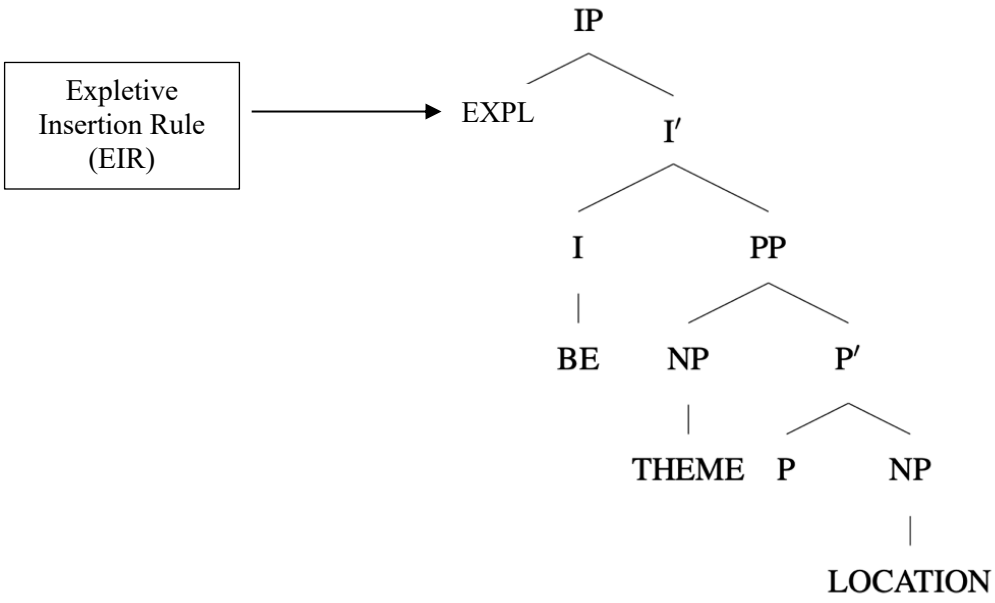
b. *Ø faut le faire.*
Ø necessary it do
'**It** is necessary to do it' (Djuikui et al., 2020 p.1)

In conclusion, a review of past studies found that Expl is not only present in English, but most other natural languages also have a specific lexical item that functions as Expl. Based on the examples provided, it is found that most languages position Expl at the beginning of the sentence and serve as a dummy subject. In addition, most scholars do not interpret Expl as having a whole semantic meaning of its own because the structure of Expl symbolizes the existence of something in a specific context. Therefore, it does not have any literal meaning on its own.

EXPLETIVE ISSUES

McNally (2016) claims that there is no subject-to-subject movement operation in all Expl structures. This is because McNally (2016) believes that Expl *there* is generated directly in the subject position of the sentence [Spec,TP] through the *Expletive Insertion Rules* (EIR). McNally (2016) states that there is no need for movement of the subject phrase [Spec,vP] to the subject position of the sentence [Spec,TP] because the position of the subject phrase has been filled by the pivot DP constituent. An example is shown in (19).

(19)



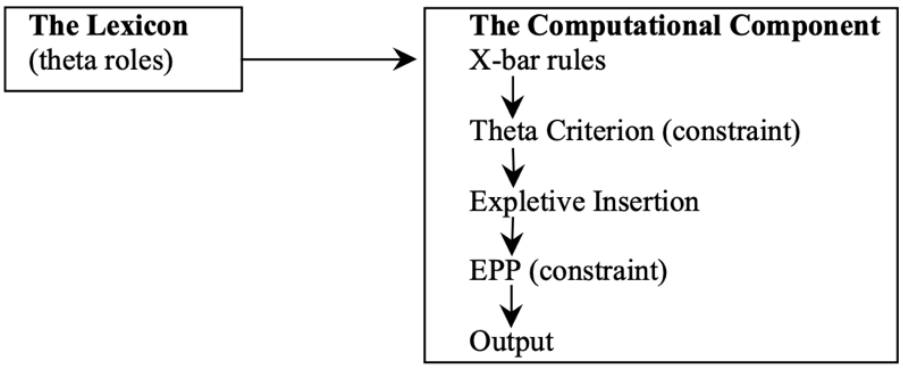
(McNally, 2016 p. 20)

The syntactic structure in (19) is claimed by McNally (2016) as a universal expletive structure. According to him, the structure (19) is based on the copula expletive structure, when BE fills the position of the Infl (I) head, it is a copula phrase that is present post-Expl in the existence sentence.

Carnie (2006) states that EIR applies to all expletive structures at the Logic interface level. Carnie (2006) claims that Expl *there* does not enter the syntax structure through the merging

process at the numeration level. Instead, EIR only applies at [Spec,TP] after all merging operations and feature-checking have occurred at the numeration level. Therefore, Carnie (2006) claims that Expl *there* does not receive any Case. This is presented in (20).

(20)



(Carnie, 2006 p.174)

Additionally, this study found that previous scholars only discussed Exp in copula expletive structures only, that is Expl followed by the copula BE. However, further research on the possibility of Expl *there* being present with other elements has not been discussed by scholars. This is because previous scholars only discussed one structure which is Expl-Cop-DP-Loc and did not present further discussions on whether there are other expletive patterns used by native speakers.

Based on this statement, this study argues that McNally's (2016) and Carnie's (2006) claims need to be re-evaluated. This is because their claims are based solely on structure without taking into the role of morphosyntactic features brought by each lexical item during merging operations at the numeration level. In Minimalist analysis, Chomsky (1995), Sultan and Suhaimi (2012), and Sultan (2011) argue that the role of morphosyntactic features brought by each lexical item is crucial in determining whether movement, feature-deletion, and adjustment occur during merging operations. Therefore, in addition to looking at the structure found in the corpus, this study will take into the morphosyntactic features and syntactic operations that occur during the formation of expletive sentences and re-evaluate the validity of McNally's (2016) and Carnie's (2006) claims in order to present a new perspective on expletive structure.

METHOD

According to Joharry et al. (2021), Zawawi et al. (2022) and Abdullah et al. (2021), the use of a language reflects the knowledge, opinions, social and professional status, and power relations of its users. This shows that the language used by a large group of language users is closely influenced by the social conditions of an area. In the context of this study, research on the Expl *there* reflects the knowledge of a speaker or language user of the use of this lexis in the communication process. This is further reinforced when Sadjirin et al. (2020), Alimi et al. (2021) and Manoharan et al. (2022b) claim that language use in social groups is considered universal because it exists and is present in every culture in a society.

Novel is one type of fiction material that is written with good language based on the social experiences of native speakers as its authors. It symbolizes the use of a language structure that is understood by readers and uses an appropriate style of presentation for the actual situation. The data for this study was selected from the portal Allnovel.net (https://allnovel.net) based on the highest number of readers. A total of three novel titles were selected as the data source, namely A Ruthless Proposition by Natasha Anders (2,193,269 readers); To All the Boys I've Loved Before by Jenny Han (1,739,954 readers); and Married by Morning by Lisa Kleypas (1,344,677 readers).

The data from these three novels will then be stored as raw data in a text format (*.txt*). Then, the raw data will be input into *Wordsmith 8.0* as a corpus processing software. The keyword *there* is entered into the search engine. The context limit is set to ten lexical items left and right. The use of this application allows only data with the expletive *there* to be taken from the entire sentence. The resulting data display will then be cleaned, that is, only essential arguments will be retained for ease of analysis. All cleaned data will then be analyzed using a theoretical research based on the Minimalist framework (Figure 1).

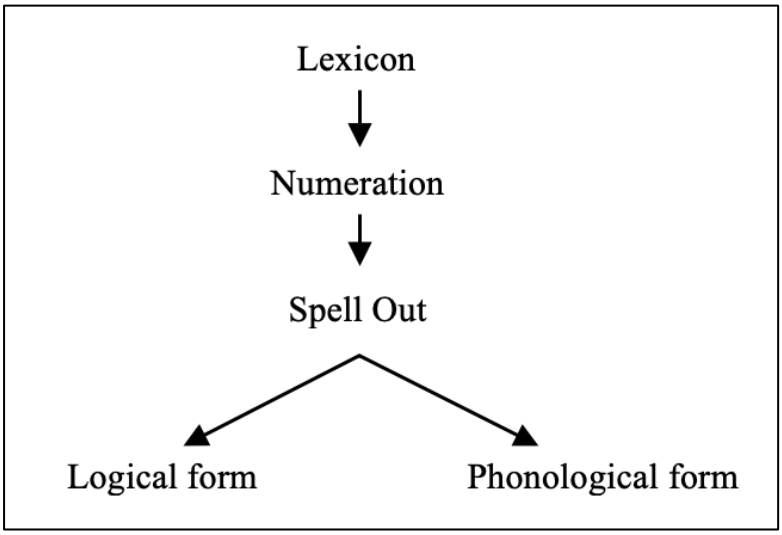


FIGURE 1. Minimalist Program Framework (Chomsky, 2015)

According to Chomsky (2015), the basic framework of the Minimalist Program, as shown in Figure 1, includes several levels, namely the lexicon, numeration, spell-out, and an interface level between logical form and phonological form. Adger (2003), Carnie (2006), Sultan et al. (2011), Taha et al. (2017) and Zawawi and Sultan (2023) have stated that every native speaker has a mental grammatical template that is innate in their lexicon. This allows native speakers of a language to have normal knowledge and ability to acquire their first language. This innate knowledge is known as native speaker intuition. Therefore, the Minimalist framework is an important part in analyzing how the meaning and grammaticality of an utterance are generated in stages within human intuition (Manoharan et al., 2022a; Radzi et al., 2012; Sultan & Ramli, 2015; Zawawi & Sultan, 2023).

The first level in the Minimalist framework is the lexicon. This level is also known as the innate mental dictionary. At this level, all lexical items are stored in an unordered semi-conscious arrangement. The lexical items include lexical categories and functional categories. Lexical categories have whole meanings such as nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Functional categories

include determiners, quantifiers, qualifiers, intensifiers, and auxiliary words. The lexical items stored in the lexicon level have morphosyntactic features that include syntactic features, semantic features, and phonetic features. These features are also in the form of interpretable [X] features and uninterpretable [uX] features.

The second level is called the numeration level. At this level, the operation of merge occurs between lexical items. The merge operation takes place at the smallest level, which is lexical, phrase, clause until it forms a grammatically correct sentence. The merge operation does not happen arbitrarily because it is controlled by the Feature Deletion Principle at the spell-out level. Through this principle, each lexical item that is merged must be able to check and delete uninterpretable features. Checking and deleting features can occur if a lexical item carries interpretable features that are required by another lexical item that has matching uninterpretable features. This checking occurs in a sisterhood relationship. Structures that still have uninterpretable features cannot be passed to the spell-out level because they are considered to be crashed. Therefore, after all uninterpretable features are checked and deleted, the structure will be passed to the interface level between logical form and phonetics to be spoken as a grammatically correct sentence.

Therefore, the selection of the Minimalist framework (Chomsky, 2015) for analyzing expletive phenomena is considered appropriate for examining the intricacies of the merge operation that applies to the expletive *there*. Through this framework, this study can elaborate on whether the claims of previous scholars who claim that *there* does not go through the merge operation at the numeration level can be accepted or rejected.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF EXPLETIVE STRUCTURE

The results of *Wordsmith 8.0* on the selected corpus of novels found that there were two different expletive structures, namely *There-BE-DP-Loc* and *There-V-DP-Loc*. In the first pattern, it is observed that the copula BE follows the Expl *there* consistently. This study names this pattern as the *BE-post-Expl* structure. However, in the second pattern, a lexical verb follows the Expl *there*. Therefore, this study labels it as the *V-post-Expl* structure.

BE-post-EXPL SENTENCES

Based on the corpus database, it was found that most of the Expl data found positioned the copula BE after the Expl. This structure is known as Be-post-EXPL. The data obtained is stated in Table 2.

TABLE 2. *BE-post-EXPL* structure from corpus database

Num.	Data
1	[Expl**There** [BE*were* [DPmany beautiful women [Locin London]]]].
2	[Expl**There** [BE*is* [DPsteam [Locon the lenses]]]].
3	[Expl**There** [BE*was* [DPa tap [Locon the door]]]].
4	[Expl**There** [BE*was* [DPan old manor [Locon the Ramsay estate]]]].
5	[Expl**There** [BE*was* [DPgrit [Locin her mouth]]]].
6	[Expl**There** [BE*was* [DPa tremor of laughter [Locin his voice]]]].
7	[Expl**There** [BE*are* [DPsome experiences [Locin life]]]].
8	[Expl**There** [BE*were* [DPseveral medals [Locon his garment]]]].

9	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*were* [$_{DP}$hundred students [$_{Loc}$on a field]]]].
10	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*was* [$_{DP}$someone [$_{Loc}$inside the machine]]]].
11	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*was* [$_{DP}$silence [$_{Loc}$in the bus]]]].
12	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*were* [$_{DP}$huge buildings [$_{Loc}$in front of them]]]].
13	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*was* [$_{DP}$a hooded man standing [$_{Loc}$nearby]]]].
14	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*were* [$_{DP}$huge craters [$_{Loc}$in the ground]]]].
15	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*is* [$_{DP}$empty couch [$_{Loc}$next to him]]]].
16	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*is* [$_{DP}$a note of sarcasm [$_{Loc}$in his voice]]]].
17	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*were* [$_{DP}$free seats [$_{Loc}$in the middle]]]].
18	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*is* [$_{DP}$honey [$_{Loc}$on his cheek]]]].
19	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*was* [$_{DP}$a picture of a girl [$_{Loc}$in his room]]]].
20	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*is* [$_{DP}$a knock [$_{Loc}$at my window]]]].

Based on Table 2, Expl *there* consistently appears at the beginning of the sentence and is followed by BE. Although McNally (2016) divides such a structure into three groups based on the original structure of the copula, possessive, and personal, this study only classifies the three classifications by McNally (2016) into only one construction. This is because the data in Table 2 is only constructed from one same structure, which is There-BE-DP-Loc.

Table 2 also shows that the DP constituent is present in an indefinite form. This DP is known as a *pivot* DP, that is, an entity that is stated present in the expletive structure but does not function as the subject of the sentence. Although there is discussion by Nomoto (2006) that the DP in this construction functions as the subject, the data presented further supports the argument of Zawawi et al. (2022) that any form of DP that is present in an indefinite form cannot be considered as the subject of the sentence because there is a default definiteness constraint in the position [Spec,TP]. The DP present in this construction only functions as the complement of BE. In theoretical analysis, this study will discuss further the position of this indefinite DP in the vP Shell structure.

Additionally, it can be observed in Table 2 that this structure also accepts the presence of the prepositional phrase PrepP carrying semantic of Loc. However, this study found that Loc present in this structure is not optional. This is because if Loc is removed from the construction, the sentence construction in Table 2 appears awkward. This is shown in (20) to (22).

(20) a. [$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$were [$_{DP}$many beautiful women [$_{Loc}$in London]]]].
b. ?[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$were [$_{DP}$many beautiful women]]].

(21) a. [$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$is [$_{DP}$steam [$_{Loc}$on the lenses]]]].
b. ?[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$is [$_{DP}$steam]]].

(22) a. [$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$was [$_{DP}$an old manor [$_{Loc}$on the Ramsay estate]]]].
b. ?[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$was [$_{DP}$an old manor]]].

This shows that the information Loc is considered something that must be present in the expletive structure. Therefore, this study implies that PrepP in this expletive structure functions as a complement, and not an adjunct as claimed in previous studies.

Interestingly, this structure is found to be similar to the sentence structure Malay existential sentences because it positions the lexical *'ada'* at the beginning of the sentence as a marker of existence, similar to Expl *there*. This is shown in (23).

(23) a. [$_{K}$**Ada** [$_{DP}$bangsal [$_{FPrep}$di tebing sungai]]].
b. [$_{K}$**Ada** [$_{DP}$ikan [$_{FPrep}$dalam sampan]]].
c. [$_{K}$**Ada** [$_{DP}$kucing [$_{FPrep}$di bawah meja]]].

However, there are still differences between English expletive sentences and Malay existence sentences. Malay does not have an explicit Expl because in sentence (23), the marker of existence in Malay is supported by the lexical K *'ada'*. In contrast, in English, Expl *there* functions as a marker of existence in copula constructions because it is consistently followed by BE. Secondly, *'ada'* in BM has a whole semantics that can stand alone as a V, whereas in English, Expl *there* does not have any literal meaning that can be translated, except when it is present with other constituents that complete its meaning context.

V-post-EXPL SENTENCES

This study found that discussions among scholars only focus on the structure of the Expl BE. However, they do not discuss other possible expletive structures that native speakers may use based on actual data. Nonetheless, through corpus research, this study found another rarely discussed structure of Expl, V-post-EXPL which is the presence of a lexical V that follows the Expl *there.* This structure is called *V-post-Expl*. Examples obtained from the corpus are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3. *V-post-EXPL* structure from corpus database

Num.	Data
1	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{V}$*came* [$_{DP}$a sound of joy [$_{Loc}$from inside the room]]].
2	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{V}$*awarded* [$_{DP}$several rewards [$_{Loc}$in their company]]].
3	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{V}$*remain* [$_{DP}$several problems [$_{Loc}$from the team]]].
4	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{V}$*recognised* [$_{DP}$that brilliant ideas [$_{Loc}$from him]]].
5	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{V}$*arrived* [$_{DP}$a train [$_{Loc}$at the station]]].
6	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{V}$*came* [$_{DP}$a cry of anguish from [$_{Loc}$inside the house]]].
7	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{V}$*expecting* [$_{DP}$more clues [$_{Loc}$from her]]].
8	[$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{V}$*appears* [$_{DP}$some errors [$_{Loc}$in a sentence]]].

The structure presented in Table 3 shows the presence of a lexical K as the head of the sentence. The DP and Loc were found to be present in a consistent and consecutive manner. Therefore, these two different structures will be analysed to determine whether EIR applies to both structures as stated by previous scholars.

THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

The corpus data discussed in the previous section found two expletive structures used by native speakers, namely the *BE-post-Expl* and *V-post-Expl* structures. In this section, the study will analyze the syntactic structure of both patterns using the *vP Shell* framework in Minimalist (Chomsky, 2015). Although many sentences were obtained through corpus data, this section will only analyze one example for each pattern. This is because according to Adger (2003), Generative Syntax studies prioritize the analysis of structure over quantity. Furthermore, the analysis of one example for each pattern is considered sufficient to represent other sentences with the same pattern.

Thus, this analysis can show the syntactic operations that occur, particularly in operations of merger, adjustment, and feature deletion at the numeration level, resulting in a grammatical expletive sentence can be expressed.

BE-post-EXPL STRUCTURE

Sentence that positions the *BE-post-Expl* structure obtained from the corpus is shown in (24).

(24) a. [$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*was* [$_{DP}$a picture of a girl [$_{Loc}$in his room]]]].
b. Lexical arrays : {k, BE, a, there, of, in, a, his, picture, girl, room}

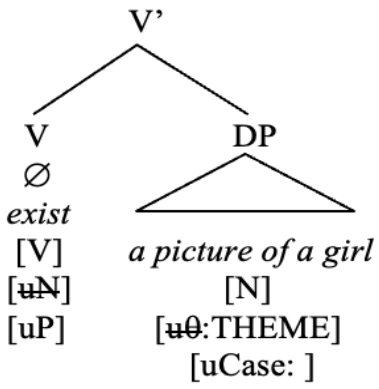
Based on the lexical arrays in (24b), there are eleven lexical items that are required in the mental lexicon at the lexicon level to allow the sentence (24a) to be formed. According to Chomsky (2015), small v is present by default and plays a role as an essential element to allow the constructed sentence to fully satisfy the EPP. Based on sentence (24a), it is found that there is no explicit presence of a verb (V) in this construction. However, this study assumes that there is an unexpressed V, which is *'exist'*. Its absence in the sentence structure is marked as ∅. This is depicted in (25).

(25) [$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{BE}$*was* [$_{VP}$∅$_{exist}$ [$_{DP}$a picture of a girl [$_{Loc}$in his room]]]].

This study also assumes that the unexpressed V 'exist' does not affect the grammaticality of sentence (25). This is because although V 'exist' is not expressed, the overall structure (25) is still grammatical and the expression of the existence of the DP 'a picture of a girl' can still be understood. Although unexpressed, the implicit V 'exist' marked by ∅ occupies the position of the head V.

Therefore, the first step is the merge operation between the head V and the DP *'a picture of a girl*' to produce a V' projection as in (26a).

(26) a.

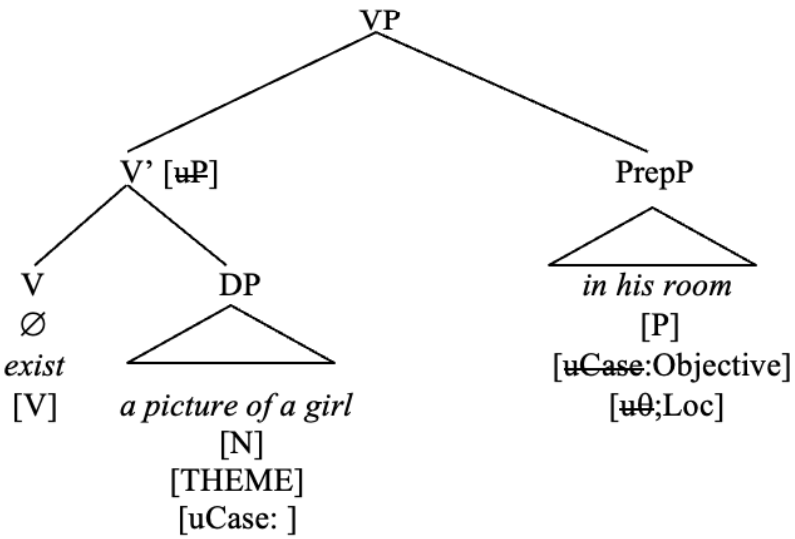


Based on (26a), it is observed that the unexpressed and unspoken V *'exist'* is assumed to occupy the position of the V Head. It carries the verb feature [V] and the uninterpreted selection feature [uN]. Because of the feature [uN] carried by V, it requires a constituent that carries the [N] feature that matches its requirements. So, the DP *'a picture of a girl'* is chosen to merge with the V head to produce the V' projection. In fact, the internal merger operation occurs first between the

lexicon to produce the DP. The merger of the V head with the DP allows the uninterpreted feature on V to be checked and deleted [~~uN~~]. In addition, there is a θ-role-acceptance feature that has not been evaluated on the DP. According to Chomsky (1995), the merger of the DP with the V head is a labeling-θ merger, which means that the DP is given its thematic role assignment by the V head. Therefore, the DP *'a picture of a girl'* is marked as THEME. Therefore, the role-acceptance feature on the DP is successfully evaluated and deleted [~~uθ~~:THEME].

In addition, it is observed that the V head still has an uninterpreted feature [uP] that has not been deleted. Therefore, this feature is projected to the V' projection. This causes V' to have one uninterpreted feature that requires a merger with an element carrying the appropriate [P] feature to delete it. This is presented in (26b).

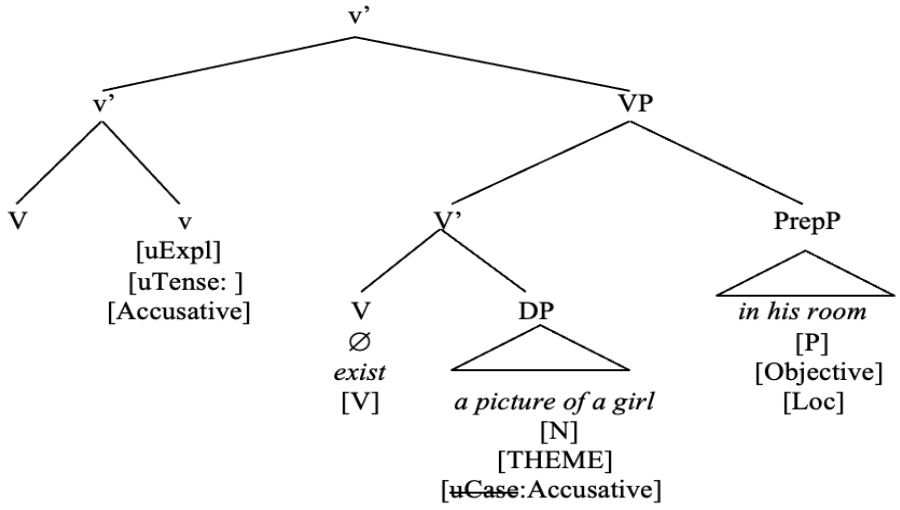
b.



Based on (26b), it is found that the PrepP *'in his room'* carries three features, namely its category feature as a preposition [P], its case-acceptence feature [uCase:], and its unevaluated θ-role-acceptence feature [uθ:]. The merger operation between the V' projection and the PrepP allows the uninterpreted feature [uP] on the V' projection to be evaluated and deleted [~~uP~~]. Additionally, the merge operation in (26b) also causes the Prep *'in'* to assign the Objective case to the entire PrepP. Also, Prep *'in'* can also assign Loc to the entire PrepP. This causes the case-acceptence feature to be evaluated as the Objective case, and the θ-role-acceptence feature can be evaluated as Loc. Thus, both uninterpreted features can be deleted completely, [~~uCase~~:Objective] and [~~uθ~~:Loc].

However, based on (26b), there are still case acceptance feature that have not been evaluated and deleted in the DP. Therefore, to allow the DP to obtain its case, the third step is to combine the VP projection with small v and produce a projection v' like (26c).

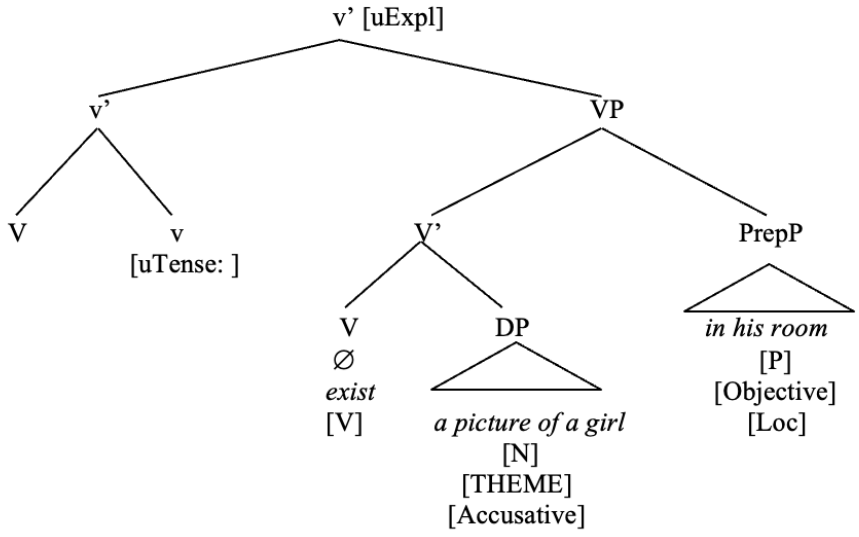
c.



The result of the merge operation of VP projections with small v in (26c) causes the DP 'a picture of a girl' to be marked with the Accusative case. This is because at the small v position, there is a case feature [Accusative] carried by the v node. Therefore, the uninterpreted case feature on the DP can be evaluated as Accusative and fully deleted [~~uCase~~:Accusative].

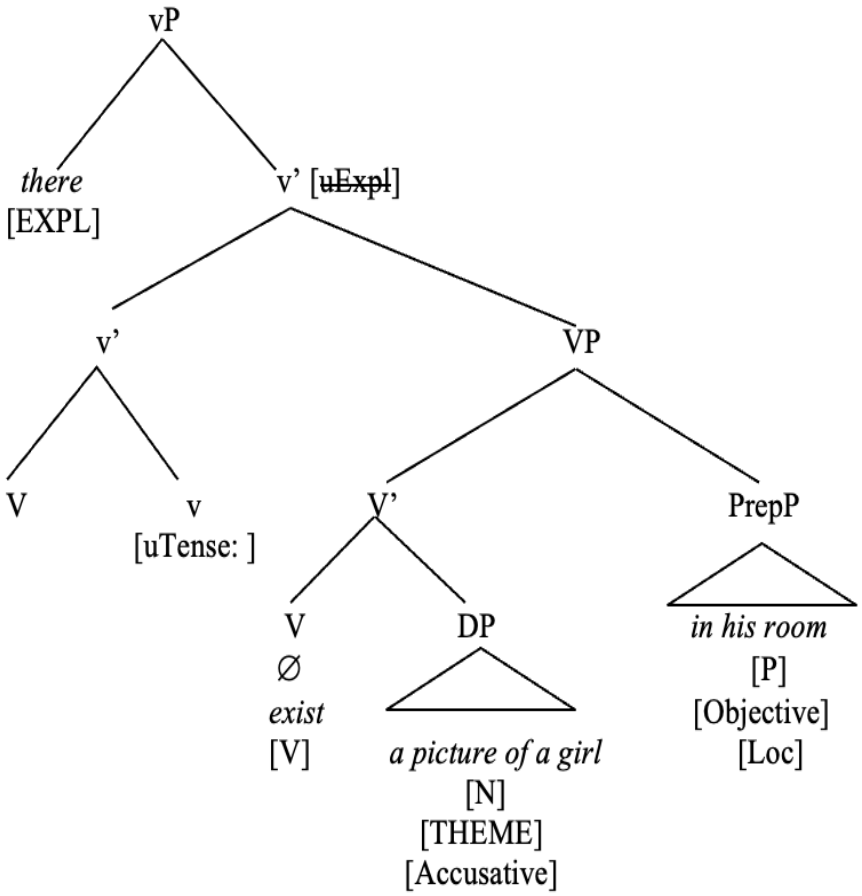
However, in the structure (26c), the small v node still carries unchecked and un-deleted features, namely the uninterpreted Expletive feature [uExpl] and the unchecked and un-deleted Tense feature [uTense:]. Based on Adger (2003) and Sultan and Othman (2021), the small v node typically carries the EPP feature [uN]*. However, for the expletive structure, this study assumes that the EPP feature is not carried on the small v node because there is no DP element that can occupy the subject phrase position. Therefore, this study assumes that there is a special feature only found in expletive structures, namely the uninterpreted Expl feature [uExpl] on the small v node. This is a novel finding of this study that has not been discussed in previous other studies. Therefore, in order to allow this feature to be deleted, the feature [uExpl] is projected to the v' projection as in (26d).

d.



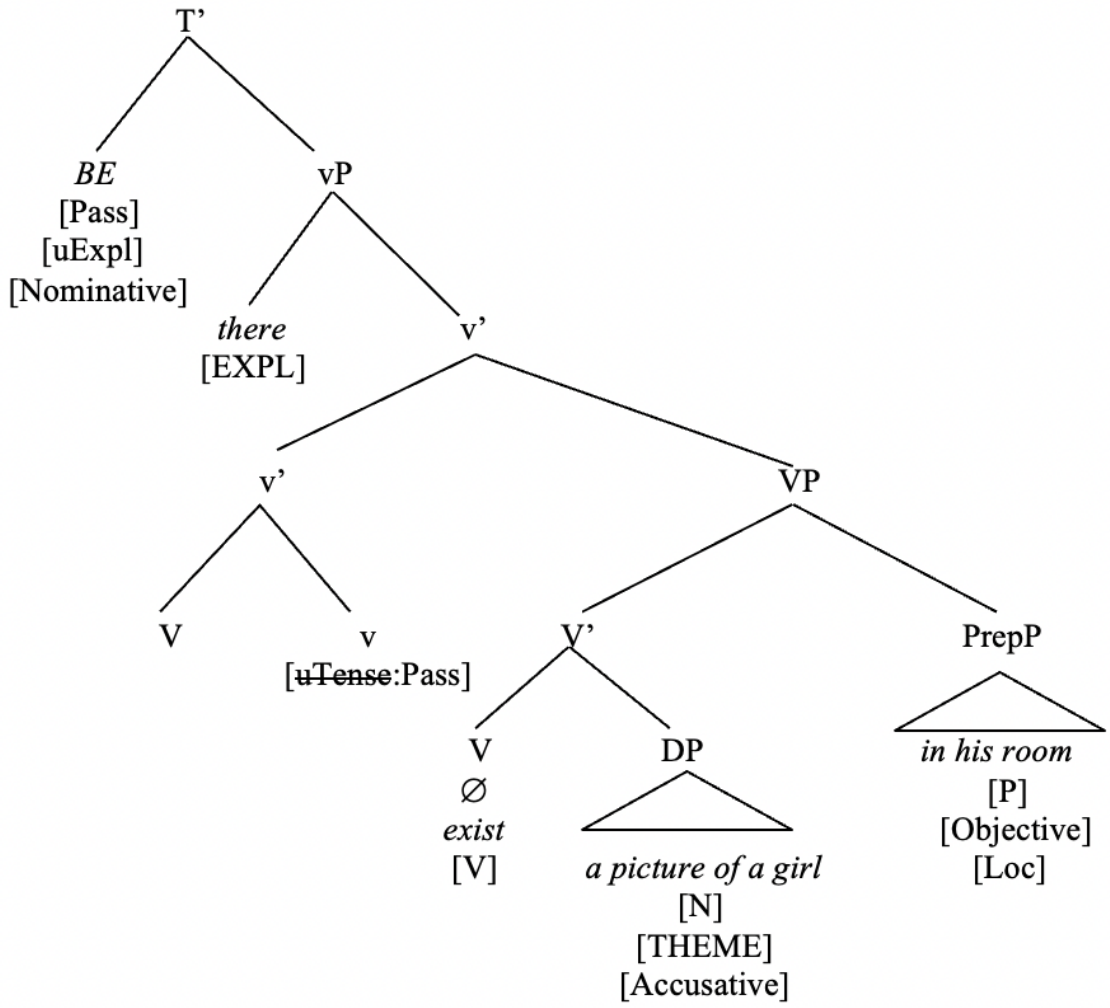
The uninterpreted Expl feature projected to the v' projection allows this projection to attract an Expl that carries corresponding features to check it. Therefore, the v' projection chooses the Expl *there* from the lexicon to merge with it and form a new projection, vP. The Expl *there* in this combination occupies the position [Spec,vP]. This position is called the expletive subject phrase position. This merge operation is also found to occur at the numeration level, rather than at the interface level of Logic as claimed by scholars in previous studies. This is also a new finding in expletive studies. The combination between the v' projection and the Expl *there* allows the uninterpreted features on v' to be fully checked and deleted [~~uExpl~~]. This is shown in (26e).

e.



Because the small v node in (26e) still has an uninterpreted Tense feature [uTense:] that has not been checked, the vP projection needs to merge with the functional Tense element, occupy with *BE*. This combination allows for a new projection to be formed, T' (26f). As a result, the Tense feature on the v node can be evaluated as Pass Tense. Therefore, the uninterpreted Tense feature on the v node can be fully checked and deleted [~~uTense~~:Pass] as shown in (26f).

f.

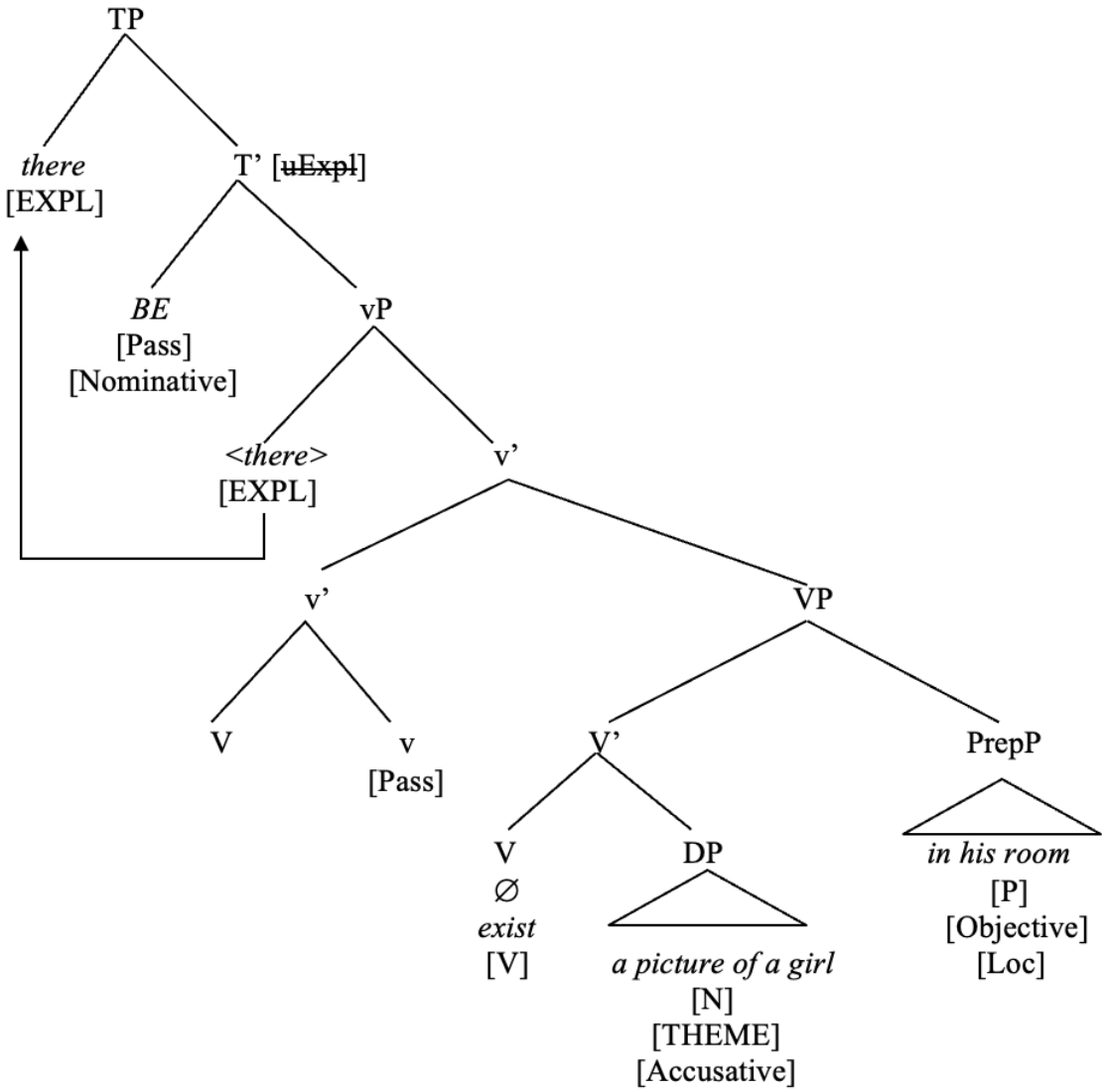


Based on the structure (26f), it is assumed that the Tense head carries three features. The first feature is the Pass Tense feature. However, this study has found a new discovery in the analysis of expletive syntax structure because the Tense head also carries two other features, namely the uninterpreted Expl feature [uExpl] and the Nominative case feature that will be given to the expletive sentence subject.

In canonical declarative sentences, the Tense head is said to carry the EPP feature [uN]* which aims to attract a DP as the subject of that sentence. However, in the structure of expletive sentences, this study found that Tense carries an uninterpreted Expl feature. This feature serves to attract an Expl element to be in the subject position of the sentence [Spec,TP]. Therefore, this is a strong reason that causes the Expl *there* from the subject phrase position [Spec,vP] to undergo movement to the subject position of the sentence [Spec,TP]. Interestingly, this occurs at the numeration level. This also denies the analysis of Carnie (2006) and McNally (2016) who said that EXPL only enters at the Logical level. This once again shows the novelty of this study.

Therefore, the next step shows that the Expl feature [uExpl] on the Tense head is projected to the T' projection to allow the Expl *there* to be raised to the subject position of the sentence to merge with T'. This causes the formation of the TP projection as in (26g).

g.



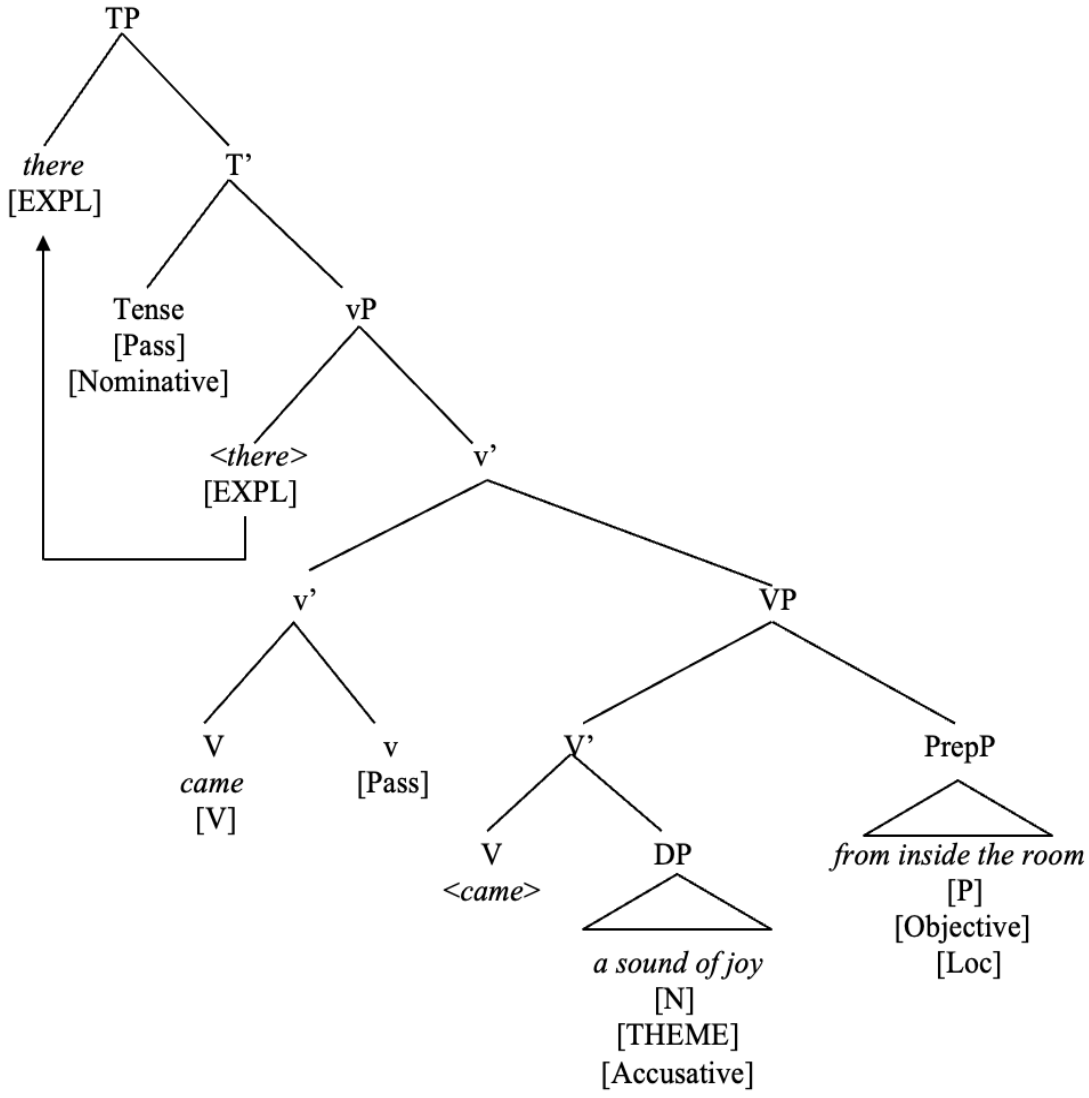
The merging operation of Expl *there* with the T' projection allows the uninterpreted Expl feature to be fully checked and deleted [~~uExpl~~]. In addition, because the Tense head carries a Nominative case feature, it is assumed that Expl *there* receives the Nominative case marked by the Tense head. This contradicts Carnie (2006) who claims that Expl *there* is not marked with any case. This study found that this is not entirely accurate because Tense inherently carries the Nominative feature. If this case is not given to the element occupying the [Spec,TP] position, the structure is not complete and considered crash. This is a strong argument of this study that found that Expl *there* still receives the case in order to allow the structure to pass through the spell-out level to be used as a complete expletive sentence *'There was a picture of a girl in his room*.'

This analysis will also discuss the expletive structure that positions the lexical V as post-Expl. The study will only present one sentence example for analysis because it is considered sufficient to represent all sentences with the same structure. The example sentence for this structure is derived in (27a) and the lexical array of the sentence is presented in (27b).

(27) a. [$_{Expl}$**There** [$_{v}$*came* [$_{DP}$a sound of joy [$_{Loc}$from inside the room]]].
b. Lexical array: {k, came, there, a, sound, of, joy, from, the, inside, room}

Because sentence (27a) will be analyzed using the vP Shell, the step-by-step construction of the sentence structure (27a) will not be repeated in this analysis because the same steps are applied as in the previous structure (26). Therefore, the complete vP Shell structure for the *V-post-Expl* sentence is derived in (28).

(28)



The *V-post-Expl* structure in (28) also found some novel findings. Firstly, Expl *there* is actually not generated in the subject position of the sentence [Spec,TP] as claimed in previous studies. Instead, it is generated through subject-to-subject raising from the expletive subject phrase position [Spec,vP] to [Spec,TP] due to the need for checking and deleting the uninterpreted expletive feature [uExpl] on the Tense head. In addition, this study also proves that the Expletive Insertion Rule hypothesis does not give implications to the formation of expletive syntax structure because subject-to-subject raising has occurred. Secondly, this study proves that the EPP feature [uN]* is not carried on the small v node and Tense as usual in the usual canonical declarative structure. Instead, in the expletive structure, the small v node carries the feature [uExpl] to allow Expl *there* to occupy the expletive subject phrase position [Spec,vP]. Furthermore, the Time head also carries the feature [uExpl] to allow the raising of *there* to the expletive subject position to be done efficiently and completely.

Based on this explanation, this study argues that the Expletive Insertion Rule (EIR) does not occur at the Logical level. Instead, the lexical merge operation with Expl *there* still occurs at the numerical level. This is because at the numerical level, the combination of *there* with lexical in the syntax structure allows uninterpreted morphosyntactic features to be checked and deleted to allow the structure to pass through the spell-out level to be sent to the Phonetic Interface level and pronounced as a grammatically correct expletive sentence *'There came a sound of joy from inside the room.*'

CONCLUSION

According to this study, there are two types of expletive structures, the *BE-post-Expl* and *V-post-Expl* structures, which have not been widely discussed by previous scholars because most previous studies have focused on the analysis of copular expletive structures. Previous studies by McNally (2016) and Carnie (2006) argued that *there* is generated directly in the subject position [Spec,TP] and does not go through lexical merge in numeration. However, this study refutes this claim by finding that *there* is actually generated through the lexicon via merger in the expletive subject phrase position [Spec,vP]. This is because it is influenced by the need to check and delete the uninterpretable feature of the v node. Furthermore, due to the need to delete the uninterpretable feature of Tense, *there* then moves up to the expletive subject position [Spec,TP]. This directly refutes Carnie's (2006) claim that *there* does not go through subject-to-subject raising and is not marked with case. This study found that Carnie's (2006) claim is inaccurate because the Tense head still carries the case feature [Nominative] that needs to be given to the element occupying the position [Spec,TP]. Therefore, this study assumes that *there* still receives the Nominative case because the need for case spread is caused by the feature carried by Tense that needs to be distributed in syntactic operations. Therefore, this study is expected to be a reference for further contemporary studies on expletive structures by other researchers in the future.

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