Notes on Expletive *There*

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August, 2018

1.
    There are minimal pairs in English that indicate that the well-known 'definiteness effect'[1] is not a property of existential sentences in general, but rather is closely tied to the presence of expletive *there*. For example, we have the following pair, with an unstressed definite pronoun:
        (1) One wonders if it really exists.
        (2) *One wonders if there really exists it.
Both sentences contain the verb *exist*, yet the definiteness effect surfaces only in the second one.
    There are also contrasts of this sort with lexical DPs, for example in the context of a treasure hunt where the participants are getting discouraged:
        (3) The treasure definitely exists, so keep looking.
        (4) *There definitely exists the treasure, so keep looking.
and similarly, without any particular context:
        (5) That the planets exist is obvious.
        (6) *That there exist the planets is obvious.
    An initial point about other languages is in order. The counterpart of expletive *there* may in some languages (e.g. Danish[2]) resemble English *there* in occupying subject position. In other languages, as Burzio (1986, 148) has noted for Italian *ci* ('there'), there can be an element that is a good match for *there* in many respects, except with respect to position, in that Italian expletive *ci* ends up in an object clitic position rather than in an ordinary subject position.[3] Like Italian in this respect are French and Catalan, with object clitics *y* and *hi*, respectively. French makes the positional distinction especially clear, in that its existential sentences contain both object clitic *y* and a second expletive *il*,[4] which is a subject clitic:
    (7) Il y a un livre sur la table. ('it there has a book on the table')
In this example, *y*, which corresponds closely to English *there*, is in a typical object clitic position and clearly not in subject position. This *y* is preceded by the subject clitic *il*, which is an approximate match for English *it*.

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[1]Cf. Milsark (1974; 1977) and subsequent work by many authors.
[2]Cf. Allan et al. (1995, 160).
[3]Cf. also Freeze (1992, 568).
[4]Though this *il* may, like *there*, not be a true expletive. For discussion of *il* as a possible possessor (or causer), and of the *be/have* difference, see Kayne (2008, sects. 11, 13). Some varieties of English have *it* rather than *there* - see Freeze (1992, 575) and references cited there. It seems plausible to take that expletive *it* to match this French *il*. (If so, then varieties of English with expletive *it* in existential sentences will in all likelihood have a silent counterpart of *there* in such sentences; in the same vein, standard English may have a silent counterpart of *it*, in addition to *there*.)

A third group of languages may, as noted by Chomsky (1995, 154), have instead only a silent counterpart of expletive *there.* For the Romance family, this is arguably the case for Spanish,[5] for Portuguese and for Romanian.

The preceding paragraph implicitly embeds the hypothesis that most, if not all, languages will have individuable existential sentences that show a clear definiteness effect, at least with unstressed pronouns.[6] In such languages, at least in such sentences, there will almost certainly be a silent counterpart of *there* if there is not a visibly overt one.

But why is there a definiteness effect at all in certain existential sentences,[7] and why does it seem to correlate with the presence of expletive *there* (and its counterparts in other languages)?

2.

To answer this last question, I think we have to ask what is in ways a more basic one, i.e. what exactly is the status of expletive *there*? It is often taken to be the case that expletive *there* is:[8]

(8) i) uninterpretable (i.e. it contributes nothing to the interpretation of sentences in which it occurs)
    ii) externally merged in a relatively high Spec position

However, In agreement with Moro (1997; 2000, 125), Sabel (2000), Choe (2006), and Deal (2009), I will take at least (ii) to be false, and will argue for a different kind of source for expletive *there*.

The question of the source or status of expletive *there* ties in, I think, with the more general question of homophones, which the language faculty clearly tolerates in some cases. A few examples from (my) English are:[9]

(9) one/won; two/to; four/for; eight/ate; red/read(past tense); sew/so; been/bin

The two elements of each such pair are accidental homophones in that they have in common only their phonological or phonetic realization. In addition, in each of the pairs in (9), the two elements have distinct spellings.

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[5]Except, plausibly, for the present tense, with *-y,* as proposed by Fernández-Soriano (1999).

[6]On how to bring out the definiteness effect in Italian, see Belletti (1988, 9).

[7]The proposal to be developed will agree with Safir (1985) that the answer is syntactic in character, though the details will be different.

[8]Cf. Chomsky (1995, 154); also Groat (1995) taking expletive *there* to be interpreted as 'null'. From the perspective of the analysis to be developed, the question of the interpretability of expletive *there* is related to the question of how DP-internal deictic *there* is interpreted; one possibility would be Williams's (1984) scope marker idea, which would lead in turn to the question of:

  i) There/*some/*many/*a few/*one are books on the table.

which this paper will leave open. On interpretation, see also Leu (2015, sect. 2.7) and references cited there.

[9]For a pair like *their/there*, if there is a common morpheme *th-*, we can take there to be a pair of homophones *-eir/-ere*.

If we take orthography to reflect a set of informal linguistic hypotheses, it becomes tempting to put forth the following heuristic (for languages with English-like orthography):[10]

(10) If X and Y are both functional elements and are truly accidental homophones, then X and Y cannot have the same spelling.

Let us now consider the case of *there/there*, where one is the expletive at issue, and the other what we think of as locative *there*. If (10) is correct, then it follows that these two instances of *there* cannot be accidental homophones (since they have the same spelling and are both functional elements).[11] In which case they must have more in common than their phonology (a conclusion that is difficult to reconcile with the idea that one of them is an uninterpretable expletive). But if *there* and *there* are not accidental homophones, then the most appealing hypothesis is surely that they are identical (in particular in how they externally merge), and that there is only one *there* in English.

A sentence like:

(11) There is a problem there.

thus contains two instance of the same *there*. In fact, if we don't mind mixing registers a bit, and if we take *therefore* to be *there + for(e)* (cf. *for that reason*), we can construct a single sentence with four *there*s, one example being:

(12) Therefore, there's a problem there in that there paper of yours.

in which the last *there* is what Bernstein (1997) called a demonstrative reinforcer, seen in the following paradigm, in non-standard English:

(13) that there dog; this here dog; them there dogs; these here dogs

Yet if (10) is correct, no two instances of *there* can be truly accidental homophones, and (12) must in fact contain four instances of the same *there*, each in a different local syntactic environment. (The *there* that Bernstein called a 'demonstrative reinforcer' I will henceforth loosely call 'deictic',[12] since I will be suggesting that it needn't always cooccur with a demonstrative.)

3.

We can distinguish, in (12), the following subtypes of what must now be one *there*:

(14) i) expletive *there*
      ii) locative *there*
      iii) the *there* of *therefore*, akin to *thereby, thereof*
      iv) deictic *there*

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[10]I am grateful to Thomas Leu for insightful discussion bearing on this question.

It may be, thinking of Chomsky and Halle (1968, 69, 184n), that distinct orthography correlates with distinct underlying phonology.

I set aside here the important question of idioms.

[11]On the implications of 'functional' here, see Kayne (2016).

[12]In the long run, the question is how exactly *there* is interpreted in (non-standard) *that there book*, and more specifically how this 'deictic' *there* is interpreted when it is unaccompanied by *that*, as it is in its 'expletive' guise.

Along the lines of Kayne (2004),[13] I take locative *there* to be related to deictic *there* as follows. There is strong parallelism in:

(15) We went there yesterday.

(16) We went to that there place yesterday. (non-standard)

This parallelism can be expressed by taking *there* in (15) to be the one visible piece of a larger phrase (capitals will be used to indicate silent elements), as in:

(17) we went TO THAT there PLACE yesterday

The *to, that* and *place* seen in (16) are also present in (15), except that in (15) they are not pronounced.

The *there* of (15) is thus not locative per se. Rather the *there* of (15) is the deictic *there,* embedded in a locative PP most of whose pieces are silent. (The term 'locative *there*' is henceforth to be understood only in this manner.)

Similarly, the *there* of *therefore* should be linked to the deictic *there* of (non-standard) *for that there reason*, with *therefore* then reflecting a larger phrase:

(18) THAT there REASON for(e)

in which there has been leftward (phrasal) movement of *there* past *for(e)* in essentially the mode of van Riemsdijk (1978).[14] Summing up, both locative *there* and the *there* of *therefore* are instances of deictic *there* embedded within a larger PP of one sort or another whose nominal pieces are silent.

4.

That leaves expletive *there*. For it, too, to reduce to deictic *there*,[15] expletive *there* must be locally associated with some noun (or noun phrase). Thus in an ordinary sentence such as:

(19) There were books on the table.

there cannot be merged by itself into a sentential Spec position; it must first merge with some N(P). In (19) there appear to be two candidates, *books* and *table,* but in the general case the latter, i.e. *table*, is not a viable candidate, as shown by:

(20) There were books on this table.

(21) There were books here.

In (20), *table* is accompanied by *this*, which is otherwise sharply incompatible with *there*:

(22) *this there table

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[13]Cf. Katz and Postal's (1964, 128) proposal to analyze *where* as parallel to *(at) what place,* but with *place* deleted (and somewhat similarly for *there*); also Collins (2007).

[14]The phrasal character of this movement aligns with Barrie and Mathieu's (2016) analysis of noun-incorporation as phrasal movement. For more details on how the movement(s) take place and on the licensing of the silent elements accompanying *there*, see Kayne (2004).

[15]Cf. É.Kiss (1996, 135).

English has expletive *there* rather than an expletive *here* or an expletive *then*. As discussed in Kayne (2008; 2016), the absence of expletive *then* is related to the contrast between *that there book* and:

i) *that then book

The proposal made for *there* vs. *here* depended on *here* being associated with a first person morpheme, which from the present perspective might be held to block extraction.

In (21), there is a silent noun PLACE, but also *here*, which precludes any plausible source for *there*, given:

(23) *this here there place; *this there here place; *that here there place; *that there here place

I conclude that in all of (19)-(21), *there* must initially merge with *books*.[16]

That *there* can do so is supported by:

(24) them there books (non-standard; *them* is non-standard for *those*)

in which case we should think of, say, (19) as having a derivation containing as a substage:

(25) were [there books] on the table

There is indirect evidence from Hebrew that the appearance of *there* in (25) in the absence of any *that* or *those* or *them* is less surprising that it might seem. Ordinary Hebrew demonstratives cooccur with the definite article:

(26) ha-yalda ha-zot ('the girl the dem.')

Yet Hebrew also allows, according to Sichel (2001, chap. 1, note 6):

(27) yalda zot

with no definite article.[17] In addition, while (26) as a direct object would be preceded by the morpheme *et* that normally precedes definite direct objects, (27) would not be. Sichel concludes that (27) is an instance of a demonstrative phrase that is not definite, in a way that I take to reinforce the existence of (25) as a substage of the derivation of (19).

There remains a more specific question. If *there* in (19) originates within a phrase '[there books]', why can a phrase of that form not successfully appear in argument position? If it could, we might have:

(28) *There books are on the table/for sale.

Here I would like to exploit a point made by Szabolcsi (1994, sect. 5) concerning the Hungarian counterparts of English *our friend* and *a friend of ours*. Szabolcsi shows that in the case of a definite possessive DP in Hungarian, the possessor may or may not be extracted from within that DP. Whereas when the containing DP is indefinite the possessor must be extracted.[18]

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[16]This proposal has something in common with that of Sabel (2000); also with Chomsky's (1995, 156) idea that the associate LF-adjoins to *there*.

[17]Cf. also Leu (2015, sect. 2.3.8).

[18]Kayne's (1993, sect. 1.2) proposal concerning *of* moves in that direction for English *a friend of his*.

Transposing freely to deictic *there*, we have the following proposal:[19]

(29) If deictic *there* is (minimally) embedded within an indefinite DP, then that DP must be split apart by movement.

Part of the derivation of (19) might now be illustrated as follows:

(30) were [there books] on the table -->
       there were [<there> books] on the table

In (30) expletive *there* (= deictic *there*) reaches its sentential Spec position as the result of extraction from within the DP that is often called its 'associate'.

5.

An additional question is whether DP-internal deictic *there* (the source of 'expletive' *there*) might itself be associated with a preposition (with deictic *there* itself perhaps originating within a reduced relative clause).[20] If DP-internal deictic *there* is associated with a preposition in (30), then we need to ask whether or not that preposition is carried along by movement to sentential subject position. Facts like the following indicate that an ECM subject position cannot contain a PP:[21]

(31) Into this room has walked many a famous person.
(32) *I believe into this room to have walked many a famous person.
(33) *Its beauty has made into this room walk many a famous person.
(34) *We don't want into that room to walk too many famous people.
(35) *Its owner would like very much for into it to walk many a famous person.

Yet expletive *there* is compatible with ECM subject positions:

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[19]As in the Hungarian case, a question arises as to why such extraction/splitting is obligatory.

The label DP is being used for convenience, the essential point being that *there* starts out within the associate, whatever the exact label. The associate can be overtly complex, as in:

i) There are books you need to read on the table

Similar in one way to the text analysis is Basilico's (1997) taking expletive *there* to start as sister to a small clause; cf. Moro (1997).

There itself may be definite, as suggested by its initial *th-*, yet its presence must not make the containing DP definite. This may reinforce the idea that deictic *there* does originate in a relative clause - for discussion, see Kayne (2008, sect. 5).

[20]Cf. Freeze (1992, 564), Schütze (1999, note 23) and Avelar (2009, 153).

[21]The facts concerning subject position of a finite clause are less sharp:

i) ??Has into that room really walked many a famous person?

Yet it may be that in (i) the auxiliary *has* has preposed past a topic *into that room*, as in this Italian example due to Paola Benincà and Guglielmo Cinque:

ii) Potrebbe a Gianni questo libro darglielo domani? ('could-he/she to G this book give$_{infin}$to-him-it tomorrow' = 'could he/she give this book to G tomorrow?')

in which the finite verb *potrebbe* has, in this interrogative context, been preposed past two clitic-left-dislocated phrases (*a Gianni* and *questo libro*).

Different again is the question of sentences like:

(i) Under the bed would be a good place to hide.

in which there is arguably a silent PLACE above *under*, within what is a subject DP; cf. Kayne and Pollock (2001, note 50).

(36) I believe there to be no solution to this problem.
(37) (?)What exactly has made there be so much disagreement?
(38) Nobody wants there to be another meeting.
(39) We would like very much for there to be another meeting.

Consequently, if expletive *there* is associated with a preposition, it seems virtually certain that that preposition is, in (36)-(39), stranded (within the associate) by the movement of *there* to subject position.[22]

The stranding of a P by the movement to subject position of expletive *there* is supported, I think, by considerations of the comparative syntax type. Freeze (1992, 574) has in this regard said that "English is the only language in which I have found a lexically locative existential pronoun in subject position, though there may be other languages that belong to this exceptional category". Danish and some Norwegian do seem to be like English in this respect, and Dutch may be, too.[23] The question, then, is why having an expletive like *there* in subject position is so rare and why these Germanic languages are the exceptional ones.

The reason for the exceptional behavior of these Germanic languages can, given the discussion of (31)-(39), now be attributed to their allowing preposition-stranding to one degree or another, that is we have the following conjecture:[24]

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[22]Left open is the contrast:
  i) That box/*There has been lived in by large numbers of laboratory mice.
Relevant is the possibility that *in there* is not parallel to *in that box* - cf. McCawley (1988, note 12) and Rizzi (1988).
    If deictic *there* is part of a reduced relative, then the stranding in question may have something in common with:
  ii) They're being taken no notice of.
    The agreement in sentences like:
  iii) There are books on the table.
may be a movement instance of Agree; alternatively expletive *there* can pick up number features from its associate *books* via DP-internal agreement, thinking of colloquial Norwegian as discussed by Leu (2015, 32), whose sect. 2.5 contains a finer-grained discussion of *there* and THERE that will need to be integrated.
[23]Cf. Zwart (2011, 18). For discussion of German *da* in existential sentences, see Hartmann (2008, sect. 4.4).
    English does not allow:
  i) *There was hot last week.
whereas Danish does, according to Allan et al. (1995, 161). Similarly, with impersonal passives, English disallows:
  ii) *There was danced last week.
as opposed to Danish, as well as to Dutch, according to Safir (1987, 78). The unacceptability of (i) and (ii) in English can be attributed to *there* having no (indefinite DP) source in those examples. Why exactly Danish *der* and Dutch *er* are freer remains to be understood.
[24]If there is a silent P with expletive *there*, one might wonder if such a P is ever visible; it may well be in Egyptian Arabic, as brought to my attention by Maha Aboul-Ela - cf. Brustad (2000, 152), as well as Boneh and Sichel (2010) on Palestinian Arabic *fiih* - and/or in Irish *ann* - cf. McCloskey (2014). In fact, adapting a suggestion of Pierre

(40) A language allows (a close counterpart of) expletive *there* in subject position only if that language allows preposition-stranding.

6.

    The generalization stated in (40) has relevance to Romance languages. If Romance languages do not allow P-stranding by movement, then they should not allow their counterparts of expletive *there* to appear in subject position. And it does seem that no Romance language has a counterpart to expletive *there* in subject position, whether as a subject clitic or as a subject non-clitic. On the other hand, (40) allows Romance languages to have a non-subject counterpart of *there*, as many do, in object clitic position, as in the discussion of (7) above.
    The apparent Romance P-stranding seen (in French) in:[25]
   (41) Tu lui courais après. ('you him/her were-running after')
is probably to be reinterpreted as involving a silent body-part-like noun, in such a way that the dative clitic *lui* is not the complement of the P *après*, but is rather directly associated with that silent N, thinking of sentences like:
   (42) Les insectes lui couraient sur les jambes. ('the insects him/her were-running on the legs')
In this example, *lui* plausibly originates as a DP-internal possessor of *jambes* ('legs'), rather than as the object of the preposition *sur* ('on').[26] In parallel fashion, *lui* in (41) may originate as the possessor of a silent BODY, as in the following (abstracting away from the definite article):
   (43) ...courais après [lui BODY]
If so, then movement of *lui* in the derivation of (41) does not strand the preposition *après* any more than it strands *sur* in the derivation of (42).
    Thinking again of (7) above, repeated here:
   (44) Il y a un livre sur la table. ('it there has a book on the table')
we can conclude that if French *y*, Italian *ci*, Catalan *hi* and Paduan *ghe*, etc. are close object clitic counterparts of English expletive *there* and if the discussion of this section concerning prepositions associated with *there* is on the right track, then *y, ci*, *hi* and *ghe* should almost certainly also be associated with a preposition that, in their case, cannot be stranded (since Romance languages don't allow P-stranding). Therefore, these

Pica's (p.c.), it might even be the case that the *-re* subpart of *there* is a suffixal P; on prepositional subcomponents of Italian dialectal counterparts of *where*, see Poletto (2013).
[25]French also allows apparently objectless Ps with no clitic present, yet with an object understood, as in:
   i) Marie est montée après. ('M is gone up after')
(BODY might be relevant here, too.) For discussion, see Kayne (1975, sect. 2.15), Zribi-Hertz (1984) and Authier (2016); on British English, see Griffiths and Sailor (2015). Ruwet's (1978, (218)) French example:
   ii) Les candidats, j'aurais tous voté pour. ('the candidates, I would-have all voted for')
shows that a floating quantifier can bind a silent object in (ii).
[26]Cf. Szabolcsi (1983; 1994), among others.

Romance expletive object clitics must have moved along with their preposition (presumably the same holds in their non-expletive uses).[27]

The behavior of expletive *y, ci*, *hi* and *ghe,* which are never subjects or subject clitics in Romance, appears to contrast with what is found in Italian sentences like:

   (45) A Gianni piace la musica. ('to G pleases the music')

as discussed by Belletti and Rizzi (1988), who argue (albeit cautiously - see their note 32) that in such sentences dative *a Gianni* is in subject position, despite having the form of a PP.[28] How best to reconcile their proposal, if it is correct, with the clear non-subject status of Romance non-dative *ci, y*, *hi* and *ghe,* I leave an open question, except to note that it might perhaps be precisely the dative vs. non-dative distinction that is central.

7.

   Against the background of our discussion of the status of expletive *there*, let us return to the definiteness effect that expletive *there* appears to induce. The clearest instance of this effect involves unstressed (anaphoric) pronouns, as in:[29]

   (46) One wonders if it really exists.
   (47) *One wonders if there really exists it.

The effect is very strong in (47), but absent, in the absence of *there*, in (46).

   There are also clear cases of the definiteness effect with lexical nouns preceded by the definite article, as in the following examples mentioned earlier, in the context of a treasure hunt (where the participants are getting discouraged):

   (48) The treasure definitely exists, so keep looking.
   (49) *There definitely exists the treasure, so keep looking.

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[27]That clitics can include a prepositional subpart in tandem with a pronominal subpart is clear from cases in Berber where the preposition is overt - cf. Ouhalla (2005, 625).

[28]Cf. Fernández-Soriano (1999) on Spanish.

[29]This is presumably true even in languages that are otherwise freer than English with respect to the definiteness effect. The unstressed pronouns in question are those that correspond to the entire associate, not just to part of it. Not at issue, then, are cases like Italian:

   i) Ce ne sono due. ('there of-them are two')

in which object clitic *ne* corresponds to only a subpart of the associate, and similarly, I suspect, for Spanish:

   ii) Los hay. ('them there-is')

(and its Bulgarian counterpart) with an analysis based on the presence of a silent element akin to SOME, but with no *of*.

   On differing sensitivity to definiteness in two dialects of Catalan, see Rigau (2005, 792); similarly, for two varieties of Spanish, Longa et al. (1998, 13).

   The incompatibility of expletive *there* with an unstressed pronoun associate might be related to Pollock's (1998, 318) discussion of the incompatiblity of *en* and *le* originating from within the same DP.

   In the Italian example:

   iii) Una sorella, ce l'ha anche Gianni ('a sister, there it has also G' = 'J has a sister, too')

expletive *ce/ci* must originate within 'una sorella' rather than with unstressed pronominal 'l(a)'.

Pursuing the key idea that expletive *there* (= deictic *there*) must originate within the associate, we see that in (49) *there* would have to originate within the phrase *the treasure*:

   (50) definitely exists [the there treasure]

The question is why, starting from (50), we cannot reach (49).

    The answer cannot simply be that (49) contains an overt determiner (*the*), since some overt determiners are compatible with expletive *there* (the weak ones, in Milsark's (1974; 1977) terms), and trigger no definiteness effect violation:

   (51) There were three/many/several/no/some books on the table.

These will partake of a derivation similar to the one in (30), repeated here:

   (52) were [there books] on the table -->
         there were [<there> books] on the table

For example, with *three*, we will have:

   (53) were [there three books] on the table -->
         there were [<there> three books] on the table

in which *there* is extracted from '[there three books]'.

    From this perspective, *the* in (49) must not be occupying the same position relative to deictic *there* as *three* and the other weak determiners in (51). *Three* and the others must be able to occur between *there* and the noun, in such a way as to not interfere with the extraction of *there*. For the numerals, and for *many* and *several* (but not for *some* and *no*), this positioning finds support in:

   (54) them there three/?many/?several books (non-standard)

    The proposal, then, is that in (49)/(50), *the* (as opposed to the weak determiners) is hierarchically above *there* and blocks its extraction.[30] That is the source of the definiteness effect. (For a discussion of cases in which *the* is not hierarchically above *there* and therefore does not block extraction,[31] v. Kayne (2016).)

    It may well also be the case that this blocking effect of *the* (and other strong determiners) can be unified with Guéron's (1980, 666) Name Constraint and/or with Fiengo and Higginbotham's (1981, 402) Specificity Condition. If so, then the Definiteness Effect found in existential sentences with expletive *there* will turn out not be specific to existential sentences.

    In this view, the blocking effect due to *the* seen in (49)/(50) may also be unifiable with Romance facts of the sort illustrated (in French) in the following (non-existential) sentences:

   (55) Marie en a d'autres. ('M thereof has of others' = 'M has others')
   (56) *Marie en a les autres. ('M thereof has the others')

where we see that extraction of quantitative *en* is sharply blocked by the definite article, here *les*. Similarly, we have:[32]

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[30]In the spirit of Postal (1966), *it* will have the same effect on extraction of *there* as *the*, triggering the definiteness effect seen in (47).

[31]For example as in:

  i) there is [<there> [the most beautiful KIND] house] for sale
  ii) you know where there are [<there> [the most NUMBER] syntacticians]

in which *the* is associated, not with *house* or *syntacticians*, but with (unpronounced) KIND and NUMBER.

[32]For a wider range of examples, cf. Kayne (1975, chap. 2, note 55).

(57) Marie en a (*les) trois. ('M thereof has (*the) three')

8.
    We now see more clearly why the definiteness effect comes into play in (49), repeated here:
    (58) *There definitely exists the treasure, so keep looking.
but not in (48), also repeated:
    (59) The treasure definitely exists, so keep looking.
even though (48)/(59), too, is an existential sentence. The reason is that the definiteness effect has specifically to do with when exactly expletive/deictic *there* has a position within the associate that allows it to be extracted. Since there is no extraction of *there* at issue at all in (48)/(59), not even of a silent one, there is no definiteness effect there, either.

    In conclusion, expletive *there* originates DP-internally as an instance of deictic *there* (as in non-standard *that there book*), with this assimilation related to the language faculty's frowning on accidental homophony within the functional domain. The definiteness effect, which is induced by expletive *there* or counterparts of it, including silent ones, results from a blocking effect, probably not specific to existential sentences, that certain determiners such as *the* impose on the movement of expletive *there* from its DP-internal position up to a sentential subject position. This account of the definiteness effect depends on the DP-internal origin of expletive *there*. The fact that an expletive *there* in subject position is cross-linguistically rare may be due to the movement of expletive *there* to subject position being an instance of preposition-stranding.

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