

Title: Empty expletives and the EPP

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Since the introduction of the EPP in Chomsky (1981), it has successfully withstood deeper analysis. In particular, there is no consensus on what the EPP could derive from, or why it should exist (but cf. Haider 2010 for an interesting approach). More recently (that is to say, within the last 20 years!) various proposals have been made that try to connect the EPP to some phonological property. In particular, there is a class of approaches that claim that the EPP requires that Spec,T be filled by some \*phonologically overt\* category (e.g. Holmberg 2000, Landau 2007, Richards 2016, McFadden & Sundharsan 2018). This view appears to be incompatible with the very concept of an empty expletive. In my talk, I will argue that there are good reasons to assume that empty expletives exist. If my arguments are valid, this means that this class of approaches to the EPP may be dismissed.