TWO NOTIONS OF “SUBJECT” AND CLAUSAL ARCHITECTURE
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1. EPP and EPP-checking

The classical view of generative grammar that holds through LGB and also the MP assumes that the EXTENDED PROJECTION PRINCIPLE (EPP) is universal, and that clause structure is therefore designed in such a way that the subject or some related element from a small class – a locative adverb or a locative PP or a pronominal which function as an expletive – has the privilege of fulfilling this requirement.

(1) a. [A stranger] is in our garden
   b. [There] is a stranger in our garden
   c. *[∅] is a stranger in our garden

In languages in which subjectless sentences are possible the EPP-requirement can be met by a null subject. In languages which follow the null-subject parameter by allowing referential null subjects (or zero clitics), one may argue that there is a null expletive or a null "ambient" (weather) subject. Both could be “little pro”.

(2) a. [pro] sono arrivati tre uomini …
   b. [pro] piove

2. German

German is certainly not a null subject ("pro-drop") language. Thus, there is the problem how to cope with a number of data in which the satisfier of the EPP, an overt nominative Case checker, is far away from the left edge of the structure right below C (supposedly SpecTP) -- cf. (3), or a nominative subject is totally missing, cf. (4).

(3) a. weil den Opa eine Biene gestochen hat
   b. weil gestern zwei komische Leute vorbei kamen
   c. weil dem Opa der Gesang nicht gefallen hat

(4) a. weil mir schlecht ist
   b. weil mich hungert
   c. weil getanzt wurde
d. weil drei Ritter zum Tor hinausritten, 'since three knights rode ...'
   since three knights from the gate rode-out

In these cases the EPP requirement causes certain problems: In (3a) eine Biene could be in SpecTP while the definite DP den Opa is scrambled higher. Alternatively, there could be a pro in SpecTP, and the indefinite DP eine Biene could be associated with it. The same holds for the thetic sentence in (3b). But why the EPP-checker could be empty in this case is unclear. The absence of the definiteness effect in (3c) signals scrambling, but the DAT < NOM order seems to be very well compatible with a base order. The base order is, however, hardly compatible with an expletive (cf. *since there has the song not interested our grad-dad).

Turning to (4a,b), there is no overt EPP-checker which would check off the relevant features of T. The Cases accusative and dative fail to agree with T. A solution could be that there is an empty nominative. This has some plausibility since there is a version in which one observes an overt expletive as seen in (5a,b). But then it is still unclear why the impersonal passive in (5c) and the existential construction in (5d) are impossible, or why these two can surface without a potential EPP-checker like da ("there"):

(5) a. weil es mir schlecht ist 'since I feel nauseated'
   since it-NOM me-DAT bad is
b. weil es mich hungert 'since I am hungry'
   since it-NOM me-ACC hungers
c. *weil es getanzt wurde 'since there was dancing'
   since it danced was
d. *weil es drei Ritter zum Tor hinausritten, 'since three knights rode ..."

It looks as if the EPP-requirement involves a number of stipulations.

3. Strictly head-final languages

A further problem is that expletives seem to be entirely absent in strict SOV-languages.

(6) Ahmed dans ed-il -diğ-in -i söyle-di TURKISH
    Ahmed dance do-PASS –FN-3SG-ACC say -PAST
    'Ahmed said that there was danced'

(7) a. je nac hocche BANGLA
    that dance happening-is
    'that there is dancing'
b. ama-r mon-e hoy je hiren mor-e gaeche
   I-GEN mind-LOC is that Hiren death-LOC went
   'I think that Hiren died'
c. ama-r Thanda leg-e jor hoyeche
   I-GEN cold feel-PART fever occurred
   'Having been cold I contracted a fever'

While in (7a) nac (‘dance’) could be a nominative subject, there is no potential nominative in (7b). (7c) is an infinitive which does not license an overt subject; thus, Thanda (‘cold’) cannot be the external argument, but amar can be a “non-nominative subject”. An expletive does not occur in any of these cases. There would not even be a possible pronominal or adverbial form.
Åfarli & Eide (2000) argue on the basis of semantic considerations for the universality of an expletive subject in cases where the subject fails to serve as the external argument of the predicate. They assume that the act of predication enforces the existence of an external argument or a substitute (like an expletive). The question is, however, in which way and how directly UG has to respond to this requirement. The total lack of expletives in strictly head-final languages suggests that the implementation of predication in grammar is not likely to be as direct as the postulation of EPP-checking by a silent expletive would make us believe. [See however the datum on Kashmiri in 4.]

4. Verb-second

Significantly, an expletive appears in SOV-languages as soon as the V2-property comes into play. German and Kashmiri show an expletive element in the specifier of the raised verb:

(8) a. Getanzt wird t₁
   danced becomes
b. Es wird getanzt
   it becomes danced
c. Es ritten drei Ritter zum Tor hinaus
   it rode three knights from the gate out

(9) a. vuchini₁ a:v t₁ zi ...
   seen come-PASS that
   "Seen was that ..."
b. yi a:v vuchini zi ...
   it come-PASS seen that
   "It was seen that ..." (Wali and Koul, 1997)

The expletive seems to be required only when there is a position defined by a functional head. Since the locus of the expletive is SpecCP, any other XP can serve as an EPP-checker, cf. (8a) and (9a).

5. German versus Dutch

In Dutch there seems to be less than total agreement on expletives among speakers (which may be an indication that this language is undergoing a rapid change), but according to majority judgments we get:

(10) a. *dat gedanst wordt
    that danced becomes
b. dat er gedanst wordt
    that there danced becomes
c. dat in de tuin gedanst wordt
    that in the garden danced becomes
    d. dat er in de tuin gedanst wordt
    that there in the garden danced becomes
The grammatical (or strongly preferred) structure shows the R-word er (“there”) or a locative PP. Obviously, the locative PP can act as an EPP-checker. But as (10d) shows, this PP can also be further to the right, in which case er can still step in as an EPP-checker.

Is there a functional head which splits the Dutch middle field (but not the German middle field)? For Dutch, Zwart (1991) says yes (while many syntacticians would say no for German). Zwart’s evidence is the behavior of clitics. If pronominal clitics are heads which have to adjoin to a functional head, they would – due to Relativized Minimality – target the nearest c-commanding functional head. Notice the difference between Dutch and German:

(11) DUTCH
a. dat Jan ’r₁ [VP gisteren t₁ gekust heeft] ’r < haar
   that Jan-her yesterday kissed has
b. *dat’r₁ Jan [VP gisteren t₁ gekust heeft]

(12) GERMAN
a. *ob Robert ’s₁ [VP gestern t₁ gesehen hat] ’s < es
   if Robert-it yesterday seen has
b. ob’s₁ Robert [VP gestern t₁ gesehen hat]

These data are predicted by a functional head (e.g. T) which separates the subject from the VP in Dutch, but its absence in German. The first head in German accessible for the clitic would be C.

Dutch is OV but seems to have developed various characteristics of head-initiality. Progressive Dutch seems to have developed a VP with an initial T-head which delimits a SpecTP position, while German does not have T at all or – more plausibly – a final T-head which is pre-syntactically merged with V and does not give rise to a position to which a clitic could move nor to a specifier position which would host an EPP-checker.

Biberauer (2003) claims that in Afrikaans as well as in Dutch the expletive daar or er is optional:

(13) Onderaan is (daar) ‘n skroef wat jy moet losmaak AFRIKAANS
    under-on is there a screw what you must loose-make

but she also admits that the choice of daar is “particularly common in Modern Spoken Afrikaans” (p.23). So it is well possible that the unstable judgments reflect a transition in the language by which a functional head T is in the process of being established in pre-VP position, abandoning the older Germanic system in which T was only morphologically present in the verb’s inflection.

6. Functional heads

Since Kayne’s (1994) LCA, many syntacticians have adopted the view that heads are always initial. The universal order would be SPEC<HEAD<COMPLEMENT. Where we see the complement to the left of the head, there has been raising (to the specifier of the head). This view is widely adopted for functional heads. Haider (2000a,b; 2005) adopts this view partially by assuming that there are phrase structurally represented initial heads but also morphologically represented final heads. The former give rise to head-movement and specifiers. The latter do
not. No rightward head movement, no functionally defined specifiers for morphologically defined heads.

Crucially, SpecTP in (14) is a designated formal position which is related to T°. SpecXP in (15), on the other hand is at best semantically licensed. Under normal circumstances it hosts the external argument, but this argument does not have to be a nominative.

How does agreement work in OV-syntax?
If there is no T° [VP ... ], T cannot be a probe which could value the Case feature on an associate (a “low” nominative in VP). Nevertheless, there is Nom-V agreement in the entire span of V’s projection. This suggests m-command.
M-command is independently motivated as it gives a straightforward account for strict OV-languages in which <neg> appears to be a feature of the verb (suffix, neg-copula) (cf. Bayer, 2001).

\((17)\) **“Upward” NPI-licensing**

\[ \text{ke} -u \ ama-ke \ bhalobaSe na \]

\(\text{who-EMP I -OBJ love NEG}\)

‘Nobody (at all) loves me’

\((18)\) **Scope of negation**

\[ \text{Sobai amar kotha Sone ni} \]

\(\text{all my word hear NEG/PAST}\)

a. ‘Nobody listened to me’ (lit: ‘all did not listen to me’; narrow scope of <neg>)

b. ‘Not everybody listened to me’ (wide scope of <neg>)

The unmarked order of arguments is determined by the theta hierarchy plus other semantic constraints such as animacy, volitionality etc. (cf. Bayer, 2004). The most prominent argument – not necessarily the nominative – is merged as the external argument and thus appears to be the “subject”, but there may be competitions which prevent crystal clear asymmetry.

\((19)\) Q: Was ist geschehen? (‘What happened?’)

A1: Ich glaube, dass die Kinder den Opa gestört haben

‘I guess that the children (agents) have disturbed grandfather’

A2: Ich glaube, dass den Opa die Kinder gestört haben

‘I guess that grandfather was disturbed by the children (stimulus)’

\((15)/(16)\) suggest that there is a notion of “subject” in head-final languages which is independent of EPP-based licensing.

### 7. Two kinds of subjects

Cardinaletti (2003) distinguishes two subject position, one for a subject of predication, and one for a subject of agreement (phi-feature checking):

\((20)\)

\[ \text{[SubjP [AgrSP [TP [... [VP ... ]]]]]} \]

subject of predication  subject of agreement

(universal)  (parameterized)

According to Cardinaletti, a full pronoun like *lui* (“he”) would move to AgrSP and then to SubjP, whereas pro would stop in AgrSP. This would, of course, hold for expletive pro. A dative subject would only be in SubjP because it does not check agreement.
(21) a. A Gianni piaceva molto la musica
   ‘Gianni was much pleased by the music’

   b. SubjP
      PP1       AgrSP
      NP       V2
      molto  VP
      t1      V’
      V       NP

   a Gianni proEXPL piaceva t2 la musica

Cardinaletti suggests that SubjP is universal whereas AgrSP is parameterized. For an SOV-language like German, this could be interpreted such that there is no positional basis for AgrS (or T) but certainly for the external argument (as long as there is such an occurrence); see Åfarli & Eide (2000) for a closely related predication based notion of subject.

German provides an apparent conflict with respect to binding which can be resolved with the help of a subject of predication. The problem is that anaphors cannot be bound by dative objects but by dative subjects.

(22) a. *Ich habe den Gästen einander vorgestellt
   Intended: “I introduced to each of the guests the other”

   b. Den Alkoholikern hat vor einander gegraut
      the alcoholics-DAT has from each-other disgusted
      “Each of the alcoholics was disgusted by the other”
Bayer, Bader & Meng (2001) account for (22a) by assuming a KP-structure for datives by which the head K(ase) blocks binding of the anaphor.

\[(23) \quad \ldots [KP \ K^\circ [DP \ \ldots ]_1] \ldots \ \text{einander}_1 \ldots \]

There is no reason to assume that quirky subject datives as in (22b) lack a KP-shell. This leads to a wrong prediction. If the quirky subject is in the specifier of a predication head à la Bowers (1993), Pred^\circ will be coindexed with the KP in its specifier. Provided that the Case-head K does not block the Num-feature of DP, this enables Pred^\circ instead of KP to license the anaphor. The anaphor is therefore licensed indirectly by virtue of Pred^\circ.

\[(24) \quad [PredP [KP \ K^\circ [DP \ \ldots ]_2]_2 \ [Pred^\circ_2 \ldots \ \text{einander}_2 \ \ldots ]] \]

8. Formal features – can there be survivors?

German can do without the overt occurrence of an agreeing nominative subject. Postulation of a little pro expletive is by all means no tenable solution. A designated position for EPP-checking and the assumption of expletive pro is especially troubled by the fact that with certain predicates the expletive \textit{es} is optional. Recall the data in (25). The data in (26) were found on the internet without \textit{es}.

\[(25) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \quad \text{weil (es) mir schlecht ist} & \quad \text{‘since I feel nauseated’} \\
& \quad \text{since it me-DAT bad is} \\
\text{b.} & \quad \text{weil (es) mich hungert} & \quad \text{‘since I am hungry’} \\
& \quad \text{since it me-ACC hungers}
\end{align*} \]

\[(26) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \quad \text{abgesehen davon dass (es) mir unklar ist, was den Rohrschachtest} \\
& \quad \text{apart from tha tit me-DAT unclear is what the R-test-ACC} \\
& \quad \text{in deiner Traumabehandlung nun so wichtig gemacht hat, ...} \\
& \quad \text{in your dream-analysis now so important made has} \\
& \quad \text{‘Apart from the fact that it is unclear to me what made the Rohrschach-Test} \\
& \quad \text{so important in your dream analysis, ...’}
\end{align*} \]

\[(\begin{align*}
\text{b.} & \quad \text{Nicht, dass (es) ihn interessiert hätte, was Shizumi tat...aber es} \\
& \quad \text{not that it him-ACC interested had what S. did but it} \\
& \quad \text{interessierte ihn, was genau die junge Japanerin nach Deutschland} \\
& \quad \text{interested him what exactly the young Japanese to Germany} \\
& \quad \text{verschlagen hatte, ...} \\
& \quad \text{brought had} \\
& \quad \text{‘Not that he was interested in what Shizumi did, but he was interested what} \\
& \quad \text{exactly had brought the young Japanese woman to Germany’}
\end{align*} \]

Given that expletives are not subject to information structure, focusing etc., why would pro alternate with \textit{es}? So the null hypothesis is that when an agreeing subject like \textit{es} is missing in the German middle field it may be missing for good.1

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1 I do not assume this in general. There are predicates where the assumption of an empty pronominal is lexically motivated. The important point here is that in German an empty pronominal cannot be present by a general formal requirement such as agreement.
Leaving expletive pro aside leads to a familiar conflict with the minimalist standard requirement that the uninterpretable features of the verb (person, number, etc.) have to be removed at LF (“No uninterpretable features!”). For impersonal passives, Bayer and Suchsland (1998) and Cardinaletti (1998) suggested that the passive morpheme which according to Baker, Johnson and Roberts (1989) absorbs the external argument in passives would act as a checker; see also Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998). But what would be the checker in (25) and (26)?

My tentative assumption is that surviving formal features are not necessarily uninterpretable. They lead to crash only if they occur at LF more than once. (Verbs must not carry phi-features, if these features are already in the agreeing DP.) In the es-less versions of (25) and (26) as well as in the German impersonal passive, the survivors would be <3rd pers, sing>. Given that these are exactly those which the unmarked pronoun es (“it”) would check off, there can be no semantic reason to get rid of them at LF.²

9. The distribution of German es

(27) Obligatory absence (cf. (5c,d))
   a. weil (*es) ein Fremder im Garten ist
      *since it a stranger in-the garden is
   b. weil (*es) geglaubt wurde [daß die Welt rund ist]
      *since it believed was that the world round is

(28) Optionality (cf. (25) and (26))
   a. weil (es) klar war [daß er nicht kommt]
      *since it clear was that he not comes
   b. weil (es) mir schlecht ist
      *since it me-DAT bad is

(29) Obligatory presence
   a. weil *(es) eine Schande ist [daß er nicht kommt]
      *since it a shame is that he not comes
   b. weil *(es) schneit
      *since it snows
   c. weil *(es) heute in der Mensa Spaghetti gibt
      *since it today in the mensa spaghetti gives
      ‘since the mensa offers spaghetti today’

Given that German does not have an active (i.e. initial) T which would induce EPP-checking, the reason for the appearance of es must be sought elsewhere.³

My proposal is that it is either lexically selected as in ambient es or existential es gibt, or it is in the service of information structure. Assume that es occupies a topic position such that the material to its right will be placed in the comment. By being in the comment it will invariably be foregrounded. Predicates like klar sein, unklar sein etc. may be foregrounded or

² Holmberg (2005) argues against the Agr-only-theory of null-subject pro, but excludes from his considerations languages which may lack the EPP-requirement. Since OV-languages like German appear to follow exactly this path, I take it that Holmberg’s arguments will not affect the present adoption of surviving formal features. A similar checking problem appears in Dutch and German PPs with so-called R-pronouns where the adverbial da or wo cannot plausibly check off the Case feature from P. According to Bayer & Bader (forthcoming), the Case feature in P must remain at LF.

³ Biberauer (2003) suggests that in SOV-languages like Afrikaans, Dutch and German EPP-checking if fulfilled by raising the entire vP to SpecTP. Her proposal is faced with obvious technical as well as conceptual problems.
not, while others like *eine Schande sein* are in a way too prominent to avoid staying outside the comment. makes unambiguously located in VP proper and therefore in the focus domain. Predicates like *eine Schande sein* (21a) can perhaps not avoid being in focus. They tend to occur obligatorily with *es*. Predicates like *klar sein* (20a) have the choice of being in focus (foregrounded) or out of focus (backgrounded). The latter should not show bridge characteristics. Consider extraction of the wh adjunct *wie* (‘how’) in German:

(30)  a.  *Wie* ist es eine Schande [daß Siegfried sein Moped *t* repariert hat]?
  how is it a shame that Siegfried his moped repaired has

  b.  *Wie* ist es jetzt klar [daß Siegfried sein Moped *t* repariert hat]?
  how is it now clear that Siegfried his moped repaired has

  c.  *Wie* ist jetzt klar [daß Siegfried sein Moped *t* repariert hat]?
  how is now clear that Siegfried his moped repaired has

In a theory of EPP-checking which requires there to be a nominative expletive checker for the mere reason of getting rid of the formal features on the verb, it would be difficult to state the difference between (30b) and (30c), and it would be difficult to exclude (29a), *

One can conclude that the occurrence of TP-level (middle field) *es* has nothing to do with the EPP.

### 10. Conclusions

- SVO and SOV employ distinct clausal architectures which cannot be reduced to movement as a consequence of extensive EPP-checking as frequently suggested in the aftermath of Kayne’s (1994) LCA.
- SVO and SOV differ roughly as follows: In SVO-syntax the clause is cut by an initial functional head which gives rise to a specifier which needs to be filled by internal or external merge (EPP). In SOV-syntax no such cut can be observed. There is no initial functional head and therefore no formal EPP-checking requirement. (This crude typology should not mean that the two types cannot mix, SOV in combination with V2 being the most obvious case in point.)
- Nevertheless, SVO and SOV converge in following a universal requirement of predication by which both must have a “subject” in the sense of the external argument in predication.
- The subject of predication is semantics based and must be independent of formal agreement.
- As a consequence of a lack of an “active” functional head such as T, SOV-syntax cannot have genuine expletives. Nevertheless there are pleonastic subjects in non pro-drop SOV-languages. At closer inspection, these “expletives” are not in the service of formal licensing but rather information structure. Genuine expletives are not necessary for convergence and are therefore forbidden due to economy (cf. German *weil es getanzt wurde*, *weil es zwei Ritter zum Tor hinausritten*).
- Given irreducible SOV-syntax with final heads, probe-goal agreement under m-command must be an option of UG, contra a claim to the contrary in Chomsky (2005).
References

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