

# Quantitative Study on *There* Sentences with Perception Verbs

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## Abstract

This study investigates *there* sentences involving perception verbs, focusing on the type of expressions occurring in embedded clauses. This study demonstrates that *there* sentences were used twice in main clauses and embedded clauses in most cases. However, approximately 10% of *there* sentences with perception verbs did not contain *there* sentences within embedded clauses. In addition, while previous studies claim that the grammatical number of the verb in the main clause should be identical to that in the embedded clause, a small number of examples did show number disagreements.

**Keywords** : *there* sentences, embedded clauses, perception verbs, copy raising

## 1. Introduction

Generally, the combination of {*appear/feel/look/seem/smell/sound/taste*} and {*like/as though/as if*} is used with the expletive *it*, as in (1) and (2) :

- |     |     |  |                           |
|-----|-----|--|---------------------------|
| (1) | a . | But <i>it feels like</i> you're doing all of this in your own power. | (COCA : FIC)              |
|     | b . | <i>It looks like</i> everyone left early.                            | (COCA : FIC)              |
|     | c . | Lately <i>it seems like</i> she'd rather not talk about it.          | (COCA : FIC)              |
|     | d . | <i>It sounds like</i> you're not going to Switzerland.               | (COCA : FIC) <sup>2</sup> |
| (2) | a . | " <i>It feels as if</i> someone has died," I said.                   | (COCA : FIC)              |
|     | b . | Ah, <i>it looks as if</i> our dinner is ready.                       | (COCA : MOV)              |
|     | c . | <i>It seems as though</i> that problem never gets fixed.             | (COCA : SPOK)             |
|     | d . | Well, <i>it sounds as though</i> this is the beginning of peace.     | (COCA : SPOK)             |

These perception verbs sometimes co-occur with the expletive *there*. This abnormal usage is reported to be strictly restricted in that *there* sentences should be embedded in *like* or *as though/if* clauses, as in (3) and (4) (e.g., Potsdam and Runner (2001), Asudeh (2002), Landau (2009, 2011), Asudeh and Toivonen (2012), and Kim (2014)). In short, *there* should appear twice in one sentence.

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<sup>2</sup> All emphasis is mine.

- (3) a. *There felt like there was some real pressure.* (COCA : SPOK)  
 b. *Now there looks like there's a lot of colours there.* (BNC : SPOK)  
 c. *There seems like there's always a long line to get in.* (COCA : FIC)  
 d. *There sounds like there was a very cold side to her.* (COCA : SPOK)
- (4) a. Although our Agrabah is a sort of multicultural Fantasia, if you will, *there felt as though there were certain rules* to that world that needed to be sympathetic to, I suppose, the culture and ethics of the Middle East. (NOW : US (19-05-22))  
 b. Mr Bishop said *there looked as if there was a lot of internal bleeding*, probably coming from the liver. (NOW : NZ (16-10-20))  
 c. I don't believe he killed Lucy Wilson, at least, *there seems as if there's enough evidence* to suggest otherwise. (TV : 2011)  
 d. *There sounds as if there should be much more transparency* within the credit reporting agencies just as it is in your articles. (iWeb)

This study attempts to investigate *there* sentences involving perception verbs, focusing on the type of expressions occurring in embedded clauses by using various large corpora, such as *the Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) and *the British National Corpus* (BNC).

This paper is organized as follows. Sections 2 and 3 review previous studies on copy raising constructions and multiple expletive constructions, respectively. Section 4 presents a detailed distributional investigation of *there* sentences with perception verbs. Section 5 concludes this paper.

## 2. Basic Usage of Perception Verbs

This section presents the basic findings on the use of perception verbs obtained from a review of the literature, such as Rogers (1971, 1972, 1974), Lappin (1983, 1984), Heycock (1994), Potsdam and Runner (2001), Asudeh (2002, 2012), Kim (2012, 2014), and Park and Turner (2017). The pair of expressions in (5a) and (5b) is considered a syntactic alternation :

- (5) a. It seems like Richard is in trouble. (Potsdam and Runner 2001 : 453)  
 b. Richard<sub>i</sub> seems like he<sub>i</sub> is in trouble. [copy raising construction] (ibid.)

In expressions such as (5b), called a copy raising construction (CR construction), the lexical noun is selected as a subject of the main clause, and the co-referential pronoun occurs in the subject position of the embedded clause<sup>3</sup>. In (5b), *Richard* in the main clause and *he* in the em-

<sup>3</sup> Potsdam and Runner (2001 : 453) suggest that CR is viewed as a marked or uncommon construction in English compared to the well-known Subject-to-Subject Raising (SSR) *seem to be* construction as follows :

(i) Richard seems to be in trouble. (Potsdam and Runner 2001 : 453)

bedded clause are co-referential, as indicated by the index *i*.

However, in some examples, such as (6)-(8), the subject of the main clause is not co-referential with that of the embedded clause, although these expressions are lower in frequency and less acceptable than expressions such as (5b).

- (6) a. The girl seemed as if her mom was dying. (COCA : FIC) (Kim 2014 : 169)  
 b. Mary appears as if her job is going well. (Potsdam and Runner 2001 : 456)
- (7) a. Bill seems as if Mary is chasing him. (Lappin 1983 : 122)  
 b. IBM looks like someone has been kiting it. (Rogers 1971 : 219)  
 c. The broach looks to me like Abbie gave it to Myrna. (Park and Turner 2017 : 479)
- (8) a. "The house smells like you've been cooking all day", says Duggan.  
 (COCA : NEWS) (Kim 2014 : 184)  
 b. Her apartment sounds like there must be a wonderful view. (Heycock 1994 : 292)  
 c. They look like someone has just died. (Bender and Flickinger 1999 : 17)

The co-referential pronouns occur at the position of the modifier of the subject noun in (6) and at the position of the object in (7). In the examples in (8), no co-referential pronouns occur in the embedded clauses.

Kim (2014 : 183) proposes a semantic constraint on the CR construction, *CR's Perceptual Characterization Condition (PCC)*. This constraint stipulates that the matrix subject of the CR construction, serving as the topic, is "perceptually characterized" by the rest of the utterance. This condition indicates that the utterance serves as a characterization of the matrix subject in the CR construction. This condition can explain the unacceptability of the examples such as the following :

- (9) a. \* Bill appears as if Mary is intelligent. (Lappin 1984 : 240)  
 b. \* Tina seems like Chris has been baking sticky buns.  
 (Asudeh and Toivonen 2012 : 325)

In the case of (9a), Mary being intelligent does not indicate any characteristic about Bill. Similarly, Chris baking sticky buns does not describe any characteristic of Tina in (9b). PCC also explains why the examples in (8) are natural despite no pronominal copy being in the embedded clause. The matrix subject in each case is an entity characterized by the event denoted by the embedded clause. For example, in (8a), the house's smell became its characteristic because of the event: cooking all day. Thus, these examples can occur with no pronominal copy in embedded clauses.

### 3. Multiple Expletive Constructions

The expletive *there* can occur as the matrix subject of perception verbs, as in (10b), though expletive *there* sentences are far less acceptable than expletive *it* sentences such as (10a). This study calls expressions such as (10b) multiple expletive constructions (MECs), as coined by Terada (2000). This section presents four basic findings about MECs.

- (10) a. It looks like there is going to be a riot. (Rogers 1972: 307)  
 b. There looks like there is going to be a riot. (ibid.)

First, there is a dialect or speaker variation in the acceptability judgement (e.g., Potsdam and Runner (2001), Asudeh (2002), Landau (2009, 2011), Asudeh and Toivonen (2012), and Kim (2014)).

- (11) a. % There looks like there's gonna be a riot. (Potsdam and Runner 2001: 455)<sup>4</sup>  
 b. % There seem like there are problems. (ibid.)  
 c. % There smells like there is a problem with the car. (Asudeh 2002: 33)

Second, as indicated by the name of “multiple expletive constructions,” only the expletive *there* is allowed as the subject of the embedded clause. The examples (12b) and (13) are unacceptable because the expletive *there* does not occur in the embedded clauses:

- (12) a. % There seemed/looked/smelled like there was a problem. (Asudeh 2002: 39)  
 b. \* There seemed/looked/smelled like it rained. (ibid.)  
 (13) a. \* There seemed like he had a very cold side. (Kim 2014: 196)  
 b. \* There seems like people are dancing in the street. (Park and Turner 2017: 496)

According to my review of the literature, only Terada (2000, 2008) claims that *there* does not have to occur in embedded clauses.

- (14) a. There seems as if a man is in the room. (Terada 2000: 7)  
 b. There seems as if a ghost is in this room. (Terada 2008: 9)

Third, the expletive *there* should appear in the subject position rather than in the other position.

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<sup>4</sup> % denotes a dialect or speaker variation in the acceptability judgement.

- (15) a. There seems like there is expected to be an election. (Landau 2011 : 800)  
 b. \* There seems like John expects there to be an election. (ibid.)

Fourth, the grammatical number of the verb in the main clause should be identical to that in the embedded clause. In (16), the singular forms *looks* and *seems* are ungrammatical because the postverbal nouns in the embedded clauses are plural :

- (16) a. There look/\*looks like there are problems. (Jang 1997 : 99)  
 b. There seem/\*seems as if there are problems. (ibid.)

As shown thus far, the use of MECs is severely constrained.

#### 4. Quantitative Study on *There* Sentences with Perception Verbs

This section investigates what type of expressions actually occur in the embedded clauses of *there* sentences with perception verbs such as *feels like* and *seems as though* because no previous studies have attempted a quantitative study on such expressions. Due to the rarity of such examples, eight corpora were employed to obtain a sufficient sample size : (i) *the British National Corpus* (BNC ; 100 million words from British English through the 1980s to 1993), (ii) *the Corpus of Canadian English* (CAN ; 50 million words from Canadian English through the 1920s to the 2000s), (iii) *the Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA ; 1 billion words from American English through 1990 to 2019), (iv) *the Coronavirus Corpus* (CORONA ; 1.5 billion words from 20 countries through January 2020 to December 2022), (v) *the Movie Corpus* (MOVIES ; 200 million words from American, Canadian, British, Irish, Australian, and New Zealand Englishes through 1930 to 2018), (vi) *the NOW corpus* (NOW ; 16.7 billion words from 20 countries through 2010 to the present), (vii) *the Corpus of American Soap Operas* (SOAP ; 100 million words from American English through 2001 to 2012), and (viii) *the TV Corpus* (TV ; 325 million words from American, Canadian, British, Irish, Australian, and New Zealand Englishes through 1950 to 2018). In the case of NOW and CORONA, the examples were collected from six sub-corpora : United States (US), Canada (CA), Great Britain (GB), Ireland (IE), Australia (AU), and New Zealand (NZ).

This study collected the examples of *there* sentences with perception verbs by using the following strings. The \* mark was used to compile a single arbitrary word.

- (17) a. there {appear/feel/look/seem/smell/sound/taste} {as/like}  
 b. there {appears/feels/looks/seems/smells/sounds/tastes} {as/like}  
 c. there {appeared/felt/looked/seemed/smelled/sounded/tasted} {as/like}

- d . there \* {appear/feel/look/seem/smell/sound/taste} {as/like}
- e . there \*\* {appear/feel/look/seem/smell/sound/taste} {as/like}
- f . there \* {appears/feels/looks/seems/smells/sounds/tastes} {as/like}
- g . there \*\* {appears/feels/looks/seems/smells/sounds/tastes} {as/like}
- h . there \* {appeared/felt/looked/seemed/smelled/sounded/tasted} {as/like}
- i . there \*\* {appeared/felt/looked/seemed/smelled/sounded/tasted} {as/like}

Because the target expressions of this study are subject to individual and dialectal differences in acceptability judgments, this study just presents the examples observed in the large corpora and does not comment on the acceptability of the expressions. The data search began on April 22, 2023, and ended on May 16, 2023.

#### 4.1. Frequency

This subsection presents the results of the corpus research. Table 1 summarizes the frequency of *there* sentences with the perception verb *feel* and the complementizers *as if/as though/like* (138 examples): 122 examples (88.41%) exhibited the pattern of multiple expletive constructions (MECs), as in (18) and (19), and 16 examples (11.59%) did not contain *there* sentences in the embedded clauses, as in (20) and (21).

Table 1. Frequency of *There feel as if/as though/like*

<i>There feel</i>	COCA	BNC	NOW	CORONA	CAN	TV	MOVIES	SOAP	Total
There	6	0	106	8	0	0	1	1	122
Not there	1	0	13	2	0	0	0	0	16
Total	7	0	119	10	0	0	1	1	138

- (18) a . *There didn't feel as though there was time* to stop, and I knew he wouldn't come if he was still here. (COCA : MOV)
- b . *There definitely feels as though there was a gap* that needed filling, in terms of the style of event that we bring to Lincoln. (NOW : GB (16-10-08))
- (19) a . So *there actually feels like there is an air* of absurdity about this whole thing which is, the point Mike Pence himself was oddly making last night. (COCA : SPOK)
- b . *There felt like there was some real pressure.* (COCA : SPOK)
- (20) Having lived in New Zealand in 2006, when a touring Ireland went 0-2, and toured as a reporter in 2012, Ireland went 0-3, *there often felt as if this day would never come.* (NOW : IE (23-02-22))
- (21) a . However, over the last two years *there feels like a clear gap has developed to*

- the chasing pack.** (NOW: GB (16-12-23))
- b. With trans rights suddenly up for debate and Black Lives Matter protests sweeping the globe, *there feels like we have more to fight for than celebrate.* (NOW: CA (20-06-20))

Table 2 summarizes the frequency of *there* sentences with the perception verb *look* and the complementizers *as if/as though/like* (171 examples): 157 examples (91.81%) exhibited the pattern of MECs, as in (22) and (23), and 14 examples (8.19%) did not contain *there* sentences in the embedded clauses, as in (24).

Table 2. Frequency of *There look as if/as though/like*

<i>There look</i>	COCA	BNC	NOW	CORONA	CAN	TV	MOVIES	SOAP	Total
There	12	1	122	17	0	3	1	1	157
Not there	1	0	10	0	1	1	1	0	14
Total	13	1	132	17	1	4	2	1	171

- (22) a. Before those on Capitol Hill get around to the health care plan, *there looks as though there is going to be a vote* Tuesday on the balanced budget amendment, which is now compli-complicated by a new kind of weaker version. (COCA: SPOK)
- b. Mr Bishop said *there looked as if there was a lot of internal bleeding*, probably coming from the liver. (NOW: NZ (16-10-20))
- (23) a. *There looks like there's another footprint* there we never heard about in court. (COCA: SPOK)
- b. The first is that *there doesn't look like there will be a marquee startup debuting* this fall to drive excitement. (COCA: MAG)
- (24) a. *There looks like it dries out a bit at least tonight.* (NOW: US (21-02-18))
- b. So, with that, once again, I want to thank you for being able to come here and I know while you're flying over here, you look outside the window of the airplane and see that *there looks like nobody lives anywhere.* (CAN: SPOK)

Table 3 summarizes the frequency of *there* sentences with the perception verb *seem* and the complementizers *as if/as though/like* (168 examples): 154 examples (91.67%) exhibited the pattern of MECs, as in (25) and (26), and 14 examples (8.33%) did not contain *there* sentences in the embedded clauses, as in (27) and (28).

Table 3. Frequency of *There seem as if/as though/like*

<i>There seem</i>	COCA	BNC	NOW	CORONA	CAN	TV	MOVIES	SOAP	Total
There	23	0	113	9	1	4	2	2	154
Not there	0	0	12	2	0	0	0	0	14
Total	23	0	125	11	1	4	2	2	168

- (25) a. I don't believe he killed Lucy Wilson, at least, *there seems as if there's enough evidence* to suggest otherwise. (TV : 2011)  
 b. *There does seem as though there is something* not right within the club. (NOW : IE (21-10-31))
- (26) a. *There seems like there's always a long line* to get in. (COCA : FIC)  
 b. At first *there didn't seem like there was anything* to worry about. (MOV : 2000)
- (27) As the plot points lock into place in the last reel *there never seems as though much is at stake*. (NOW : US (22-04-01))
- (28) a. *There seems like someone should get on it*. (NOW : US (15-09-25))  
 b. "Whether it be young white children from Sandy Hook, older Black grocers in Buffalo or young brown people, children, *there seems like something has to be done*," Smith said, standing in front of a Texans backdrop while wearing an orange-and-white shirt. (NOW : US (22-06-01))

Table 4 summarizes the frequency of *there* sentences with the perception verb *sound* and the complementizers *as if/as though/like* (10 examples) : 9 examples (90%) exhibited the pattern of MECs, as in (29), and 1 example (10%) did not contain *there* sentences in the embedded clauses, as in (30).

Table 4. Frequency of *There sound as if/as though/like*

<i>There sound</i>	COCA	BNC	NOW	CORONA	CAN	TV	MOVIES	SOAP	Total
There	3	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	9
Not there	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	3	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	10

- (29) a. *There sounds like there was a very cold side* to her. (COCA : SPOK)  
 b. And this is going to be the focus of the State of the Union because *there doesn't sound like there's going to be a deal* before that. (COCA : SPOK)
- (30) *There sounds like a natural visual connection is waiting to happen...*  
 (NOW : GB (12-05-22))

Finally, no examples with the perceptual verbs *appear/smell/taste* and the complementizers *as though/as if/like* were found in the corpora.

To conclude, as mentioned in previous studies, *there* sentences were used twice in main clauses and embedded clauses in most of the *there* sentences with perception verbs: in other words, the MEC is a prototypical case of *there* sentences with perception verbs. However, approximately 10% of them did not include *there* sentences within embedded clauses, which suggests that although the proportions are low, future studies should not ignore the existence of such sentences. Unfortunately, this study was unable to generalize the syntactic and semantic patterns of non-*there* sentences in the embedded clauses.

#### 4.2. Number Disagreement

This section discusses the number (dis) agreement of perception verbs in *there* sentences. As discussed in Section 3, the grammatical number of the verb in the main clause should be identical to that in the embedded clause, as in (16), repeated here as (31) :

- (31) a. There look/\*looks like there are problems. (= (16a))  
 b. There seem/\*seems as if there are problems. (= (16b))

However, in a small number of examples, the grammatical number of the verb in the main clause differs from that in the embedded clause. Notably, in all of these non-agreement examples, the perceptual verb in the main clause is singular, and the embedded *be*-verbs are plural, not vice versa.

In the case of *there* sentences with the verb *feel*, the corpus search retrieved 82 examples of *there* sentences with the verb *feels* in the singular present form (*there feels*, *there \* feels*, *there \* \* feels*), and of those examples, 3 (3.66%) showed number disagreement, as in (32).

- (32) a. At times *there feels like there are dark spirits at work in True Detective*, but the show is seeped in the crumminess of its landscape. (NOW : US (14-01-09))  
 b. *There feels like there are fewer transitions overall than previous games*, but the ones that are around lean on the more unique stages, like taking a pterodactyl ride or being thrown by a monstrous sea creature. (NOW : GB (20-09-09))  
 c. *There feels like there are a million different The Macallans* out there.  
 (NOW : US (23-01-27))

The corpus search retrieved 93 examples of *there* sentences with the verb *looks* in the singular present form (*there looks*, *there \* looks*, *there \* \* looks*), and of those examples, 6 (6.45%) showed number disagreement, as in (33). Example (33d) occurred in both NOW and

CORONA.

- (33) a. Does anyone know how far residential prices are going to fall, or not?, considering *there looks like there are 2 rate cuts on the way this year...*  
(NOW : AU (19-98-20))
- b. *There looks like there were a couple of rolls of quarters* that might have been taken but other than that it doesn't appear that anything else of value was taken from the home. (NOW : US (19-10-28))
- c. Oh, well *there looks like there are two babies in there!* (NOW : US (22-05-29))
- d. *There looks like there are good mechanisms in place* to be able to safely do what needs to be done at the venue. (NOW : US (20-06-12))
- e. Then *there looks like there are some murders* on the university campus.  
(NOW : GB (23-01-09))

The corpus search retrieved 80 examples of *there* sentences with the verb *seems* in the singular present form (*there seems, there \* seems, there \*\* seems*), and of those examples, 10 (12.5%) showed number disagreement, as in (34). Example (34c) occurred in both NOW and CORONA.

- (34) a. But I wonder, *there seems like there are very few good reasons* and a lot of probably not so great reasons. (COCA : SPOK)
- b. Yeah. I mean, it pays to point out that even though, *there seems like there are more crashes*, because this is -- the third or fourth major one in the past like 14 months. (COCA : SPOK)
- c. I feel for all our players and I'm just mad at the government -- *there seems like there are different rules for different people.* (NOW : CA (21-03-23))
- d. Subtle subversion is fun, but *there seems like there were missed opportunities for blatant evisceration.* (NOW : GB (20-10-05))
- e. But the problem is *there seems like there are more eyewitness reports than spider monkeys in the wild.* (TV : 2012)

The corpus search retrieved 5 examples of *there* sentences with the verb *sounds* in the singular present form (*there sounds, there \* sounds, there \*\* sounds*), and of those examples, only 1 (20%) showed number disagreement, as in (35).

- (35) *There sounds like there are two Ted Mahers.* (COCA : SPOK)

The corpus study has demonstrated that most of the examples showed number agreement. However, a few examples did show number disagreement. Evaluating the small number of the examples without number agreement is difficult, but the existence of such examples should not be ignored. Notably, number disagreement has become common in the case of *there* sentences with *be*-verbs, especially the contracted form *there's* (e.g., Meechan and Foley (1994), Hay and Schreier (2004), Svartvik and Leech (2016), and Yaguchi (2017)), as in (36). Moreover, *there* sentences with non-*be* verbs sometimes do not follow the rule of number agreement (e.g., Gazdar and Pullum (1980), Bauer (2022), and Mino (2023)), as in (37). Catenative verbs also permit number disagreement (e.g., Quirk et al. (1985) and Olofsson (2007, 2011)), as in (38):

- (36) a. Well, there is children that are going to trick-or-treating, I'm sure. (COCA : SPOK)  
 b. There was reports that this was in fact not spontaneous. (COCA : SPOK)  
 c. There's problems in a regulatory process. (COCA : SPOK)
- (37) a. Near the fountain there sits a large purple gorilla and a small pink baboon. (Gazdar and Pullum 1980 : 199)  
 b. Similarly, in this country, I think, there exists certain Americans who harbor resentment or regard Japan even as a threat to this country. (COCA : SPOK) (Mino 2023 : 41)
- (38) a. As there seems to be no questions Ma'am, may I propose the adoption of the report. (BNC : Spoken)  
 b. There appears to be substantial numbers of people who join or leave, become active or inactive, over time. (BNC : Written)  
 c. There happens to be only two apples left. (Quirk et al. 1985 : 1406)

Thus, in the future, the number agreement constraint on *there* sentences with perception verbs would gradually loosen, and the singular perception verb would be the default in *there* sentences.

#### 4.3. Motivation for Using *There* Sentences with Perception Verbs

This section investigates why abnormal expressions discussed thus far are uttered in daily conversations. The examples (39) – (42) were collected from spoken (sub-) corpora or conversations. In these examples, the underlined ordinary *there* sentences with *be*-verbs were used immediately before MECs.

- (39) a. "There's a couple years it was Bryan Danielson, and I think if you have your fin-

ger on the pulse of wrestling, *there always feels like there was a guy* that was oh this guy's the best, and that's kind of how the evolution of 'chip on his shoulder' CM Punk happened is because I was in a company that would never position me as anything, really. (NOW : US (21-09-23))

- b. "There is definitely a lot of invisible extra work for disabled writers and workers," she says, "and *there also sometimes feels like there's a pressure* to go above and beyond to prove that being disabled isn't holding you back in any way, particularly when you feel under greater scrutiny and less likely to be forgiven for mistakes by people with ableist attitudes." (NOW : IE (23-02-16))
- (40) a. "I believe in this case there were no signs of forced entry. *There looks like there were a couple of rolls of quarters* that might have been taken but other than that it doesn't appear that anything else of value was taken from the home. For this to be such a brutal attack with no clear motive it's kind of stumped us," Carey said. (NOW : US (19-10-28))
- b. "He's fantastic," Tennessee coach Mike Vrabel said. "There's a calmness. I don't think *there ever looks like there's any panic* when things break down sometimes in the pocket. He's got amazing play strength, quick release, can throw from different platforms with guys hanging all over him. It's a huge challenge." (NOW : US (20-12-31))
- c. "It doesn't look like there's going to be any (separation) throughout the year," Peters said. "There wasn't last year, there doesn't look like there's going to be any this year. What you have to make sure you do is keep pace... what you can't do is go on a prolonged losing streak." (NOW : CA (18-12-28))
- (41) a. GIFFORD : But these days, there's so -- none of those reasons anymore, right? I mean, unless you're...  
 KOTB : Well, still, I think there still are those -- I think there still are those reasons, like -- and people don't want to be alone.  
 GIFFORD : There's a biological clock.  
 KOTB : Yeah.  
 GIFFORD : Yeah.  
 KOTB : But I wonder, *there seems like there are very few good reasons* and a lot of probably not so great reasons. (COCA : SPOK)
- b. DAVIS : In your research for "Rat Race Blues," did you come across any indication that perhaps Gigi Gryce regretted his decision to stop performing?  
 Mr-FITZGERALD : There were points when talking with his brother Tommy, who is a tenor saxophonist in New Jersey, that *there seemed like there were moments of regret*. (COCA : SPOK)

c. Reese : He hasn't called?

Sonny : Well, does Jason know that Carly's sick?

Reese : I don't know. There wasn't much of a conversation. But *there seemed like there was something wrong with him.*

Sonny : What do you mean? (SOAP)

- (42) ANDI HORVATH: Right, so there's a distrust of authority by the sounds of things, and it sounds like there's almost a little bit of paranoia about who's in control, but *there also sounds like there's a real desire* to make sense of the world, to have an answer, an absolute truth so to speak. So is a conspiracy theory like reverse healthy scepticism and is it a distrust of the body of science? (NOW : AU (20-06-10))

The finding of this study indicates that preceding ordinary *there* sentences might cause the use of abnormal *there* sentences with perception verbs. However, this study was unable to collect sufficient examples of MECs following ordinary *there* sentences. Thus, this topic is for further research.

## 5. Conclusion

By searching several corpora for *there* sentences involving perception verbs while focusing on the type of expressions occurring in the embedded clause, this study demonstrated that *there* sentences were used twice in main clauses and embedded clauses in most *there* sentences. In other words, MECs are a prototypical case of *there* sentences with perception verbs. However, approximately 10% of *there* sentences with perception verbs did not include *there* sentences within embedded clauses. Moreover, according to previous studies, the grammatical number of the verb in the main clause and embedded clause should be same ; however, some of the examples found disobeyed the claim. These results suggest that although the occurrences are a few, future research should pay attention to the existence of such abnormal sentences when attempting to capture the actual behavior of *there* sentences with perception verbs.

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