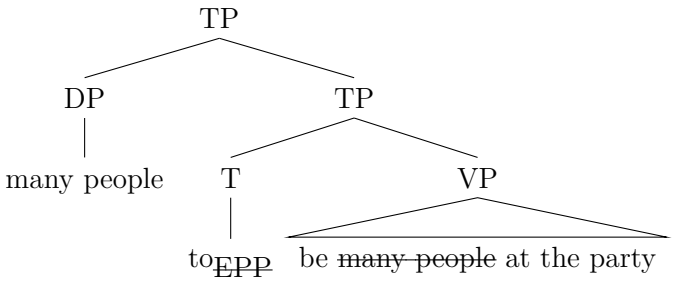
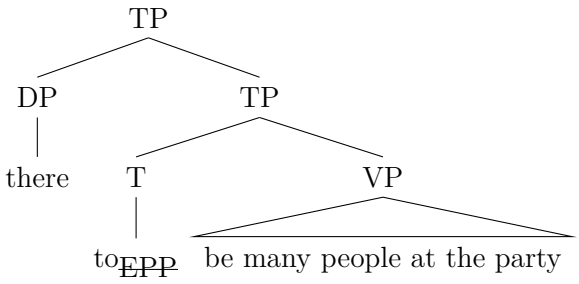
After the **Merge** of **T** *to* and **VP** *be many people at the party*, assume there is an *EPP*[5] feature on **T** that must be checked. This can be done either by **Move**-ing *many people* there, or by **Merge**-ing in *there*. **Merge over Move** requires the derivation to prefer the latter. Each is schematized below:

MOVE *many people*



MERGE *there*



By **Merge over Move**, the derivation schematized by the first tree is licit only if there is no available expletive to **Merge**, as in (1). If one is available, moving *many people* is ruled out, and only the derivation schematized by the second tree is allowed.

That solves the immediate problem, but at the cost of introducing others. Computationally,

[5] **EPP** is a bit of a problematic category in Minimalism. It is essentially a placeholder - a feature that implements the fact that some syntactic projections seem to require - or at least allow - specifiers for reasons unknown or not fully understood. *EPP* simply requires that the projection have a specifier, often without much in the way of discrimination about what types of objects fill it.