

English *with/with-less-SubjPart* constructions: A case of a quantitative corpus-based analysis

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This study is a quantitative corpus-based analysis aimed at identifying semantic and functional differences between two English alternative grammatical constructions (*with* and *with-less* Participle I clauses with the explicit subject). These syntactic patterns represent secondary predication of syntactically independent configuration, attached to the matrix clause by the augmentor *with* or *asyndetically*. In a sentence, the patterns perform the general syntactic role of an adverbial modifier elaborating, extending, or enhancing the matrix proposition. Regarding the form, the obligatory slots of the pattern are schematically represented as [øaug/aug][SBJ][PRED_{P1}].

Adopting the theoretical and methodological assumptions of usage-based construction grammar and quantitative corpus linguistics [2; 4; 6; 9; 10], the study analyzes the distributional and functional dissimilarities between the *with-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* and *with-less-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* applying the quantitative corpus methods of simple collexeme and distinctive collexeme analyses [7; 8; 11; 12] to the sample collected from the BNC-BYU [1]. The output of the conducted quantitative analyses serves as the basis for considering the underlying semantic factors that motivate the distribution of nouns in the subject slot of the investigated syntactic structures and thereby define semantic and functional contrast between them. The obtained results suggest that the analyzed constructions differ in terms of

- 1) *productivity*, i.e. the *with-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* proves to be more productive in modern English usage than the *with-less-SubjPart_{r-cxn}*;
- 2) *semantics of nouns in the subject slot* (the common nouns occurred in the subject slot of the *with-less-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* evoke BODY_PARTS, WEATHER, KINSHIP, PURPOSE, REASON, EMPHASIZING, INCLUSION, and SIMILARITY semantic frames (as in [3; 5]). The distinctive collexemes refer to semantic frames BODY_PARTS, WEATHER, KINSHIP, and PURPOSE. The nouns in the subject slot of the *with-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* instantiate PEOPLE, PEOPLE_BY_VOCATION, COMMERCE_SCENARIO, LEADERSHIP, PEOPLE ALONG POLITICAL SPECTRUM, LAW_ENFORCEMENT_AGENCY, BODY_PARTS, WEATHER, PRECIPITATION, CALENDRIC UNIT, NATURAL FEATURES, and ATTENTION semantic frames. The distinctive collexemes evoke the semantic frame PEOPLE;
- 3) *agentivity of the subject's referent*: the subject of the *with-less-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* is typically inanimate, acts as PATIENT of state/process expressed by [V_{PARTICIPLE 1}], coreferent (PARTITIVE) with the subject of the matrix; the subject of the *with-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* is typically animate, acts as AGENT of a process/state expressed by [V_{PARTICIPLE 1}], not coreferent with the matrix subject;
- 4) *discourse function*: the *with-less-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* performs one prominent (depictive function) and one peripheral function (support function). Used in fiction with body part nouns in the subject slot, this construction adds new details to the matrix event by describing the personages, their outward and inward characteristics. With general factual nouns in the subject slot, it provides supplementary information to the matrix event in written narrative non-fiction texts. The *with-SubjPart_{r-cxn}* typically

implements support function. Prevailing in newspapers and magazines, the construction attracts general people nouns in the subject slot. It elaborates the event in the matrix, stressing the significance of a human being in general.

From the quantitative-corpus research that has been carried out, we conclude that the *with-SubjPartI-cxn* and *with-less-SubjPartI-cxn* are semantically distinct patterns that perform different discourse functions.

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