

## The English Absolute Constructions

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**Yangsoon Kim. 2020. The English absolute constructions.** *Korean Journal of English Language and Linguistics* 20, 411–426. The purpose of this study is to investigate the syntactic and semantic properties of the absolute constructions in English from a synchro–diachronic perspective. The non–finite adverbial adjunct clause with an overt subject is referred to as an absolute clause, in which “absolute” is manifested from two aspects: an overt subject which is not coreferential with the subject of the main clause and no need of conjunction. This paper is mainly concerned with three questions: (i) what syntactic and semantic properties the absolute clauses have; (ii) why a subject cannot be deleted in the absolute clauses unlike other *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts; (iii) why the absolute clauses are productive in PDE. Following Kortmann (1991), two types of the absolute clauses are discussed here: the augmented absolute clause, [*with* + NPsubj + modifiers] and the unaugmented absolute clause, [NPsubj + *~ing*]. I propose a TP–adjoined CP structure for the unaugmented absolute clause and a TP–adjoined PP structure for the augmented absolute clause, providing an explicit structural and semantic explanation for the first and second questions (i) and (ii). The answer to the question (iii) is based on the diachronic explanation of Latinism and the grammaticalization process since the Middle English period.

**Keywords:** absolute construction, (un)augmented absolute clause, overt subject, TP–adjoined CP, TP–adjoined PP

### 1. Introduction

This paper is to investigate the syntactic and semantic properties of the absolute constructions in English from a synchronic as well as a diachronic perspective. The absolute construction has been labelled as an infrequent and formal Latinism (Quirk et al. 1985),<sup>1</sup> but some recent studies have claimed that the absolute construction is more productive especially in Present Day English (PDE) (Kortmann 1991, 1995,

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘absolute’ derives from Latin ‘absolūtum’ meaning ‘loosened from’ or ‘separated,’ “standing out of the syntactic connection”(Jespersen 1940),“ or “abnormally connected to the rest of the sentence” (Crystal 2008).

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König and van der Auwera 1990).

The non-finite adverbial adjunct clauses or verbless adverbial clauses with explicit subjects are referred to as absolute clauses (Biber et al. 1999, Quirk and Greenbaum 1973, Quirk et al. 1985). The English absolute construction can be identified as a non-finite adjunct construction,<sup>2</sup> which always consists of two core elements: an overt (pro)nominal subject, e.g., *lights and people*, *Mary*, *health*, *blood* and a predicate without a verb, e.g., *away*, *knowing all the answers*, *permitting*, *leaking from his mouth* as exemplified in (1a–d) below. The point is that the non-finite verbless adjunct clauses in (1) have an explicit subject which does not refer to the subject of the primary clause, hence they are called absolute clauses.

- (1) a. With lights and people away, this year's sea turtle nesting so far seems much from India to Costa Rica to Florida. (VOA News 2020)<sup>3</sup>  
 b. (With) Mary knowing all the answers, nobody wanted to take part in a contest.  
 c. Health Permitting, her early retirement would not be considered. (BNC 2012)<sup>4</sup>  
 d. The big hard right fist caught Elam on the side of the jaw and stretched the man out on the floor, blood leaking from his mouth. (COHA 2001)<sup>5</sup>

The predicate is typically a present or past participle, but other possible predicate types include some modifiers like perfective participles, noun phrases, adjectival phrases, adverbial phrases, prepositional phrases and infinitives (Kortmann 1995).

There are several types of absolute constructions in English, but Kortmann (1991) distinguishes two major subtypes of absolute constructions based on the presence or absence of an introductory preposition (i.e., a conjunctive preposition) *with(out)*, what is called an augmentor: the augmented absolute clause, [*with* + NP + modifiers] and the unaugmented absolute clause, [NP+ *~ing*]. Then, (1a) and (1b) with an introductory preposition *with* are the augmented absolute constructions, while (1c) and (1d) belong to the unaugmented absolute constructions. In this paper, following Kortmann (1991), two types of absolute constructions, the augmented absolute clauses and the unaugmented absolute clauses will be discussed with three questions: (i) what

<sup>2</sup> The subtypes of non-finite verb forms generally include the infinitive, the participle, the converb and the action nominal.

<sup>3</sup> [www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/people-stay-home](http://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/people-stay-home), 2020.

<sup>4</sup> BNC (British National Corpus) <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> COHA (Corpus of Historical American English), *The first mountain man, Forty guns west*, 2001.

syntactic and semantic properties the absolute clauses have; (ii) why a subject cannot be deleted in the absolute clauses unlike other *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts; (iii) why the absolute clauses are productive in PDE.

To answer the questions (i) and (ii), first, let us first see the semantic properties of the absolute clauses. The absolute clauses are to express additional uses for extension (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014, van de Paul and Cuyckens 2013). However, though the absolute clauses have specific semantic roles in the sentences in which they appear, paradoxically, they lack any explicit indication of their syntactic connection to the main clause which they modify. So, for the syntactic connection of the absolute clause with a main clause, a TP-adjoined CP structure and a TP-adjoined PP structure will be suggested respectively for the unaugmented absolute clause ([NPsubj + *~ing*]) and the augmented absolute clause ([*with* + NPsubj + modifiers]). The proposed structure is to provide the absolute clauses with the clear structural relations while maximizing the economy principle, that is, the simplification of the multiple sentences. As a result, the absolute constructions become compact with a variation from the conventional adverbial clauses (Hannay and Mackenzie 2002). Finally, the answer to the question (iii) is based on the diachronic explanation of Latinism starting from the Middle English. Due to the Latin influence during the Middle English period, the original Germanic forms seem to gradually acquire more clausal features, resulting in the absolute adjunct clauses through the processes of grammaticalization of syntactic and semantic factors. This explains why the absolute constructions are not phrases but clauses and they are productive in PDE differently from other Germanic languages.

## 2. The Absolute Constructions in English

The English absolute constructions are universally applicable or cross-linguistically valid in the sense that they are found in various languages irrespective of their genetic and areal connections, and must be seen as belonging in some way or other to universal grammar.

The English *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts as in the example, *Standing up, she looked around the classroom*, have the following three criteria illustrated in (2).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> A participial phrase is a group of words consisting of a participle and the modifier and/or

- (2) a. Optional part of the clause–complex;  
 b. No subject of their own, rather controlled by predicate and something of a matrix NP (almost invariably the subject)<sup>7</sup>;  
 c. Not linked to their matrix by a conjunction

Unlike the English *~ing* free adjuncts, the absolute clauses fail to fulfill one of the criteria above in (2), that is, the absolute clause with an explicit subject violates the criterion (2b).

The main point is that unlike the English *~ing* free adjuncts, “absolute” is manifested from two aspects: one is that the overt subject is not coreferential with the subject of the main clause; the other is that it does not have a conjunction.<sup>8</sup>

In the section 2, the syntactic and semantic motivations of absolute constructions will be discussed, focusing on why a subject cannot be deleted in absolute constructions.

## 2.1 Why Absolute Clauses?

The non–finite adverbial adjunct clauses or verbless adverbial clauses with explicit subjects are defined as absolute clauses. The notion of non–finite is largely taken for granted and understood in its traditional sense; i.e., in contrast to finite forms, non–finites are not usually marked for such categories as tense, mood, aspect, person or number, and they do not function as only predicates of independent clauses. The classical participles are classified as adjectives, but absolute clauses belonging to converbs are classified as optional adverbs.

The absolute clauses are optional clauses unlinked to their matrix clause by a conjunction, but have an overt subject of their own.<sup>9</sup> Then, why do we need the

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nouns, pronouns or noun phrases that function as the direct objects, indirect objects, or complements of the action or state expressed in the participle.

<sup>7</sup> English *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts have no subject their own, rather they are controlled by and predicate something of a matrix NP since main and adjunct clause subject NPs are coreferential. In contrast, absolute clauses have an explicit subject NP which cannot be deleted since main and adjunct clause subject NPs are not coreferential. However, Rio–Rey (2002) argues that the clear–cut distinction between free adjuncts and absolutes based on the presence of an overt subject does not always hold, but this argument will not be further discussed in this paper.

<sup>8</sup> The example of *~ing* constructions with a conjunction is *while*–conjunction as in, *While walking home, she sensed spring was coming soon.* (example from Fuhre 2010)

absolute clauses? Why do we need an overt subject in the absolute clauses unlike the other adverbial free adjunct clauses? The motivation to use absolute clauses is based on syntactic and semantic reasons. One reason is syntactic to provide the explicit structural connection, while maximizing the economy principle; that is, the simplification of the multiple sentences. In this context, two sentences can be joined as one complex sentence, leading to the simplification in the expression and providing the structural connection between a dependent absolute clause and an independent main clause. So, the absolute constructions are compact with a variation from the conventional adverbial clause. For example, two sentences with a coordinator like *and*, *but* can be joined as one complex sentence, resulting in a conjunction-less and a verbless non-finite. If the participle of an absolute clause is expressed by the verb *be* (e.g., *being*, *having been*), it is often omitted,<sup>10</sup> thus leading to simplification of the expression while providing explicit structural connections between a dependent absolute clause and an independent main clause as shown in (3–5).

- (3) a. His voice was trembling and his eyes were roving. He started to cry.  
 b. His voice trembling and his eyes roving, he started to cry.
- (4) a. The pandemic will turn global economic growth ‘sharply negative’ and it will see only a partial recovery in 2021.  
 b. The pandemic will turn global economic growth ‘sharply negative’ with only a partial recovery seen in 2021.<sup>11</sup>
- (5) a. My eyes were closed, but I could do this work easily.  
 b. My eyes closed, I could do this work easily.

<sup>9</sup> (<https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-dangling-participle-1857150>) This absolute *~ing* clause with an overt subject is different from the ungrammatical dangling participles that are not placed next to the nouns they modify and with an overt subject, causing great confusion. A dangling participle is one that is left hanging out in the cold, with no noun to modify as in (i): *Looking around the yard, dandelions* sprouted in every corner. So, the dangling participle (i) must be corrected as in (ii): *Looking around the yard, I* could see that dandelions sprouted in every corner. The point is that there is no overt subject in a dangling participle, *looking around the yard*.

<sup>10</sup> To see the examples with *being* deleted:

(i) *The party (being) organized, she had a relaxing bath.*

(ii) *Dinner (being) finished, we left for the concert.*

(iii) *(Having been) married for forty years, the couple could not imagine their lives without each other.*

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/business>, 2020.

In (3b, 4b, 5b), *His voice trembling and his eyes roving, with only a partial recovery seen in 2021, My eyes closed*, are absolute clauses and are connected syntactically and semantically as adjunct clauses to the main clause in a simplex sentence.

Another reason to use absolute constructions is semantic to the extent that they are used to provide additional background information to extend or enhance the matrix clause, so absolute clauses are often optional adverbial clause in nature. That is, the non-finite absolute construction can express a wide variety of semantic relations with its matrix clause in a similar way to finite adverbial clauses. As Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), van de Paul and Cuyckens (2013) confirm, the absolute clauses are mainly used for extension or additional uses. van de Pol and Petré (2015) also confirm the adverbial uses by providing the empirical data of corpus that the uses of absolute clauses consist of ‘strongly adverbial uses’ (44%), ‘weakly adverbial uses’ (40%) and ‘elaboration’ (16%) in a descending order. The absolute clauses are optional adverbial clauses in nature, so they typically express adverbial meanings, such as ‘posteriority/result’ as shown in (4b) in the above, ‘concurrency’ (two actions at a time) as in (6), ‘reason’ as in (7–9), ‘concession’ as in (10) and ‘conditional/time’ as in (11).<sup>12</sup>

- (6) Last week Tennessee relaxed more social-distancing restrictions, allowing restaurants and retail stores to lift capacity restrictions and enabling attractions and large venues to reopen with social distancing restrictions in place.<sup>13</sup>
- (7) A leopard is not a tiger, the difference being that a leopard cannot drink whiskey through a straw, and a tiger cannot operate a washing machine without assistance.<sup>14</sup>
- (8) The coach (being) crowded, Fred had to stand. (Kortmann 1991)
- (9) With the traffic thickening and the street lights coming on, it would be after four when I got there. (van de Pol and Petré 2015)
- (10) They can be easily passed even with a pedestrian walking on the cycle path.<sup>15</sup>
- (11) All things considered, you are correct. (COCA 2012)

<sup>12</sup> A comma separates subordinate clauses within a complex sentence where two separate sentences are not required (Murphy 2010: 9).

<sup>13</sup> [www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/how-when-will-life-get-back](http://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/how-when-will-life-get-back), 2020.

<sup>14</sup> [www.englishforums.com/English/TheDifferenceBeing](http://www.englishforums.com/English/TheDifferenceBeing), 2020.

<sup>15</sup> <http://bicycledutch.wordpress.com>

As illustrated in the examples, the absolute clauses add up new details or enhancement to the general meaning of the sentence with economy in structures and vividness in meaning. So, absolute clauses are sometimes regarded as parentheses and they are separated from the rest of the sentence either with a comma (pair of commas), or a dash (pair of dashes).

The final reason to use absolute constructions is based on the prescriptivist tradition as well as the grammaticalization process from the Middle English to PDE. During the period of the Middle English, English prescriptivism did not prohibit the use of absolute clauses whereas prescriptivism in other Germanic languages strongly did (Killie and Swan 2009). This explains why the absolute clauses are productive in PDE differently from other Germanic languages.

## 2.2 Proposal: Structures of English Absolute Constructions

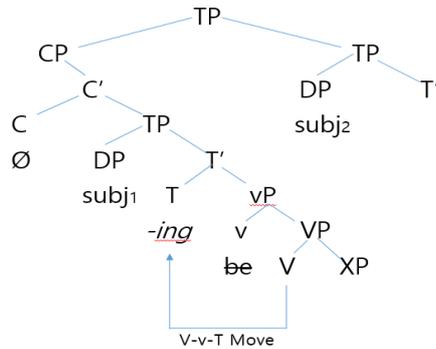
In this section, the two major issues will be talked about: (i) what structures can be proposed for the English absolute constructions; (ii) why the absolute clauses must have an overt subject unlike the covert subject in the English *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts?

The augmented absolute clause ([*with* + NPsubj + modifiers]) and the unaugmented absolute clause ([NPsubj+ *~ing*]) are two main subtypes of the absolute clauses depending on the presence or absence of an introductory preposition *with(out)*. I propose the unaugmented absolute structures are CP–adjunction to TP and the augmented absolute structures are PP–adjunction to TP, in which we can explain why a subject cannot be deleted in the absolute clauses unlike the other English *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts.

### 2.2.1 Unaugmented absolute clauses

I propose the unaugmented absolute structures are CP–adjunction to TP on the left or right side as shown in (12) and (13).

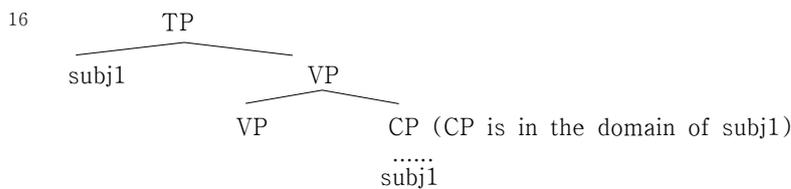
- (12) Unaugmented Absolute Constructions: [NPsubj1 + ~ing]  
 Left CP–adjunction to TP: [Absolute clause–Main clause]



The structure for the unaugmented absolute construction proposed in (12) does not have a typical introductory preposition *with*, hence it is called ‘unaugmented’ absolute clauses.

To contrast the absolute clauses with more frequent *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts, I assume a CP–adjunction to VP for the latter, in which a controlled PRO by Equi–NP deletion can occur since subject1 and subject2 are coreferential in the domain of C–Command.<sup>16</sup> However, unlike *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts, I propose a CP–adjunction to TP for the former, in which subject1 and subject2 are not coreferential and are not in the domain of C–command, so Equi–NP deletion cannot occur in the absolute clauses. Without Equi–NP deletion, absolute clauses must have an overt subject NP1 instead of a covert subject PRO. As a result, in the exceptional but frequent absolute clauses, the distinct subject cannot be deleted and must be overtly and clearly stated in order to prevent confusion in meaning, thus violating the criterion (2b) of the English *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts.

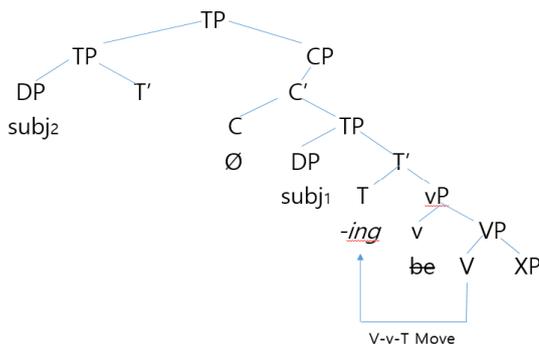
In a proposed structure (12), I suggest that *~ing* is at T–position as an auxiliary (or raised to T as in Miguel (1992)) and a verb *be* is at v of a light verb phrase vP. A verb *be* should be deleted for economy principle since it is recoverable semantically,



forming a verbless adjunct clause with a null v. A sequential verb movement (V–v–T Move) can occur, forming the absolute clauses in the order of [NPsubj+ ~ing].<sup>17</sup> In this way, a CP clause can adjoin to a main clause TP and provide additional adverbial background information to the matrix clause while providing an explicit syntactic connection in a grammatical structure.

When the unaugmented absolute clauses have adverbial function for extension or enhancement, the absolute clause and the main clause can be translocated.<sup>18</sup> The CP–adjunction to TP can occur on the left or right side to express interdependent structural relations, resulting in the adjunct–initial sentences as in (12) or the adjunct–final sentences as in (13). The right–adjoined CP to TP structure looks like (13), in which an absolute clause appears at the sentence–final position.

- (13) Unaugmented Absolute Constructions: [NPsubj1 + ~ing]  
 Right CP–adjunction to TP: [Main clause–Absolute clause]



<sup>17</sup> The predicate is typically a participle, but include other possible predicate types like noun phrases, adjectival phrases, adverbial phrases, prepositional phrases and infinitives. When the predicate is not a participle, [NPsubj + XP] is formed instead of [NPsubj+ ~ing].

<sup>18</sup> The exception of translocation comes from the unaugmented absolute constructions of elaboration which cannot occur with a prepositional complementizer *with*. The examples are from COHA: (i) *He had to use other men’s property, the use being right*. (\*with the use being right). In this circumstance, the absolute clause cannot be translocated as in the example, *\*The use being right, he had to use other men’s property*.

2.2.2 Augmented absolute constructions

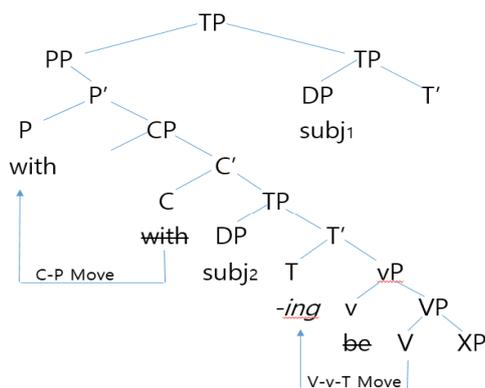
Now let us turn to the augmented absolute construction with an introductory preposition *with*. When the unaugmented absolute clauses have adverbial functions for extension or enhancement, they can be changed into augmented absolute clauses in most cases by putting a prepositional complementizer (i.e., a conjunctive preposition) *with*.

In contrast to the unaugmented absolute constructions as shown in (12) and (13), the augmented absolute constructions are TP–adjoined PP structures as in (14) and (15).

(14) Augmented Absolute Constructions:

[with + NPsubj + modifiers]

Left PP Adjunction to TP: [Absolute clause–Main clause]



In *with*–augmented absolute constructions, two head movements occur: V–v–T & C–P Move. In a TP–adjoined PP structure, in which C moves to P, forming a category of prepositional complementizer (i.e., conjunctive preposition). In the same way as in the structures of the unaugmented absolute constructions (12) and (13), subject1 and subject2 are not coreferential, so Equi–NP deletion cannot occur here, either. The sequential verb movement (V–v–T move) occurs in *~ing* clauses, forming V–*ing* at T after V–v–T movement. Again, in the same way as in (13), in the structure of (14), PP with a CP clause can adjoin to a main clause TP and provide additional background information to the matrix clause. The absolute clauses have specific semantic roles which are represented syntactically in PP–CP adjunct clauses with clear structural

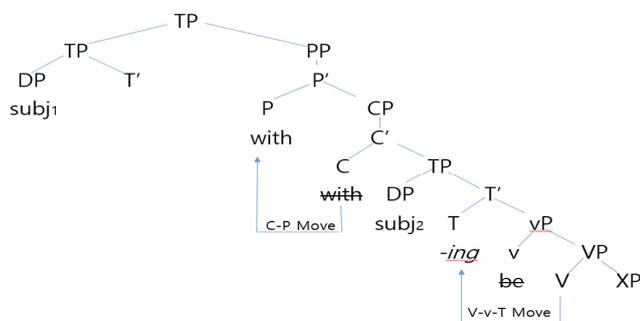
connections to the main clause which they modify.

As in the unaugmented clause (13), an absolute clause and a main clause can be translocated in the augmented absolute construction as well. The right-adjoined PP structure looks like (15) where an absolute clause appears at the sentence-final position.

(15) Augmented Absolute Constructions:

[with + NPsubj + modifiers]

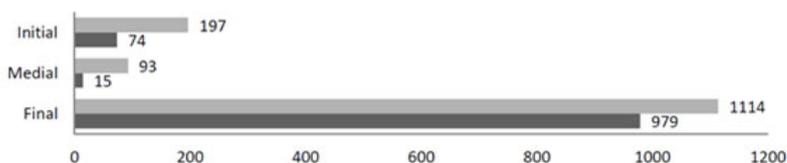
Right PP Adjunction to TP: [Main clause–Absolute clause]



In reality, the corpus data shows that from the Middle English up to present, adverbial adjunct clauses including absolute clauses occur at the sentence final position quite frequently than at the sentence initial position in the order of final position, initial position and then medial position as suggested by Fonteyn and Cuyckens (2013), and Fuhre (2010).<sup>19</sup>

Then it is natural that the sentence final free adjuncts are the unmarked forms in the order of the main clause plus the adjunct clause with no comma in front of the

<sup>19</sup> The following figure is from Fuhre (2010): the frequency of free adjuncts depending on the positions (Frequency Order: Final > Initial > Medial) (EngOrg = Original English (gray bar: 100% (1,404)) vs EngTran = Translated English (black bar: 100% (1,068))



adjunct clause since the order of [main clause – absolute clause] is the regular unmarked order. It leads to the claim that the PP–adjunction to TP can occur to the left or right side to express interdependent structural relations while making the former an adjunct–initial sentence and the latter an adjunct–final sentence.

### 2.3 Synchro–Diachronic Views for Absolute Constructions

#### 2.3.1 Why are absolute constructions productive in PDE?

The absolute construction has been undergoing the process of grammaticalization. Killie and Swan (2009) claim that the free adjuncts including absolute clauses have been on the process of grammaticalization during the Middle and Early Modern English period and this grammaticalization “never took place in the other Germanic languages.”<sup>20</sup> They suggest that while the free adjunct was modeled on Latin participial clauses, it cannot fully become a part of English grammar until the Middle English period. The free adjuncts show a dramatic rise in frequency between the Middle English and Early Modern English period. Consider the Germanic participle example in the Middle English period which hardly shows any clausal feature.

- (16) Cum þe deþe vp þe yuel, and descenden hij into helle al liueand. (c1350, PPCME2)<sup>21</sup>  
 ‘Come the death up the evil, and descend he into hell living.’  
 (Fonteyn and Cuyckens 2013)

Possibly due to the Latin influence on the Middle English, the original Germanic forms seem to gradually acquire more clausal features, resulting in the adjunct clauses through the processes of grammaticalization. As a result of grammaticalization from phrases to clauses, in PDE the absolute clauses (not phrases) have been used extensively in both written and spoken languages while very uncommon in all other Germanic languages. Killie and Swan (2009) argue that the success of the English free adjuncts can be traced back to a set of semantic and syntactic changes that occurred exclusively in English. This implies that the absolute construction has been productive

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<sup>20</sup> Unlike other Germanic language purists, English purists did not reject the free adjuncts, so English free adjuncts underwent a process of expansion and became a true part of the English grammatical system.

<sup>21</sup> Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English.

since the Middle English period. A language external factor to see why absolute constructions are productive in PDE can be found in different prescriptivist traditions. Unlike other Germanic languages, English has never opposed the use of absolute constructions.

van de Pol and Cuyckens's (2014) corpus study shows that there have never been any strong rules against the use of the absolute clauses in English, and conversely some recent academic writing guides have even started encouraging the use of absolute constructions in English to improve the flow of writing. Current English embraces the absolute construction as a useful addition to the language expression. Hennay and Mackenzie (2002) suggest that absolute constructions are compact and economical, providing the useful variation from the conventional adverbial clauses. As a result, the absolute constructions are used extensively in PDE.

### 2.3.2 Nominative or accusative absolute constructions

In unaugmented absolute constructions, the subject in absolute *~ing* clauses is usually nominative, so they are sometimes called as nominative absolute participles. Then the traditional prescriptive grammarian rejection is restricted to the use of the accusative absolute clauses in the unaugmented absolute constructions as in (17).

- (17) a. Her being my friend, I granted her request.  
 b. (*With*) her being my friend, I granted her request.

However, in PDE the accusative absolute participle as in (17) is quite acceptable, so the case of absolute clauses is not necessarily nominative.

In order to explain why both nominative and accusative cases are possible, let us see the frequency of augmented or unaugmented clauses in absolute constructions. van de Pol and Cuyckens (2014) show that augmented absolutes (introduced by a prepositional complementizer *with*) are more common than unaugmented absolutes without *with* even in informal registers of English: [with NP + *~ing*] > [NP + *~ing*]. They provide an explanation of why the English absolute construction retains its higher frequency and productivity rate in the augmented absolute clauses with a language-internal factor: to increase *with*-augmentation of absolute constructions is for clear boundaries between the more frequently used *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts (including gerunds and progressives). Then it is plausible to assume that unaugmented absolute clauses have a

covert prepositional complementizer *with* as in (17b). Syntactically, in the proposed structures for (un)augmented absolute constructions in (12~15), a covert prepositional complementizer P can assign the accusative case, so both nominative and accusative cases are possible as we desired.<sup>22</sup> The optionality of nominative or accusative case also supports the proposed (un)augmented structures in this paper.

### 3. Conclusion

The absolute constructions are used extensively in English. The point of absolute constructions in English is that “absolute” is manifested from two aspects: one is that the subject of an absolute clause is overt and non-coreferential with the subject of the main clause; the other is that it does not need a conjunction. The absolute clauses have specific semantic roles, but they lack any explicit syntactic connections to the main clause which they modify. So, this paper is concerned with three structural and semantic questions from a synchro–diachronic perspective: (i) what syntactic and semantic properties the absolute clauses have; (ii) why an overt subject cannot be deleted in the absolute clauses unlike other *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts; (iii) why the absolute clauses are productive in PDE unlike other Germanic languages.

Assuming two distinct types of the absolute clauses, that is, the unaugmented absolute clause [NP<sub>subj</sub> + *~ing*] and the augmented absolute clause [*with* + NP<sub>subj</sub> + modifiers], I propose a TP–adjoined CP structure for the former and a TP–adjoined PP structure for the latter. In the proposed structures of CP or PP adjunction, the structural and semantic connections are explained explicitly, providing a clear answer to the core question why a subject cannot be deleted in the absolute clauses unlike other *~ing* (participial) free adjuncts. Finally, the third question why the absolute clauses are productive in PDE is based on the diachronic factors of Latinism as well as the grammaticalization process since the Middle English period.

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<sup>22</sup> In structures (11) & (12), there are no overt element in C–position. The resultative clauses, though not absolute clauses, have overt complementizers like *thus, thereby, hence*: *~, thus/thereby/hence ~ing*.

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Examples in: English  
Applicable Languages: English  
Applicable Level: Tertiary

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