

A Grammar of Contrastive Stripping Construction with Subordinating Conjunctions in English*

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Cho, Sae-youn; Kim, Taeho & Lee, Han-gyu. (2022). A grammar of contrastive stripping construction with subordinating conjunctions in English. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 30(4), 125-144. The paper seeks to provide a syntactic and pragmatic account for the Contrastive Stripping Construction (CSC) in English. The pragmatic account will give a full support for our syntactic analysis. The issue here is on how to generate the CSC with a subordinate conjunction and how to give a right contrastive interpretation. Pointing out the problems of the Movement-Ellipsis analysis, we propose a construction-based analysis of the CSC, which interacts the English CSC rule with the lexical information on the lexemes such as *though*, *except* and *whereas*. It gives us a simple explanation on how to produce the CSCs with a subordinating conjunction and assign an appropriate contrastive interpretation to them.

Key Words: contrastive stripping construction, pragmatic, subordinating/ coordinating conjunction, contrast, lexical information

1. Data and Issues

Merchant (2003) provides a typical data of Negative Stripping Construction (NSC), which comprises of the coordinating conjunction 'but,' the negative 'not' and an NP as follows:

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The NSC with a coordinating conjunction: [*but (not) NP*]

- (1) a. Abby speaks passable Dutch, **but not Ben**.
 b. Abby speaks Dutch, **but Ben**? No way. (Merchant, 2003, p. 1)

Since the negative is optional as in (1a-b), we will call the NSC the Contrastive Stripping Construction (CSC) hereafter, unlike Merchant (2003).¹ In addition to the CSC with the coordinating conjunction above, he suggests the CSC with subordinating conjunctions such as *(al)though* to be possible as shown in (2).

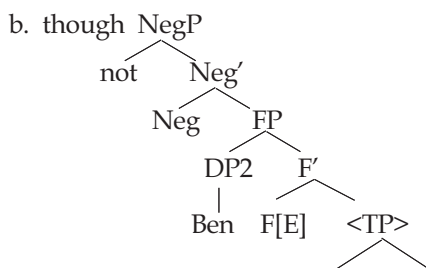
The CSC with a subordinating conjunction: [*(al)though not NP*]

- (2) Abby speaks passable Dutch, **(al)though *(not) Ben**. (Merchant, 2003, p. 7)

The CSC above can be schematized as [**Conjunction NEG(ative) XP**] (where Conjunction refers to Subordinating and/or Coordinating conjunction, NEG, *not* and XP, any phrasal category) (cf Bang & Cho, 2022).

To account for the properties of the CSC regardless of the conjunction type, Merchant (2003) seems to claim that the Movement-Ellipsis (ME) approach can be a good solution (Cf. Lobeck, 1995). More specifically, he believes that he may correctly analyze the CSC even with a subordinating conjunction under the ME approach as in (3):

- (3) a. Abby speaks passable Dutch, although not Ben.



t2 speaks passable Dutch (Merchant, 2003, p. 5)

1) We believe this term to be preferable in that the data show that the negative item is not obligatory for a contrastive reading. For further discussion, see Cho & Lee (2020) and Bang & Cho (2022).

The ME analysis can be accounted for as follows: assuming that the semantics of the CSC is derived from its immediately preceding clause-structure, the remnant ('Ben') at issue needs to be moved to the focus position (the Spec of the FP) and the TP undergoes deletion after the movement, as illustrated in (3b). Merchant (2003) claims that the ME analysis can be applied uniformly to generate the CSC pattern, [**Conjunction NEG XP**], regardless of the conjunction type, and to get the contrastive interpretation of the CSC.

However, the ME analysis appears to face some empirical and theoretical problems: Merchant (2003) claims that the NEG is optional for the CSC with a coordinating conjunction, whereas it is obligatory for the CSC with a subordinating conjunction, as in (1) and (2). Furthermore, since the NP 'Ben' of the CSC with a coordinating conjunction and with a subordinating conjunction is positioned in the Spec of the FP, it is construed as getting a focus under the ME analysis. However, the NP 'Ben' in the CSC with *but* in (1) gets a focus, while the NP 'Ben' in the CSC with *(al)though* does not. To see if the ME analysis is viable, we need to raise the following questions:

- (4) In the CSC pattern [**Conjunction NEG XP**],
- I. Syntactically,
 - 1) Is the NEG *not* optional or obligatory?
 - 2) Depending on the conjunction type, what categories can be realized for the XP position?
 - II. Semantically,
 - 3) Does the XP in the CSC get a focus regardless of the conjunction type?
 - 4) Are all CSCs able to receive a contrastive interpretation in the same way?

Against the ME approach, we claim that all CSCs, regardless of the conjunction type, can be generated by a CSC rule and a proper contrastive interpretation can be provided pragmatically.

To support our claim, section 2 provides the syntactic properties of the stripping construction at issue. On the basis of the properties, section 3 gives a pragmatic account of the constructions, which enables us to account for why they cannot be explained via the ME approach. In section 4, we propose an analysis of the CSC in Sign-Based Construction Grammar (SBCG) (Cf. Hans & Sag, 2012), after suggesting the lexical information of the connectives such as *(al)though*, *except* and *while/whereas*.

2. Lexical and Syntactic Properties of the CSC

It seems to be apparent that we need to figure out the lexical and syntactic properties of the CSC in order to provide a grammar of the construction at issue. In observing the properties, we focus on the optionality of the negative and the possible categories of the XP in the CSC pattern, i.e. [Conjunction NEG XP]. Further, when we deal with the CSC with a subordinating conjunction, we are going to use the subordinating conjunctions such as *(al)though*, *except*, and *while/whereas*.

2.1. The Optionality of Negatives in the CSC

Merchant (2003) claims that the CSC with the coordinating conjunction *but* may have a negative *not* optionally, whereas the CSC with the subordinator *(al)though* must have it, as illustrated in (1) and (2). On the other hand, Bang & Cho (2022) argues that the CSC regardless of the conjunction type may have a negative optionally. To support for the latter, we provide further corpus data as follows:

- (5) a. About half the ANC leadership, though not Mandela, also are members of the South African Communist Party. (COCA 1990)
 b. He would take it as a favor if you would accept it from him, though a stranger. (COCA 1994)
- (6) a. when I said it some people laughed except not Grandma, and not Mommy. (COCA 1994)
 b. School pictures were mailed out this week to everyone in Amy's class except Amy. (COCA 1995)
- (7) a. Jack held up his hand while not looking at Sarah as he cut her off. (COCA 2013)
 b. Even some Democratic lawmakers questioned the administration's overall approach to defeating the Islamic State while containing Iranian ambitions in the region. (COCA 2015)

As shown above, the stripping constructions with a subordinating conjunction *though* or *except* are all well-formed regardless of the existence of the negative *not*. This implies that the negative item is not required, but optional, for 'CSCs' against Merchant's claim,

and that the term 'NSC' can be a misnomer.²⁾

2.2. Possible Categories for the XP in the CSC

Bang & Cho (2022) claims that although the typical NSC may have the pattern [Conjunction (NEG) NP], any phrasal category can occur in place of the NP position. The claim can be well supported if we look at all the stripping constructions with *(al)though* and *except* in (8-9) below.

- (8) a. A 386 machine can use Windows, although not Windows 95.
(COCA 1995)
- b. It will be difficult for him to lead, although not impossible.
(COCA 1997)
- c. The blood was stopped, although with difficulty. (COCA 2012)
- d. Canada was a mostly, though not entirely, civilized society before and during the Holocaust, as witnessed by its ... (COCA 2019)
- e. It is our view that, although challenging, these issues are far from insurmountable
(COCA 2013)
- (9) a. School pictures were mailed out this week to everyone in Amy's class except Amy. (COCA 1995)
- b. I don't see an option except going without materials.
(COCA 2008)
- c. You don't have to do anything, except give him a chance.
(COCA 2004)
- d. We don't know them, except to say hello. *Times*, Sunday Times (2016)
- e. A Spurlock was shouting about "losing his future family",
except not in those words. (COCA 2010)

As in (8-9), the stripping constructions with *(al)though* and *except* can also occur with various categories other than an NP. However, the stripping constructions with *while/whereas* exhibit a little bit different distributional behavior in the sense that the subject NP cannot occur, but only predicative categories can as seen in (10):

2) The definition of the CSC will be offered in section 3. Almost all data are collected from COCA.

- (10) a. So, "real judge," while not technically inaccurate, seems like an overstatement.
(COCA 2013)
- b. I think Obama is doing all he can do, while not on vacation.
(COCA 2012)
- c. Our government's own count of the poor, while not denying their existence, also minimizes their number
(COCA 2012)
- d. ... but it could outperform on the upside, whereas not perform as poorly on the downside moves.
(COCA 2020)
- e. And that, it seems to me, whereas not impossible, is unlikely.
(COCA 1991)

As demonstrated in (5-9), *(al)though* and *except* allow any phrasal categories for CSCs, but *while* and *whereas* in CSCs should co-occur with predicative categories, but not with any subject category. The distributional difference between the two types can be assumed to be attributed to their lexical properties.

In short, we can conclude that stripping constructions with subordinating conjunctions do not require the negative *not* and the conjunction lexically determines the category value of the XP. In the next section, we consider the semantic and pragmatic issues on the CSC, focusing on related contrastive interpretations.

3. Pragmatic Account of the CSCs

This section aims at providing a semantic-pragmatic account for the contrastive stripping construction (CSC) including the subordinate conjunctions *though* and *except*. The CSC refers to the construction which consists of 'Conjunction (NEG) XP.' We will demonstrate that the CSC should be interpreted contextually, not structurally or semantically.³⁾ This will support the claim that the constructions should be base-generated, not derived from their deep structures through deletion. Then we will introduce two pragmatic functions, addition and correction, which the subordinate conjunctions, *though* and *except*, have in common. Lastly, some residual issues will be discussed briefly for our future research.

3) Cho & Lee (2020) already supports this approach by dealing with the CSC including the coordinate conjunctions.

3.1. Semantic and Pragmatic Contrast

Contrast refers to a relation between two states of affairs which have a contradiction in association with a certain aspect. It can be represented semantically or pragmatically (by inference). For example, in (11) the first and second clauses are in contrast in association with the property of height: *tall* and *short* are semantically opposite. However, (12) does not show the semantic contrast as in (11). We have a belief that, if one is sick, he cannot go to school. However, the second clause in (12) tells that Bill went to school, against our expectation. This contrast is formed by inference, so it is called as pragmatic contrast.⁴⁾

(11) Bill is tall, but Andy is short.

(12) Bill is sick, but he went to school today.

The subordinate conjunctions *though* and *except* are used mostly to induce a pragmatic contrast by introducing what is incompatible with the truth of the main clause. It is not meant to negate or weaken the truth of the main clause; but rather to emphasize the importance of the information delivered by the main clause to achieve the speaker's goal.⁵⁾ For example, in (13), *though* introduces the statement 'it was raining,' which can imply that Bill took an umbrella. But the main clause states the opposite. This way, *though* can place the main clause and the subordinate one in pragmatic contrast. Thereby the fact of Bill's not taking an umbrella can be emphasized. In (14), *except* introduces the statement that 'she did something that made you angry,' and it rejects the truth of the main clause that she did not do anything. However, the purpose of using *except* is not to claim that the main clause describes the false statement. The speaker knows that *except* can function to weaken the degree of the truth of the main clause; nevertheless, his using it is assumed to be an intentional exaggeration to achieve his goal better. Thereby *except* induces the contrastive relation between the main clause and the *except* clause. In a

4) Traditionally, and in Busquets (2007), the terms 'direct/indirect contrast' are used. But to make the semantic and pragmatic distinction clear, 'semantic' and 'pragmatic' will be used here instead.

5) The contrastive functions of the coordinate and subordinate conjunctions ((11-12) and (13-14)) can be performed in different ways, depending on the speaker's purposes. The coordinate conjunction is used to place its coordinated clauses on the equal level of importance. But the subordinate conjunctions put more weight on the information of the main clause, which is considered to be more effective for the speaker's communicative goal.

nutshell, the contrastive function induced by the conjunctions, *though* and *except*, is not intended to demonstrate the semantic contradiction, as seen in (11). Rather, the pragmatic contrast is intended to emphasize the significance of the information delivered by the main clause.

(13) Bill didn't take an umbrella though it was raining.

(14) She didn't do anything, except make you angry. (COCA 1991)

CSCs represent a kind of communicative strategies to communicate economically and effectively by exploiting available contextual information. Languages have many expressions which are not structurally well-formed, but used in everyday life. Take for example 'No Checks, No Exceptions.'⁶ This is a notice board placed on a counter of a cafeteria. It has no antecedent clause which guarantees its deep structure. But it is used and understood naturally. Only the context helps us understand that the cafeteria will never accept checks, and no exception will be allowed. This shows that we use language, making the most of contexts available, and sentence structures are not the only way for communication. Interestingly, such expressions are formed not randomly, but with some patterns, for example, such as 'negative + noun (phrase)' as seen above. Likewise, CSCs are one of the kind. As will be seen, their interpretations should be inferred from the contextual information available. They cannot be determined structurally, that is, depending on the structures of the antecedent clauses (structure-based approach). Some of the CSCs seem to be interpreted by looking back at their antecedent clauses, but it will be easily proved that most of them cannot be determined without recourse to context. This will lead to the conclusion that the CSCs should be base-generated.

3.2. The Pragmatic Account of the *though/except*-CSCs

Let's look first at the cases which show that the *though/except*-CSCs seem to be structurally retrieved and interpreted from the structure of the main clause. The examples (15-18) have the CSCs which include the XPs which have the identical grammatical roles as their antecedents in the main clauses. In (15), *no tie* has the same grammatical role as the object of *dress pants and a white shirt* in the main clause; in (16) *Ben* functions as the subject as *Abby* does in the main clause; in (17) the constituent introduced by *except*

6) From Mey (2001), p. 18.

functions as a predicate in the main clause; and in (18), *Grandma* and *Mommy* serve the same grammatical role, subject, as *some people* in the main clause. That is, the two constituents with the identical grammatical roles are put in contrast in association with the states of affairs described by the main clauses. So the CSCs in (15-18) can be considered to have the same deep structures as their main clauses, and they can be derived through deletion from them. Likewise, their meanings can be retrieved that way.

- (15) He always wore dress pants and a white shirt, though no tie. (COCA 2013)
 (16) Abby speaks passable Dutch, though not Ben. (Merchant, 2003)⁷
 (17) You don't have to do anything, except give him a chance. (COCA 2004)
 (18) when I said it some people laughed except not Grandma,
and not Mommy. (COCA 1994)

However, it is easy to find many CSC examples which cannot be analyzed through the structure-based derivational approach as seen in (15-18): the XP in the CSC does not have its corresponding constituent in the main clause which is in contrast with it. It means that the main clause does not provide any structural basis for the deep structure of the CSC. However, the CSC should be interpreted, and it is easily proven that its interpretation should be determined contextually, not structurally.

Take the examples (19-20) for the *though*-CSCs, first. In (19), the CSC should be interpreted as 'I am not a bowler(=cricket pitcher)'; *no bowler* cannot have its corresponding structural element in the main clause.⁸ The speaker has a belief that the bowler has a good arm. The fact is that he is not a bowler, but he has a good arm. Thereby the contrastive relation can be built up on the basis of his belief. In (20), the CSC is interpreted as 'he is a stranger.' It cannot be obtained by just looking at the structure of the main clause. The example was uttered in the situation where 'he' bought a

7) The example (16) is the one employed by Merchant (2003) for his claim. However, the CSCs including an NP with the subject role cannot be found from the COCA. This implies that Merchant's example can be grammatically correct, but rarely used in real life.

8) The deep structure of the CSC in (19) might be assumed to be like the first coordinate clause 'I'm a Gold Glove.' In that case, it should be explained why the first, not the second, coordinate clause farther from the CSC should be chosen for the deep structure of the CSC. However, no structural rule or principle can provide any solution.

precious dress and he asked the speaker to give it as a present to the listener. It is generally assumed that such a present is given and taken between people who know each other. This assumption is in contrast with the interpretation of the CSC.

(19) I'm a Gold Glove and have a good arm though no bowler. (COCA 2006)

(20) He would take it as a favor if you would accept it from him,
though a stranger. (COCA 1994)

The *except*-CSCs also demonstrate that their interpretations cannot be obtained from the deep structures of the main clauses. The speaker uttered (21) to describe the hair of Lana who just came into a bar and attracted people's attention. The CSC is interpreted as 'it(=her hair) was not green.' The structure of this CSC might be assumed to be derived not from its immediately preceding utterance, but from the first one whose verb is *looked*. It cannot be the verb for any deep structure of the CSC. Otherwise, we must obtain the contextually unnatural meaning, 'her hair did not look green,' which is against our intuition and the fact that her hair was not green. The main clause which says that Lana's hair looked stiff like floral wire can lead us to imagine that her hair is green because we know that the floral wire is green. This implication rejects, and is in contrast with the interpretation of the CSC. In (22), the CSC including a PP is contextually interpreted as 'the children are not allowed to drop maths, English, and science,' which is in contrast with the meaning of the main clause. Contextually, the object of the PP in the CSC corresponds to that of the verb *drop* in the main clause; it means that its structure cannot be derived from that of the main clause. The CSCs in (21-22) are shown to be contextually in pragmatic contrast with the main clauses.

(21) It looked quite stiff. Like floral wire, except not green. (COCA 1998)

(22) Children who take exams early will be allowed to drop a subject
except in the case of maths, English and science. (Collins dictionary. com)

As discussed in 3.1, the CSC is in pragmatic contrast with its main clause, and its communicative goal is not to weaken or negate the truth or factuality of the main clause, but to deliver the speaker's intention to emphasize the significance of its information at the time of uttering. This function can be exploited in different situations to perform the speaker's different purposes; adding information to clear the listener's possible confusion

caused by implicatures of the main clause (additive function), and correcting the wrong information in it (correction function).

As explained, the contrast of the CSC is contextually formed based on the implicatures from the main clause. So a lot of possible inferences can be made at the uttering moment, and they can mislead the listener to misunderstandings. The speaker does not want such situations to occur. He wants to deliver his intention properly, so that he uses the contrastive function of the CSC to help the listener clear such possible confusions. To explain this additive function, let's look at the *though*-CSCs in (23-24), first. In (23), the main clause can mislead us to assume that Mandela would join the South African Communist Party which was founded in 1921 to fight for the rights of African black people and nations, because he had fought for his black people and against Apartheid. So, by adding the information in contrast with the possible inference, the CSC serves to make the speaker's intention clear by getting rid of such a miscalculation. In (24), the additive function of the CSC has a role of getting rid of the listener's possible conjecture that 'he' had a great wealth.

- (23) About half the ANC leadership, though not Mandela, also are
members of the South African Communist Party. (COCA 1990)
- (24) He was rich, though never rich enough, and ... (COCA 1999)

The *except*-CSC also can serve the additive function, as seen in (25-26). From the main clause in (25), the listener is most likely to imagine that a Spurlock was shouting as 'I am going to lose my future family,' So the speaker of (25) adds the CSC to make clear that the Spurlock did deliver the meaning by uttering different expressions. The regional background for (26) is Ireland, and it was uttered to Irish students. So the main clause is most likely to mislead the listeners to assume that the school video is about an Irish school. To help them to get out of the wrong assumption, the CSC adds the information.

- (25) A Spurlock was shouting about "losing his future family,"
except not in those words. (COCA 2010)
- (26) Come over, guys. Okay, so this is like a school video, except not like
an Irish school, more like an American school, and it's prom night.
(COCA 2016)

The *though/except*-CSCs can also be used with the pragmatic function of correction; to correct some mis-information provided in the main clause. Even if the speaker uses the CSC to correct the wrong information, he does not intend to negate the whole information of the main clause. The information of the CSC is incompatible with that given in the main clause, but it does not affect the speaker's true intention; that is why it is corrected as if an annex. Take some *though*-CSC examples first. In the main clause of (27), the speaker says what he heard from 'them'; that the listener took a hike through the bush. The speaker knows that 'they' did have the wrong information, so he corrects it by using the CSC; Irene took a hike not through the bush, but through the woods. The speaker's main goal is to emphasize that Irene was taking a hike, so the correction in the CSC is not important, but a trifle. The example (28) is about Joseph and Maria.⁹⁾ In the main clause, he(=Joseph) did not know, but had a copulation with her(=Maria), which looks like he made an illicit act. However, the CSC corrects it: he did not make an illegal relation, because the woman was his wife. In ancient days, such a copulation was considered as a conjugal act. Based on the historic, biblical knowledge, the CSC in (28) serves the correction function.

(27) Wow, Irene! I guess you were out taking a hike through the -- through the bush, as they say, up in Ontario, though the woods. (COCA 1994)

(28) Or "but he knew her not" answering to the Hebrew that is, had carnal knowledge of her, or copulation with her, though his wife. (COCA 2012)

The *except*-CSC also can be used to correct the wrong information in the main clause. In (29), the main clause claims that Michael Jackson was not white, instead of saying that he was black; because it is well known that he got many cosmetic surgeries to become white. By using the CSC, the speaker correct the claim that he was not white in his later years. However, this correction does not change the speaker's intention that Michael Jackson was not white from birth. The example (30) was uttered in the situation where Mr. Khalilzad, the former US Ambassador to Afghanistan, joined the Afghanistan government of President Hamid Karzai as the chief executive officer. In the main clause, the speaker says that Mr. Khalizard had the power of prime minister and did the work of the Afghan prime minister. But the CSC corrected the information by saying that he was not appointed prime minister. The correction does not affect the speaker's intention that

9) This story comes from Mathews 1:25.

Mr. Khalilzard had the power of the prime minister and served the role in Afghanistan.

(29) Michael Jackson was not white, except perhaps in his later years.
(COCA 2010)

(30) The position would allow Mr. Khalilzard to serve as a prime minister,
except not prime minister (COCA 2012)

3.3. Two Residual Issues

Here we will have a brief discussion on two residual issues of the CSCs: how to interpret the negative element in the *except*-CSC, and the properties of the CSCs with the conjunctions *whereas* and *while*.

Interestingly enough, many examples can be found that the CSCs with *except* and *except not* produce the identical interpretation contextually, not semantically. For example, (31) has the CSC involving *except not*, which should be contextually interpreted as 'Grandma and Mommy did not laugh.' Semantically, 'some people' and 'Grandma and Mommy' are in contrast in association with the situation of laughing, and the use of *except* only, with no negative item, can induce the contrast: 'except Grandma and Mommy' can be interpreted in the same way as in (31). The examples (32a & b) also demonstrate the same phenomenon.¹⁰⁾

(31) when I said it some people laughed except not Grandma, and not Mommy. (COCA 1994) (=8)

(32) a. Everyone in this family is a genius except me.
b. Everyone in this family is a genius except not me.

Then we need to provide a plausible account of what motivates *except* and *except not* to be used interchangeably and when, and what pragmatic factor will work to choose either one. Unfortunately, the satisfactory explanation cannot be provided now, but it can be said that *except not* seems to be used with more emphasis on the negative interpretation the CSC should deliver. A further study will be expected to explain it fully.

The second residual issue is that the conjunctions *whereas* and *while* also can indicate a

10) Cho & Lee (2020) also explains a similar phenomenon for the *but* CSC. Even though the CSC in (i) has no negative item, it is interpreted as if it has one.

(i) Beer makes me feel sick. But vodka. (COCA 1997) (Cho & Lee (13))

contrast between the main and subordinate clauses, and their CSCs can be used, as in (33-36). However, as discussed in Section 2, their structural behavior is very restrictive, in the light that only (part of) the predicate can take the XP of the CSC; the subject of the subordinate clause cannot appear in the CSC, as seen in (33-36). This is a big difference from the behaviors of the *though/except*-CSCs which allow any items to occur.

- (33) And that, it seems to me, whereas not impossible, is unlikely
(COCA 1991)
- (34) ... it could outperform on the upside, whereas not perform as poorly
on the downside moves. (NOWC 2020)
- (35) Jack held up his hand while not looking at Sarah as he cut her off.
(COCA 2013)
- (36) I think Obama is doing all he can do, while not on vacation.
(COCA 2012)

Even though the clear explanation on the behavior of the *whereas/while* -CSCs cannot be provided at this point, it can be assumed that they can describe the contrast between the states of affairs performed by the same subject of the main and subordinate clauses. On the other hand, the *though /except*-CSCs can allow the contrast between the different subjects. So what can be figured out at this point is that the *whereas/while*-CSCs are more structure-based and less context-dependent, while the *though/except* -CSCs are more context-dependent.

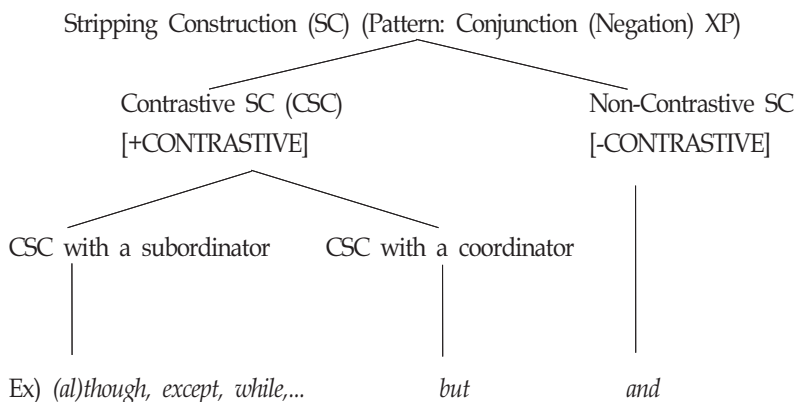
4. Our Proposal: A Grammar of the CSC

The purpose of this section is to present a toy grammar of Contrastive Stripping Constructions in English, which is based on the distributional behaviors and meanings of the target pattern, i.e. [Conjunction Neg XP]. Merchant (2003) adopts the ME analysis based on the assumption that the negative item is obligatory and the XP gets a focus. In section 2 and 3, we have pointed out that in the CSC with a subordinating conjunction, the negative item is optional and the XP does not get a focus. Thereby, we reject the ME analysis by Merchant (2003) for the target.

To explain the properties of the target, we claim that its conjunction of the CSC

determines the possible category value of the XP, the possibility of a contrastive reading, and the optionality of the negative item. Syntactically, the generating system of the target pattern can be provided under a slightly modified version of SBCG (2012). As for the contrastive meaning, the subordinating conjunctions induce a contrast contextually between the main clause and the CSC. As mentioned in section 3, the propositional interpretation of the CSC cannot be derived only from its immediately preceding sentence but from the discourse context. This semantic/pragmatic property can be encoded by using [+/-CONTRAST] in SBCG; in fact, it is a simple way of representing the pragmatic property of the CSC with a subordinating conjunction. Then the stripping constructions can be classified as contrastive vs. non-contrastive, and the contrastive stripping constructions as CSCs with a subordinator and with a coordinator, as seen in (37).

(37) The Classification of Stripping Construction



Based on the classification of the CSC above, we can provide the lexemes of the conjunctions such as *(al)though, except* and *while* as follows:

(38) The lexeme *(al)though/except/while/whereas*:

[PHON / ðəʊ / ɪk'sept / waɪ
 CONTEXT [+CONTRASTIVE]]

It needs to be noted that the lexical information of each conjunction has [+CONTRASTIVE] as the CONTEXT value, and it induces a contrastive reading pragmatically. We also propose a Construction Rule (39) for the CSC to generate various CSCs:

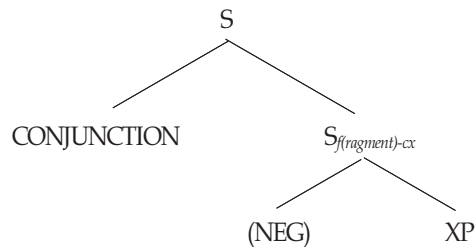
(39) **The Construction Rule for the CSC¹¹**

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SYN S[CONJ A [CONTEXT}\underline{1}\text{][}\alpha\text{ CONTRASTIVE]}} \\ \text{CONTEXT } \underline{1} \text{ \& \dots} \\ \text{DTRS } \langle S_{f(\text{ragment})\text{-cx}} \rangle \end{array} \right]$$

(where $\alpha = +/ -$ and $A = \textit{but}, (\textit{al})\textit{though}, \textit{except}, \textit{while}, \textit{whereas}, \dots$)

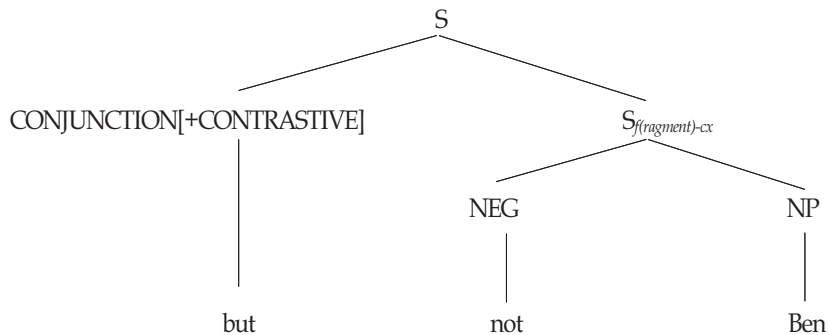
As illustrated in (39), the CSC construction (CSC-cx) states that the CSC itself has the two daughters (DTRS), i.e. the conjunction A and $S_{f(\text{ragment})\text{-cx}}$ and its CONTEXT value, $\underline{1}$, is shared with the conjunction A. And the $S_{f\text{-cx}}$ can be interpreted as S \rightarrow (Negative) XP. Then, the CSC in (39) can be represented as follows:

(40)



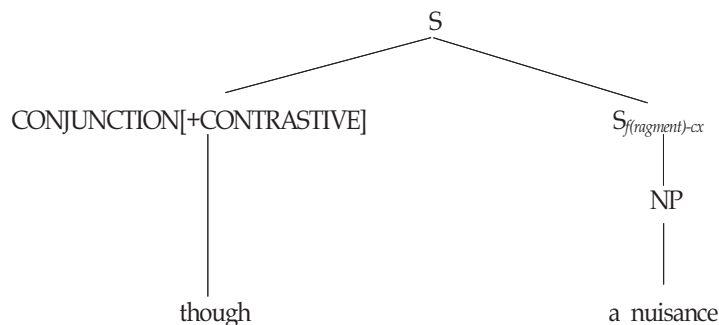
To demonstrate how the lexemes in (38) and the CSC rule in (39) work, we will analyze two representative CSC data under our base-generated approach. The first is the CSC with the coordinating conjunction *but* is 'but' from the sentence 'Abby speaks passable Dutch, but not Ben' in (1a). It can be generated by the CSC-cx as follows:

11) In this construction rule, the f-cx stands for the fragment construction, which can be represented as S \rightarrow (ADV) XP. (Cf. Kim (2015), Kim & Cho (2018))

(41) The CSC with the coordinating conjunction *but* in (1a)

Specifically, when the CONJUNCTION value of the CSC, i.e. *A*, is *but*, it encodes [+CONTRASTIVE] as a CONTEXT value by the definition of (39) and the negative item is optional, but appears in this case, depending on the lexical constraint of the conjunction *but*.¹² The AVM [CONJUNCTION [+CONTRASTIVE]] induces the contrastive interpretation between the two propositions; Abby's speaking passible Dutch and Ben's not speaking passible Dutch. The coordinate conjunction *but* puts equal weight of importance on the two propositions, as discussed in section 3. The second example is the CSC with the subordinating conjunction (*al*)*though* from the sentence 'She's nice, though a nuisance,' and it is represented as in (42). This is a case where the negative item does not appear.

(42)



Similar to (41), the lexeme *though* in (38) and the CSC rule in (39) allow us to draw the tree diagram (42). In this case, if the CONJUNCTION value *A* is *though*, the CONJUNCTION has a CONTEXT constraint, [+CONTRASTIVE], and hence this CSC has a

¹² For further discussions, see Cho & Lee (2020).

contrastive reading in the PRAGMATIC domain. As for the optionality of the negative, the lexeme, *though*, encodes no constraint so that S_{f-cx} as the DTRS value has a single NP value by the definition of (38) and (39). The AVM [CONJUNCTION[+CONTRASTIVE]] induces a pragmatic contrast between ‘she’s nice’ and ‘she’s a nuisance.’ The two propositions cannot be in direct contrast. Contextually, the speaker has a belief that a nice person is not a nuisance. Based on the belief, the proposition ‘she’s nice’ can imply that she is not a nuisance, and the implicature is in contrast with ‘she’s a nuisance.’ Unlike the coordinating conjunction *but*, the subordinate conjunction *though* puts more weight on the main clause.

The CSCs with other subordinators also can be analyzed as illustrated in (41) and (42). This construction-based approach allows us to use a CSC rule and related lexemes to capture the distributional behaviors of the CSCs with all types of conjunctions. Further, the contrastive reading of the CSC with coordinating and/or subordinating conjunctions can be accounted for pragmatically without postulating need-based structural rules. The key concept of this approach is that the seemingly independent two components, syntax and pragmatics, interact closely with each other to produce the right strings and an appropriate contrastive reading.

5. Concluding Remarks

It is not surprising that non-sentential utterances in natural language can deliver a complete propositional meaning. In this regard, the CSC pattern, i.e. [**Conjunction (NEG) XP**], invites empirical and theoretical interests: theoretically, Merchant (2003) suggests that the CSC with the conjunction *but* allows an optional negative item while the CSC with *(al)though* does not. Furthermore, Merchant (2003)’s ME analysis assumes the NP movement to the Spec of the Focus Phrase to account for why the moved NP gets a focus. This structure-based analysis seems to capture the interaction in that it can explain the syntax and semantics of the CSC. However, a closer examination of the CSC data reveals the fact that it cannot be the case. Specifically, the CSC can have an optional negative item, contra Merchant (2003). Moreover, for the CSC with a coordinating conjunction, the XP can get a focus, delivering a contrastive reading. On the other hand, the CSC with a subordinating conjunction, the XP cannot attract a focus, though it delivers a contrastive meaning. Such idiosyncratic properties may be a puzzle to the ME analysis.

To account for the properties of the CSC in English, we have claimed that the conjunction of the CSC determines the possible category value of the XP and the negative item is optional. Following SBCG (2012), We have implemented this claim to provide a CSC rule and related lexems. The contrastive reading can be represented through the interaction between the CSC rule and the lexical information of each lexeme. The proposed grammar of the CSC is not a full picture, but the construction-based analysis is a right approach to explaining the syntactic and pragmatic properties of the CSCs. Our further research will be able to provide its full-fledged grammar.

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