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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Collocational and idiomatic aspects of composite predicates in the history of English / edited by Laurel J. Brinton, Minoji Akimoto.

p. cm. -- (Studies in language companion series, ISSN 0165-7763 ; v. 47)

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

1. English language--Syntax. 2. English language--Grammar, Generative. 3. English language--Grammar, Historical. 4. English language--Verb phrase. I. Brinton, Laurel J. II. Akimoto, Minoji, 1941- . III. Series.

PE1385.C69 1999

425--dc21

ISBN 90 272 3050 1 (Eur.) / 1 55619 933 3 (US) (alk. paper)

99-10762

CIP

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John Benjamins Publishing Co. • P.O.Box 75577 • 1070 AN Amsterdam • The Netherlands

John Benjamins North America • P.O.Box 27519 • Philadelphia PA 19118-0519 • USA

1.2.3 *Complex prepositions*

“Phrasal preposition” or “complex preposition” (Quirk et al. 1985: 670) denotes the structure ‘Preposition₁ + Noun + Preposition₂’. A variety of prepositions may occupy the first position, e.g. *in* (*in relation to*), *with* (*with regard to*), *by* (*by means of*), *for* (*for the sake of*), *on* (*on account of*), *at* (*at variance with*), as well as the second position, e.g., *of* (*in view of*), *for* (*in return for*), *to* (*in addition to*), *with* (*in conformity with*). While the noun most often has a zero determiner, the definite article (e.g., *with the exception of*) is not infrequent; the indefinite article (e.g., *as a result of*) is rare. The largest class of nouns in this structure is the verb-related abstract (e.g., *use, relation, order*) (see Quirk and Mulholland 1964: 66, 71).

1.2.4 *Similarities among the structures*

Despite obvious differences, complex verbs, phrasal verbs, and complex prepositions share a number of characteristics. The most obvious is their interchangeability with simple lexical items. Complex prepositions are sometimes equivalent to simple prepositions, as in:

in spite of	despite
on behalf of	for
in the process of	during
on account of	because (of)
by means of	via

Both complex verbs and phrasal verbs are replaceable with simple verbs, though this interchangeability works in different ways. Complex verbs are interchangeable with the verbs related to the deverbal nouns forming the complex verb, as in:

give a grin	grin
give consideration to	consider
have a talk	talk
have an argument	argue
make a claim	claim
make a choice of	choose
do a dive	dive
do a translation of	translate