Equality versus Similarity Constructions in English

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the analysis of equality comparative constructions in English with reference to the study of comparison in *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* (Huddleston et al. 2002), where a distinction is made between scalar and non-scalar comparison.

The author proposes a unitary analysis of scalar and non-scalar equality comparisons and interprets the relationships between equality and similarity using two explanatory mechanisms: a similarity-identity continuum and a quantification scale. The former accounts for gradience in likeness between terms of comparison, whereas the latter explains the difference between scalar equality and non-scalar similarity constructions.

The paper also aims to clarify the nature of the mutual relations between as- and like-constructions that function as predicative and manner complements, as well as to explain the competition of as and like in manner complements.

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