Modern Swedish is characterized by a strong subject position marking constraint, which oftentimes requires the insertion of expletive elements, even though these seem to carry little or no information. Such is the case for det ‘it’ as non-referential subject, but also for som ‘that’ as complementizer in subjectless relative clauses. Southern Swedish dialects, however, allow for constructions that are reminiscent of subjectless relative clauses while lacking an overt complementizer. This article focuses on such constructions. A fundamental question is, of course, if they can be analyzed as relative clauses, as has traditionally been the practice. However, this approach has been put into question, and instead, it has been suggested that the construction type represents instances of serial verb constructions. In this article it is shown that both analyses are justified, but that they apply in different environments. The Southern Swedish structures in question appear in two varieties, depending on the matrix verbs. If the matrix verb is ha ‘have’, the construction must be analyzed as involving a serial verb construction. The use of matrix vara ‘be’, however, warrants a relative clause analysis. The consequences of the dual approach are that (i) subjectless but unheaded relative clauses in Southern Swedish do indeed exist, and that (ii) the subject marking constraint in Swedish is not as rigorous as has been claimed in the literature. In other words, there are several strategies available to make syntactic structure visible, not solely by way of expletive elements.

Keywords: relative clauses, pseudo-coordination, serial verb constructions, subject constraint, complementizer omission, stylistic fronting, Swedish, Danish.