

THE MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
“AT, IN, ON AND TO”
INDICATING A POINT OF ARRIVAL



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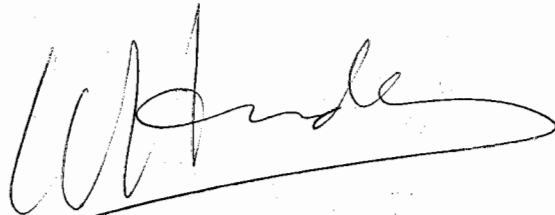
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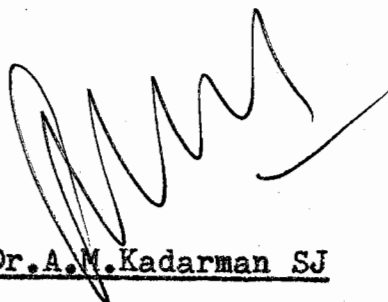
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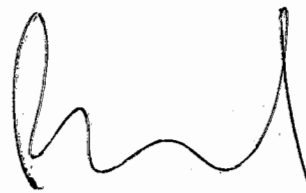
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INTRODUCTION

The fact shows us that students of English as a second language face various difficulties related to the use of prepositions. In this thesis the writer wants to talk about the possible sources of difficulty faced by most Indonesian senior high school students in learning the prepositions at, in, on and to which indicate a point of arrival and also how to overcome such difficulties, so that students can learn the prepositions correctly and accurately.

The difficulties arise because of the complexity of the prepositions themselves. Most English prepositions usually have several meanings and there are a great number of exceptions and special uses. The uses of prepositions, in some cases, are unstable. Besides, the interference of their native language and the previous teaching also influence the way they are learning the prepositions. In relation to the last two concepts, namely : the influence of their native language and the previous teaching, students may build their own strategy in responding or gaining the following teaching materials they are learning, and this is not always the right way to learn the prepositions. Therefore, the writer presents the remedial teaching at the end. This remedial teaching is supposed to help students to eliminate their difficulties dealing with the subject matter concerned.

This thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter is about the prognostic tests which are of two types, namely : the multiple-choice test and the Indonesian-English translation test. The writer talks about the prognostic tests first because the writer wants to know the students'

ability on the prepositions concerned and at once he wants to see the results of them. By obtaining the data or the results of the prognostic tests from the students, the writer is able to observe and analyse the possible sources of their difficulty in learning the prepositions, and eventually the writer can present the way of solving their problems. The next chapter, that is chapter II, shows us the results and percentages of the prognostic tests. This chapter is placed next to the first one because the writer wants to make the readers easily understand and see the students' results, by looking at the provided diagrams, on the subject matter concerned.

After seeing the prognostic tests and their results, the writer steps into chapter III. This chapter talks about the sources of difficulty faced by Indonesian senior high school students in learning the prepositions. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part is concerning the common sources of difficulty and the second part is concerned with special problems. The goal of discussing the sources of difficulty is to make us realize and understand that students do have a great number of difficulties in learning prepositions. In chapter IV the writer discusses the remedial teaching. This remedial teaching is supposed to help the students to solve their difficulties in learning the prepositions so that they can understand the uses of the prepositions correctly and use them properly and accurately. Then, in the following chapter, that is chapter V, the writer talks about some guidelines. These guidelines are actually some principles that can be used by students to learn and understand exactly what a preposition is, where it is placed and also its characteristics which

are different from adverbial particles or adverbs. By understanding the characteristics of prepositions the writer expects that students, later, are able to use the prepositions concerned correctly. To end this thesis the writer would give some closing remarks in the form of conclusion.

I. Prognostic Tests

After giving the prognostic tests to SMA De Britto and Stella Duce students on 3rd March 1981, 5th March 1981 and 19th March 1981, the writer has some obvious data which says that most of the students are still weak in using the prepositions at, in, on and to which indicate a point of arrival.

In this respect, the writer gives two types of tests to the students, namely : the multiple-choice test and the Indonesian-English translation test. The writer gives these two kinds of tests to the students because the writer wants to have the guiding results. If the choices or alternatives in the multiple-choice test are not provided, it may be possible for the students to choose other prepositions which may not have anything to do with the prepositions which indicate a point of arrival.

In the Indonesian-English translation test the writer also provides the verbs to translate the underlined words. In this case, the writer wants to observe the way the students are thinking in choosing the prepositions.

By doing so, the writer can easily analyse the results of the prognostic tests and easily predict the possible sources of their difficulty in learning the prepositions concerned.

The following are the tests given to SMA De Britto and Stella Duce students.

- I. Choose the correct alternative between brackets.
1. When you come (at, to, in, -, on) the traffic light, turn right.
2. We had to get (at, to, in, -, on) the cottage before dark.

3. They reached (at,to,in,-,on) the beach at 7 a.m. yesterday.
4. After she had arrived (at,to,in,-,on) the railway station,she went straight to the booking-office.
5. When it comes (at,to,in,-,on) Friday,I am too tired to go out.
6. Last week my father attended (at,to,in,-,on) a Chinese wedding with my mother and sisters.
7. She started to feel old when she got (at,to,in,-on) 20.
8. Our plane landed (at,to,in,-,on) London on its way from New York to Moscow.
9. My brother,Tom,will have attained (at,to,in,-,on) my grandfather's estate by the end of this year.
10. He landed (at,to,in,-,on) my house just as I was leaving.
11. The discussions have come (at,to,in,-,on) a deadlock.
12. They descended (at,to,in,-,on) me at six o'clock yesterday evening.
13. When Joyce reached (at,to,in,-,on) 25,she began to feel uneasy.
14. After struggling against the strong storm,the old man on the ship at last got (at,to,in,-,on) the shore.
15. When you come (at,to,in,-,on) Yogyakarta,take the road to Surakarta.

II. Translate the following Indonesian sentences into proper English. Use the provided verbs in brackets.

1. Jika anda sampai di lampu lalu-lintas,beloklah ke kanan. (to come)

2. Kita harus sampai di pondok itu sebelum waktu malam.
(to get)
3. Mereka sampai di pantai tersebut pada pukul tujuh kemarin pagi. (to reach)
4. Setelah dia tiba di stasiun kereta api, dia langsung menuju ke loket karcis. (to arrive)
5. Jika sampai pada hari Jumat, aku terlalu capai untuk pergi ke luar. (to come)
6. Minggu lalu ayahku menghadiri perkawinan orang Cina dengan ibu dan saudara perempuanku. (to attend)
7. Susan mulai merasa tua ketika dia mencapai umur dua puluh. (to get)
8. Kapal terbang kita mendarat di London dalam perjalanannya dari New York ke Moscow. (to land)
9. Saudara laki-lakiku, Tom, pasti akan sampai di perkebunan kakekku pada akhir tahun ini. (to attain)
10. Dia tiba di rumahku pada saat aku sedang pergi.
(to land)
11. Diskusi tersebut telah sampai pada jalan buntu.
(to come)
12. Mereka mengunjungi aku pada pukul enam kemarin sore.
(to descend)
13. Ketika Joyce mencapai umur 25, dia mulai merasa gelisah.
(to reach)
14. Setelah berjuang melawan badai yang kuat itu, orang laki-laki yang berada di kapal tersebut akhirnya sampai di pantai. (to get)
15. Jika anda sampai di Semarang, ambilah jalan ke Demak.
(to come)

II. The results of the tests
and the percentages can be seen
in the following diagrams.

Note :

- The number of the students : 41
- The number of sentences using to arrive : 1
- The number of sentences using to attain : 1
- The number of sentences using to attend : 1
- The number of sentences using to come : 4
- The number of sentences using to descend : 1
- The number of sentences using to get : 3
- The number of sentences using to land : 2
- The number of sentences using to reach : 2
- The number of sentences done by the students of SMA Stella Duce using the provided verbs and various prepositions is written in the forms of figures and percentages.


Type I

SMA Stella Duce

VERBS	PREPOSITIONS				
	∅	at	in	on	to
to arrive	1	22	12	5	1
	2,4390%	53,6585%	29,2683%	12,1951%	2,4390%
to attain	30	1	-	6	4
	73,1707%	2,4390%	- %	14,6341%	9,7561%
to attend	5	6	2	12	16
	12,1951%	14,6341%	4,8780%	29,2683%	39,0244%
to come	4	20	31	55	5
	2,4390%	12,1951%	18,9024%	33,5366%	33,9268%

Type ISMA Stella Duce

VERBS	PREPOSITIONS				
	∅	at	in	on	to
to descend	21	2	-	2	14
	51,2195%	4,8780%	- %	4,8780%	34,1463%
to get	25	8	21	25	44
	20,3252%	6,5041%	17,0732%	20,3252%	35,7923%
to land	1	29	40	3	9
	1,2195%	35,5658%	48,7805%	3,6585%	10,9756%
to reach	18	19	16	25	4
	21,9512%	23,1707%	19,5122%	30,4878%	4,8780%


 = the correct ones

Note :

- The number of students : 71
- The number of sentences using to arrive : 1
- The number of sentences using to attain : 1
- The number of sentences using to attend : 1
- The number of sentences using to come : 4
- The number of sentences using to descend : 1
- The number of sentences using to get : 3
- The number of sentences using to land : 2
- The number of sentences using to reach : 2
- The number of sentences done by the students of SMA De Britto using the provided verbs and various prepositions is written in the forms of figures and percentages.

Type ISMA De Britto

VERBS	PREPOSITIONS				
	Ø	at	in	on	to
to arrive	2	24	10	3	1
	2,8169%	26,0963%	14,0845%	4,2253%	1,4084%
to attain	32	7	5	8	18
	45,0704%	9,8591%	7,0422%	11,2676%	25,5521%
to attend	17	8	21	2	23
	23,9437%	11,2676%	29,5775%	2,8169%	32,3944%
to come	5	50	62	72	26
	1,7606%	17,6056%	21,8310%	25,3521%	33,8028%
to descend	23	4	-	2	42
	32,3944%	5,6338%	- %	2,8169%	58,3333%
to get	20	23	56	64	47
	9,3897%	10,7981%	26,2911%	30,0469%	23,0657%
to land	2	28	82	13	17
	1,4084%	19,7183%	57,7465%	9,1549%	11,9718%
to reach	27	32	31	40	12
	19,0141%	22,5352%	21,8310%	28,1690%	8,4507%

 = the correct ones


Note :

- The number of students : 112
- The number of sentences using to arrive : 1
- The number of sentences using to attain : 1
- The number of sentences using to attend : 1
- The number of sentences using to come : 4
- The number of sentences using to descend : 1
- The number of sentences using to get : 3
- The number of sentences using to land : 2

- The number of sentences using to reach : 2
- The number of sentences done by the students of SMA Stella Duce and De Britto using the provided verbs and various prepositions is written in the forms of figures and percentages.

Type I SMA Stella Duce and SMA De Britto

VERBS	PREPOSITIONS				
	Ø	at	in	on	to
to arrive	3	76	22	8	2
	2,6786%	67,8571%	19,6428%	7,1428%	1,7857%
to attain	62	8	5	14	22
	55,3571%	7,1428%	4,4643%	12,5 %	19,6428%
to attend	22	14	23	14	39
	19,6428%	12,5 %	20,5357%	12,5 %	34,8214%
to come	9	70	93	127	150
	2,0089%	15,625 %	20,7589%	28,3482%	37,6821%
to descend	44	6	-	1	56
	39,2857%	5,3571%	- %	3,5714%	50 %
to get	45	31	77	89	91
	13,3928%	9,2262%	22,9167%	26,4881%	27,0833%
to land	3	77	122	16	26
	1,3393%	25,4664%	54,4643%	7,1428%	11,6071%
to reach	25	51	47	65	16
	20,6897%	22,7678%	20,9821%	29,0178%	7,1428%

 = the correct ones

Note :

- The number of students : 71
- The number of sentences using to arrive : 1
- The number of sentences using to attain : 1
- The number of sentences using to attend : 1
- The number of sentences using to come : 4
- The number of sentences using to descend : 1
- The number of sentences using to get : 3
- The number of sentences using to land : 2
- The number of sentences using to reach : 2
- The number of sentences done by the students of SMA De Britto using the provided verbs and various prepositions is written in the forms of figures and percentages.


Type II

SMA De Britto

VERBS	PREPOSITIONS				
	∅	at	in	on	to
to arrive	-	55	13	-	5
	- %	77,4648%	18,3099%	- %	7,0422%
to attain	7	22	19	13	8
	9,8591%	30,9859%	26,7606%	18,3099%	11,2676%
to attend	30	8	10	9	18
	42,2535%	11,2676%	14,0845%	12,6761%	25,3521%
to come	14	68	60	72	74
	4,9296%	23,9437%	21,1268%	25,3521%	26,0563%
to descend	53	1	1	3	9
	74,6479%	1,4084%	1,4084%	4,2253%	12,6760%

Type IISMA De Britto

VERBS	PREPOSITIONS				
	∅	at	in	on	to
to get	34	19	57	67	24
	15,9624%	8,9202%	26,7606%	31,4554%	11,2679%
to land	5	29	82	16	8
	3,5211%	19,0141%	57,7465%	11,2676%	5,6338%
to reach	5	28	29	33	11
	22,3521%	19,7183%	20,4225%	23,2394%	7,7465%

 = the correct ones

After observing the data, the writer can say that most of the students still fail to use the prepositions concerned correctly. However, the writer thinks that it is natural for the students to make mistakes on prepositions. The writer also realizes that there are a number of sources of difficulty which can make them unable to use the prepositions correctly.

III. Sources of Difficulty

In this chapter the writer talks about the sources of difficulty in learning the prepositions at, in, on and to and also prepositions in general. Yet, the writer focuses on the problems and the difficulties which have something to do with the four prepositions mentioned above. The following are the sources of difficulty in learning prepositions.

III. 1. One of the sources of difficulty in learning prepositions is that a preposition may have the same form as an adverbial particle. The words at, in, on and to in look at; call in; call on; and take to are not prepositions. They do not denote a relationship between a noun or pronoun and another word, as prepositions do. They have already yielded fixed meanings with the verbs associated. Such words are called adverbial particles. And this can make students have difficulty in understanding prepositions.

III. 2. Another source of difficulty faced by Indonesian learners in learning prepositions is that one preposition may yield several meanings. The following are the examples that show that one preposition may have more than one meaning.

AT The uses are as follows :

1. To denote the place where something or someone is, or where something occurs.
 - The post office is at the corner of the street.
 - Mr. Haryono is at the office.
 - The accident occurred at the crossroads.
 - I will meet you at the railway station.

The names of large areas like countries, provinces and counties, and the names of roads and streets, normally take in, but at is used before the name of a road or a street if it denotes either a railway station, or a point at which the street or road in question intersects with another on a bus route.

- For the British Museum, alight at Tottenham Court Road.

- Does this bus stop at Great Portland Street ?

2. To denote a point in time, either by the clock or by some festival or similar occasion that is regarded as a landmark in the year.

- The concert starts at half past seven.

- At one time farms used to change hands at Michaelmas.

- We do not often get it as warm as this at Christmas.

Before the names of days, on, not at, is used; before the names of months and the four seasons of the year, in. Periods of day (the morning, the afternoon, the evening) take in, but periods of time in the day take at : at dawn, at sunset, at noon, at dinner-time. Note also at night and at night-time, but in (or during) the night, in (or during) the night-time.

3. To denote a place, or a point of time, as one of a series.

- At the second roundabout, turn left.

- At the third stroke it will be 5:37.

(Announcement by the telephone 'speaking clock'.)

- He passed his driving test at the fifth attempt.

4. After the verb to arrive, to express a point reached.

- It was past ten o'clock when we arrived at the office.

- At last we have arrived at our destination.

5. To express a state or condition in which things, persons or groups of persons are.

- The two tribes were constantly at war.

- I never feel at ease in his company.

- We were at a loss to explain the occurrence.

- Now I know my fears are groundless, my mind is at rest.

6. With the sense of ' engaged in ' (some activity).

This use often has more or less the same meaning as a present participle.

- He is at work on a new invention.

- She loved to watch the children at play.

- I do not like to be disturbed while I am at dinner.

- The manager is at lunch, and will not be back until two o'clock.

This use has given rise to two colloquial expressions.

a. At used in the sense of ' doing '.

- I must go and see what those children are at.

b. at it = doing something

- He is always at it, he never gives himself any rest.

(Here it has no specific reference, it has merely the sense of activity in general.)

- He is at it again !

(What activity it stands for is understood

from the context, circumstances or situation.)

7. To express circumstances.
 - He left at a moment's notice.
 - At a pinch we could manage without any extra money.
 - At a guess, I should say there were a hundred people present.
8. To express manner.
 - He vaulted over the gate at a single leap.
9. To express reason.
 - I have called to see you at the request of a friend.
 - At the suggestion of our parents, we deferred the visit to the museum until the following day.
10. To express the condition on which something is done.
 - Cars are parked at their owners' risk.
 - An extra book may be borrowed, at the discretion of the Librarian.
11. To express the rate either of movement or of the charge made for goods or services.
 - The car raced through the countryside at sixty miles an hour.
 - We walked along at an easy pace for the next few miles.
 - Eggs are sold out at three shillings a dozen.
 - Four hours at five shillings an hour comes to one pound.
12. To express the occasion that leads to something taking place.

- At the mention of money, the stranger became attentive.

Sometimes the idea of occasion is combined with that of cause.

- She felt sure she would faint at the sight of blood.

13. To express motion towards, to represent the object of at as the recipient of some activity.

- As we passed the gate a dog flew out at us.
- He kicked violently at the door.
- It sounded as if someone were tapping at the window.

14. After certain adjectives and nouns expressive of capabilities or attainments, to specify the field in which the capabilities lie.

- The boy is clever at mathematics.
- I am no good at chess.
- He is an expert at repairing clocks.

IN The uses are as follows :

1. Expressing (a) position or enclosure within a particular place, area or object, and (b) entry to or placing within such place, object or area.

- Brighton is in Sussex.
- The parcel was wrapped in paper.
- She put her money in her purse.
- I saw him go in the shop.

2. Expressing external physical environment.

- They lost themselves in the fog.
- They lost themselves in the dark.

Similarly : in the snow, in the rain, in the wet,
in the cold, in the sunshine, in the dusk.

3. To express external circumstances, or non-material condition.

- The last few years of his life were spent in poverty.
- They settled in a remote village, where they could live in peace.
- You should consider yourself in luck (that is lucky) to get such an opportunity.

Similarly : in luxury, in comfort, in difficulty.

4. To indicate bodily, physical or material condition.

- He has not been in good health for some years.
- They found the patient in coma.
- The house is in a good state of repair.

5. To express a mental or emotional state or condition.

- It was obvious that she was in great distress.
- He went in fear of his wife.
- Many who came in despair went away in hope.

6. To indicate a period of time throughout the whole of which, or within which, something takes place.

- A fast train does the journey to London in three hours.
- We should be able to complete the work in five days.
- Some people have their main meal at midday, others in the evening.

Note : If a particular day is named, on is used
(on Saturday, on July 27th, on New Year's Day, on my

birthday), but in October, in summer, in the Christmas holidays, in 1964, in the eighteen century. In ancient times, in earlier times, but at the present time, at the present day.

7. To indicate lapse of time by reference to a point at the end of a specified period.
 - I cannot see you now ; come back in half an hour (or ' in half an hour's time ').
 - We shall have to make haste ; the taxi will be here in five minutes.

8. To express state or condition by reference to the external appearance, or an external characteristic, of the person or thing in question.
 - The house was in ruins.
 - The poor girl was in tears.
 - The clothes were in rags.
 - His shoes were in holes.

9. To indicate the spirit by which one is actuated in doing something.
 - I only said it in fun.
 - She spoke in grief rather than in anger.

Similarly : in jest, in spite, in fairness, in revenge, in mercy, in sorrow.

10. Denoting a printed, written or oral context where something occurs or is to be found.
 - I read it in The Times.
 - Feste is the clown in Twelfth Night.
 - The vicar was speaking of that very thing in his sermon last Sunday.

- There may be nothing in the rumour.

- In what poem do these words occur ?

(But ' I heard it on the wireless, on the radio,
on television ',etc.)

11. To indicate location.

- Selfridge's is in Oxford Street.

- I have rheumatism in my left shoulder.

- He is deaf in one ear.

12. To indicate an activity which one is pursuing or by which one is occupied.

- Her whole life was spent in helping others.

- When we arrived, she was engaged in a telephone conversation.

13. To express an attitude of mind.

- Most of those present were in favour of the proposal.

- I am entirely in sympathy with all you say.

- We seem to be in agreement on the matter.

14. To indicate a characteristic of one's conduct or of an activity one performs.

- Everyone seemed in a hurry.

- We have to leave in haste.

- Don't be in haste to come to a decision.

Similarly : in a rush, in a bustle, in an uproar,
in a panic.

15. Expressing range, scope or limit.

- The bus is not yet in sight.

- It is not in my power to do that.

- I am willing to consider any request in reason.

16. To indicate membership of, or inclusion in, a group, organisation or profession.

- My eldest son is in the navy.
- He holds quite an important post in the Civil Service.
- She had one uncle in the medical profession and another in the church.

In this group may also be included to be in business and to be in trade (as a bookseller).

Note : In Parliament, in the Cabinet, but on the Town Council, on a committee, on a board of directors.

17. To convey the idea of ' holding ', ' fastened with ', ' projecting from ', ' within the area of ', and so forth.

- He carried a parcel in his hand.
- He had a cigarette in his mouth.
- There was a nail in the wall.
- I noticed a hole in his coat.

18. With the meaning ' in respect to ', or ' as regards '.

- In shape the object was circular.
- They are quite reasonable in price.
- The houses were rather old-fashioned in design.

19. To refer to a person's character.

- He has no malice in him.
- I did not think he had it in him to do such a thing.

There is something of the same sense when in is used in reference to the quality or character of inanimate things, for example, ' There is no flavour in these apples. '

20. To suggest conditions that have arisen or that may arise, for example, in case, in that case, in the circumstances, in the eventuality, in the event of.

21. To indicate the material of which something is made, the colour of it, or the medium used.

- We have furniture of this design in oak and in walnut.
- You can get these dresses in silk or in nylon.
- I like the pattern, but I should prefer it in green instead of red.
- Did you say the portrait was in oils, or in water-colour ?

In this class also may be included ' to speak in English ', ' to write in ink ', and so on (namely using English or ink as the medium). But, ' to speak in riddles ' denotes the manner of speaking, not the medium used.

22. To indicate manner, conveying the general idea ' in the form of '.

- The water shot up in a fountain.
- They stood in a queue.

Similarly : in a circle, in a line, in a row, in a heap, in a pile.

23. To indicate division or grouping.

- The plank was sawn in two.
- The eggs were packed in dozens.
- People stood about in twos and threes.
- Cigarettes are sold in tens and twenties.

24. To express cause.

- The child screamed in terror.

- He gave the information in hope of a reward.
- The gods, in their wisdom, have hidden the future from us.

25. With the meaning ' by way of '.

- He said nothing in reply to my question.

Similarly : in answer, in response, in imitation.

26. With the meaning ' so far as (something) is concerned '.

- It is all right in theory, but it will not work in practice.

27. Indicating conformity to a pattern, rhythm, and the like, as in time (musical), in tune, in step, in harmony.

Special uses : The following special uses should be noted.

- a. In followed by an adjective to indicate form or manner : in short, in brief, in earnest.
- b. In followed by the + an adjective, to indicate a state : in the nude, in the raw.
- c. In followed by the + a verbal noun : in the know (having private information), in the swim (familiar with the latest development).
- d. In followed by a gerund, to express an adverbial sense.

- In saying this, I do not imply any criticism of your conduct of the affair (namely : when I say this)

- You should be careful in crossing the road.
(that is, when you cross the road)

- She discovered the missing packet in turning out a cupboard. (that is, as she was turning out a cupboard)

e. A similar construction expressing an adjectival sense.

- My purpose in writing to you is to ask you advice. (that is, for which I am writing to you)

ON The uses are as follows :

1. To indicate position in relation to another object.

- The dog was sleeping on the mat.
- A mirror hung on the wall.
- He had mud on his shoes.

2. To represent a place, an object, or a part of the body as the recipient of an activity.

- She knocked on the door.
- They sat down on the seat.
- The stone hit him on the head.

3. To indicate locality, that is the place where something stands or is situated.

- The school is built on the site of an old mansion.
- London stands on the Thames.

4. To indicate a means of supports from beneath.

- A tripod is so called because it stands on three feet.
- The roof of the building is supported on pillars.

5. To indicate a means of supporting life, an organisation, a business, and the like, or of paying one's way.

- They lived mostly on vegetables from their garden.

- Her pet dogs were fed on the choicest food.
 - He finds it difficult to live on his salary.
 - You cannot afford luxuries, on an income of twelve pounds a week.
6. To indicate the means by which something is enabled to work, or to perform its function.
- Many locomotives nowadays run on oil.
 - For many years he ran his business on a staff of only five.
 - You cannot do a hard day's work on a cup of coffee and a slice of toast.
7. To express direction in relation to some person or object.
- Take the first turning on your right.
 - Enter by the door on the left-hand side as you approach the building.
8. To express membership of a group or body, for example, on the committee, on the Town Council, on the board of directors, on the staff, on the Stock Exchange, on the Senate of the University.
- (But in the army, in the navy, in the Civil Service, in the church, and so on.)
9. Followed by a verbal noun, to express a passive idea for a transitive verb, and an active one for an intransitive.
- On show (= being shown), on trial (= being tried),
 - On sale (= being sold), on exhibition (being exhibited), on parade (= parading).

In a few phrases, like on duty and on holiday, the active idea can be expressed by on followed by a non-verbal



noun. On duty = doing the duty assigned to one ; on holiday = having a holiday; on leave = having one's leave ; on night work = doing night work.

10. To express the idea of ' engaged in doing something ' .
(colloquial)

- At the moment I am on a rather difficult piece of work (that is : engaged in doing a rather difficult piece of work).

11. To express grounds, reason or condition.

- On his doctor's advice, he took a month's holiday.
- He did it on the instructions of his superior.
- We have it on the authority of Pope that a little learning is a dangerous thing.
- He called to see me on business.
- I can only do it on the understanding that I am not held responsible for the outcome.
- The two men were arrested on a charge of house-breaking.

12. To indicate time (used only for specific days) : On Wednesday, on Sunday evening, on Boxing Day, on June 24th, on my birthday. (For times of the clock at is used (at six o'clock), and for parts of the day, when used in a general sense (the evening, morning, afternoon), months, seasons, centuries, and vague periods such as youth, old age, and the like, in. But on occasions, on various occasions, on several occasions, although these do not refer to specific days : and on Saturday morning, on Tuesday evening, and so on.)

13. To indicate the subject of a book, article, talk, lecture,

and so forth. In this sense on means more or less the same as about, or concerning :

- a book on Milton
- an article on space travel
- a talk on modern jazz
- a lecture on Tennyson
- an essay on the pleasures of walking

Related to this is the use of on in the sense of a - bout in sentences such as the following.

- Have you any ideas on the subject ?
- I have had second thoughts on that matter.

14. To suggest the idea of one thing or one action following immediately after another, or of being almost simultaneous with it. (In this case on is followed by a gerund or by some kind of verbal noun.)

- On hearing the crash, he rushed out of the house.
- On receipt of the news I immediately telephoned my solicitor.
- On his stepping out of the taxi he was seized by two men.

15. To suggest the basis of an arrangement or a transaction:

- to buy on credit
- to let something out on hire
- to have goods on hire-purchase
- to make something on trust
- to have something on loan
- to be on parole
- to be on probation
- to have goods on approval

16. To indicate an objective relationship between the noun or pronoun that follows on, and the word that precedes it (usually a noun or an adjective).

- Don't be hard on the child.
- He was very strict on discipline.
- I am not keen on old mutton.
- It is hard luck on John, having to work while the rest of us are on holiday.
- The bully had no mercy on his victims.

Similarly : have compassion on, have pity on, etc.

17. With the sense ' at the expense of '.

- He is just a scrounger, who lives on other people.
- The next round of drinks is on me.

18. Followed by the + a verb used as a noun, to suggest an idea akin to that expressed by the present participle.

- Keep the kettle on the boil (= boiling).
- The enemy are on the run (= running).
- He is always on the make (= trying by all kinds of means to make money).

Similarly : on the march, on the mend (of the state of things or of a person's health), on the prowl, on the move, on the scrounge (slang), on the go, on the watch, and so forth.

19. Followed by the + an adjective, to make a phrase expressive of an adverbial sense, for example, on the sly, on the quiet, on the cheap. These phrases usually have a slight sense of disapproval about them ; and they are not exactly equivalent in meaning to the corresponding adverb. To do something quietly is to do it without making much noise, but to do it on the quiet suggests

doing it secretly or surreptitiously. To get things on the cheap suggests a certain degree of meanness, which 'to get things cheaply' does not.

TO The uses are as follows :

1. To convey the meaning ' in the direction of '.(this is the basic meaning, and most of the others are developments from or extensions of it.)

- He turned to his companion before he replied.

- He pointed to an object on the horizon.

2. To indicate destination.

- I am going to Edinburgh tomorrow.

- They always went to Paris for their summer holidays.

3. To indicate a point of arrival, or a point reached.

- We came to a picturesque cottage.

- When you come to the traffic lights, turn left.

The point may be a non-spatial or non-material one.

- I have come to the end of my patience.

- The discussions have come to a deadlock.

- When they get to feeling old,

They up and shoot themselves, I'm told

- Rupert Brooke, The Old

Vicarage, Grantchester

4. To express the meaning ' as far as '.

- We walked on to the next village.

- I will come with you to the bus stop.

- The temperature rose to 70° Fahrenheit.

5. To express attachment in one form or another. Two main types of construction may be distinguished.

a. Where the to - adjunct is attached to a verb :

- They nailed their colours to the mast.
- The prisoner was bound to a tree.

Similarly : stick to, tie to, fasten to, chain to,
cling to, hang on to, etc.

b. Where the to - adjunct is attached to a preceding noun.

- He has not a penny to his name.
- There is no index to the book.

6. To indicate the result of a transformation or change.

- Lot's wife was changed to a pillar of salt.
- The vase fell on to the floor and was smashed to atoms.
- He drank himself to death.
- Many ancient cities have now crumbled to dust.

7. To indicate the person or the thing to which an activity is directed. We may, perhaps, call this the objective use of to, since the word that follows it rather resembles a grammatical object in its relation to the verb and preposition.

- I will speak to your father about the matter.
- The secretary was requested to write to the defaulting member.

Similarly : talk to, pray to, call to, shout to.

8. As the equivalent of an indirect object. (Though this does not imply that the two mean precisely the same, or that they can always be interchanged.)

- She gave an orange to each of the children.
- Mr. Jones has sent this book to you.

9. To give a precise application to a preceding adjective.
- The exhibition will be open to the public from 10 a.m. till 6 p.m.
 - We want to give a present appropriate to the occasion.
 - This side of the house is exposed to the north winds.
 - The bridge is closed to heavy traffic.
10. To express the idea of correspondence or conformity with :
- true to type
 - true to character
 - made to measure
 - made to order
 - made to your instructions
11. To express the notion of extent, or the meaning ' to the point of '.
- She did the work to the best of her ability.
 - To the best of my knowledge all the accounts have now been paid.
 - He drained the cup to the last drop.
- Similarly : to perfection, to the death, to the very end, to a T, to a nicety.
12. With the meaning ' from the point of view of ', or ' so far as someone (or something) is concerned '.
- It looks all right to me.
 - Will it be all right to you if I leave the rest of the work till tomorrow ?
 - To a child, any unfamiliar noise may be frightening.
 - A walk of ten miles was nothing to him.

- It does not matter to me where you go.

Into this class also fall combinations made up of an adjective by a to - adjunct, such as pleasant to the senses, attractive to the eye, bitter to the taste.

13. To express the result of addition, subtraction, reduction, and so on.

- The bill comes to three pounds.

- The charges for all the items taken together amount to six pounds, ten shillings.

- The price has been reduced to twenty-two guineas.

Similarly : add up to, come down to.

14. To express the idea of comparison.

- Two is to four, as three is to six.

- This material is far superior to the other you showed me.

- The cost of living here is quite low to what it is in my own country.

Similarly : inferior to, anterior to, prior to, subsequent to.

15. To express the idea of 'having as a characteristics, a quality or a part'. (This is allied to class (5) above.)

- a story with a moral to it

- a box with a lid to it

- music with a swing to it

- food with a taste to it

To it sometimes expresses involvement, concern, or significance.

- They may say that the regulation has been made to prevent overcrowding, but there is more to it than that.

- If you cannot pay the price, you cannot have the goods, and that is all there is to it.

16. To denote the object of a wish. (Mainly in toasts)

- Here is to the maiden of bashful fifteen !
- Let us drink to the health of the bride.

17. In an objective sense after certain adjectives, to denote the person affected by the notion expressed in the adjective. (This is allied to class (7) above.)

- She was always kind to children.
- You should never be cruel to animals.
- He had always been generous to good causes.

The adjectives concerned are mainly those descriptive of an attitude or of conduct towards other.

18. To express the idea of approach towards and contact with.

- She put her hands to her head.
- He raised the cup to his lips.
- I put my shoulder to the door, and gave a heave.

Closely related to this use of to is that exemplified in such expressions as end to end, back to back, shoulder to shoulder.

19. To express a relationship between two persons or things in their relative positions : near to me, next to me, next door to me, opposite to me.

20. To express the idea of ' resulting in '.

- To our surprise, the train was early for once.
- To the disappointment of the spectators, the match had to be abandoned.

Similarly : to the joy, to the disgust of, to the

delight of, to the annoyance of, and so on. A genitive or a possessive adjective can also be used where sense and euphony permit it : to our great disappointment ; much to the teacher's annoyance.

21. To express the idea ' to the accompaniment of '.

- They were dancing to the music of a barrel organ.
- The poem has been set to music.
- We had never sung the hymn to that tune before.

Special uses

- a. After put, to is used to express the object at which the notion expressed by put is directed : put to sleep, put to death, put to use, put to shame.
- b. Note the difference between go to school, go to church, go to prison, and so on, on the one hand, and the same expressions with the definite article on the other. When the definite article is used, the building is denoted; when there is no definite article, it is the purpose for which the building exists that is meant. Children go to school (= to learn); a parent wishing to see the headmaster goes to the school. A convicted criminal goes to prison (= for punishment), but a visiting magistrate or someone going on official business goes to the prison.

Now we can see that learning prepositions is not as easy as most people think it is. The task of students in learning prepositions is not only to understand or memorize all the uses of the prepositions but also to understand the

great number of exceptions and special uses which appear in the prepositions themselves. One obvious difficulty faced by students in learning prepositions is that a preposition very often has several meanings.

Fries (1940), as Muhammad Raji Zughoul said ¹, discovered an average of thirty-six and a half meanings recorded and illustrated in the Oxford English Dictionary for each of the nine most frequent prepositions (at, by, for, from, in, of, on, to, and with).

Preposition	Number of senses listed in the Oxford English Dictionary
at	39
by	39
for	31
from	15
in	40
of	63
on	29
to	33
with	40

Looking at the number of the uses of the prepositions listed above, the writer may say that the uses of the prepositions, which the writer has talked about so far, are not yet completely explained.

III. 3. Sometimes the meanings of some prepositions are not inherent in the prepositions themselves but lie in the context which they govern. This concept is also considered true by Fries. He states that the change of the meaning of a preposition can depend on the change of the con-

1. FORUM. Volume XVII. Number 3, July 1979. Page 24.

text. Because of this, students may have difficulty in learning prepositions. Now let us observe the following examples :

- a. The soldiers fell to, and made a hearty meal.²
- b. The soldiers fell to with a vengeance.²
- c. The girl found a book on Main Street.³
- d. The girl found a book on Main Street.³

The explanation can be given as follows :

- In the first sentence fell followed by to means to start eating.
- In the second sentence fell followed by to means to start fighting.
- In sentence 3 and sentence 4 on is a homonym. In sentence 3 it means on the surface of, while in sentence 4 it means about, or concerning or on the subject of.

The third and the fourth sentence are more ambiguous than the first and the second sentence. The contexts in the first and second sentence may help the students to guess the meanings more than those in the third and fourth sentence, although the students may still have some difficulties in understanding the meanings of the sentences. Anyhow, all of the meanings of the sentences above depend on the contexts.

III. 4. Some meanings of prepositions are not demonstrable and cannot be learned by association with clearly defined classes of words.⁴ They might be determined by the words preceding the prepositions, but they remain abstract and chaotic. The following are the examples :

- They looked at the picture.

2. English Verbal Idioms. Frederick T. Wood. Page 101.

3. Lecture on Linguistics.

4. FORUM. Volume XVII. Number 3, July 1979. Page 24.

- Christians believe in Jesus.
- They listened to the radio.

Those prepositions : at, in, and to, take place because they are more determined by the preceding words rather than by the relationships between the subjects and the words that follow the prepositions. In addition to this, the meanings of the prepositions at, in, and to in the examples above, indeed, cannot be demonstrated and they remain abstract.

Coinciding with this, Kreidler comments : Anybody who has taught advanced foreign learners of English is aware that these abstract, chaotic functions of prepositions remain a stumbling block long after mastery of essential has been achieved. (Kreidler 1966 : 120)⁵

III. 5. Students have some difficulty in learning prepositions because sometimes changing the prepositions which are attached to the same words may not change the meanings of the sentences. However, in other cases, this may change the meaning. The examples of these which can make students confused to learn prepositions can be illustrated in the following sentences.

1. What do you think about Borobudur ?
2. What do you think of Borobudur ?
3. Students are always complaining about their teachers.
4. Students are always complaining of their teachers.
5. They were concerned about their plan.
6. They were concerned with their plan.

The explanation can be given as follows :

- In sentence 1 and sentence 2 the verb think can be

5. Kreidler 1966:120. Quoted from FORUM. Volume XVII. Number 3, July 1979. Page 25.

followed either by the preposition about or of and the meanings of the sentences do not change.

- In sentence 3 and sentence 4 the verb complain can be followed either by the preposition about or of and the meanings of the sentences do not change at all.
- However, in sentence 5 and sentence 6 changing the prepositions does change the meanings of the sentences. In sentence 5 to be concerned about their plan means to be worried about their plan, while in sentence 6 to be concerned with their plan means to be engaged in doing their plan.

III. 6. Combinations such as except that and in that are considered as compound conjunctions, not as combinations of preposition + that. These, furthermore, also make students have difficulty in learning prepositions, since the students may be confused in identifying such words which are themselves prepositions if the that is omitted.

Students who may have understood that except and in are prepositions, however, because of the that which makes the constructions become compound conjunctions may be perplexed with what has been learned or understood.

III. 7. Another source of difficulty in mastering prepositions is that there are at least two kinds of prepositions in English, they are :

- a. Simple prepositions
- b. Complex prepositions

Simple prepositions are prepositions consisting of one word only, for example :

about	behind	from	off	till
after	beneath	in	on	to
along	between	into	over	under
among	by	like	past	up
at	down	near	round	with
before	for	of	through	etc

Complex prepositions are prepositions consisting of more than one word. Most of them are placeable, according to their form, into one of the following three categories:⁶

A. Adverb or Preposition + Preposition

across from

along with

apart from (British English)

aside from (American English)

as for

as to

away from

back of

down from

inside of

off of (American English)

on to

out of

together with

up to

etc

B. Verb / Adjective / Conjunction / etc + Preposition

contrary to ; due to ; because of ; except for ;

owing to ; but for, etc.

6. A Grammar of Contemporary English. Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, Jan Svartvik. Page 301. Complex Prepositions.

C. Preposition 1 + Noun + Preposition 2

by means of	in spite of
in comparison with	on account of
in regard to	on behalf of
instead of	on top of, etc

In C, which is by far the most numerous category, the noun in some complex prepositions is preceded by a definite or indefinite article :

- in the light of
- as a result of

This category may be further subdivided according to which prepositions function as preposition 1 and preposition 2 :

In + Noun + Of

in case of, in charge of, in view of, in need of, in spite of, in front of, in lieu of, in favour of, in place of, in face of, in aid of, in quest of, in respect of, in search of, etc.

In + Noun + With

in contact with, in common with, in line with, in accordance with, etc.

By + Noun + Of

by means of, by way of, by virtue of, by dint of, etc.

On + Noun + Of

on account of, on behalf of, on top of, on pain of, on strength of, etc.

Other Types

at variance with, in exchange for, in return for,

in addition to, in relation to, at the expense of, for the sake of, in/with regard to, with respect to, at the hands of, etc.

Observing the complexity of prepositions, we may say that it is quite natural for the students to have difficulties in learning and mastering prepositions.

III. 8. The word past that indicates beyond in space; beyond the limits, power or range, and beyond in time may also be a source of students' difficulty in learning prepositions, since the students may sometimes find the word past modifying a verb, for example, walk past, go past, march past, run past, hurry past, and the like.

The following are the examples that show that the word past is a preposition. However, students may think that the word past in the following sentences is an adverb.

1. Past indicates beyond in space; up to and farther than.
 - He walked past the house.
 - He hurried past me without stopping to speak.
 - The driver took the bus past the traffic signal.
2. Past indicates beyond the limits, power or range.
 - The old man is past work (i.e. too old, weak , etc, to work).
 - She was past child-bearing (that is too old to bear a child).
 - The pain was almost past bearing (that is too severe to be endured).
 - He was past praying for (that is there is no hope of cure, improvement, etc).

3. Past indicates beyond in time : after.

- The school begins at half past seven.
- Buses every twenty minutes past the hour (i.e. at 1.20, 2.20, 3.20,etc) have to go.
- It was ten minutes past six when his father passed away.

III. 9. Adverbs normally receive stress, whereas simple prepositions (especially monosyllables) normally do not.⁷ Here are the examples :

- They ran down the hill (= down is an unstressed preposition).
- The watch ran 'down (= down is an adverb).

Similarly :

- Which uniform did they march in ? (= in is a preposition).
- Which prisoner did they march 'in ? (= in is an adverb).

Looking at the examples above, it is obvious that students have difficulty in learning prepositions, since the students have to know whether in is a preposition or not.

To understand whether in is a preposition or not, the students have to know content words and function words. Content words are normally stressed. They are nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. Function words, on the other hand, are not normally stressed. They are prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, determiners and auxiliaries. Thus, in as a preposition belongs to the function words. Because these function words are not clearly explained to the students of SMA in detail, the students may have some difficulties in deciding

7. A Grammar of Contemporary English. Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, Jan Svartvik. Page 305.

whether in or down is a preposition or not.

III. 10. Very often one finds the following prepositional phrases : at the door, on the door, and in the door. Such prepositional phrases often confuse the students, since they have to be able to distinguish the differences in meaning among them. They have to understand that at the door indicates that the door is envisaged as a dimensionless location, a vague ' point on the lamp ', and no details concerning its shape or size come into focus. The phrase on the door, on the other hand, makes us see the door as a two-dimensional thing, that is a surface. On, in fact, can indicate a location of either one or two dimensions (a line or a surface). In the door the door is seen as a three-dimensional object, an object having volume. In can also be applied to two-dimensional locations which are seen as ' areas ' (typically enclosed or bordered pieces of territory) rather than ' surfaces '. However, one cannot say on the park, on the village and on the bathroom although in terms of logic they are correct. All of these make the students have difficulty in learning prepositions. One preposition carries one meaning and can only be attached to certain phrases but cannot be applied to other phrases although in terms of logic one may consider it true.

III. 11. The apposition between at and in can also cause difficulty. In is used for continents, countries, provinces, and sizeable territories of any kind; but for towns, villages, and so on, either at or in is appropriate, according to the point of view. A very large city, such as New York, London, or Tokyo, is generally treated as an area : He works in London, but lives in the country.

However, one could treat it as a point on the map if global distances were in mind : ' Our plane refuelled at London on its way from New York to Moscow. '

With buildings, also, both at and in can be used. The difference here is that at refers to a building in its institutional or functional aspect, whereas in refers to it as a three-dimensional structure. However, what is taught here is not pure British or American English.

- He is at school. (Br E)
 - He is in school. (Am E)
 - He is in school. (in Br E)
- = He attends/attending school.
- = He is actually inside the building - not, for example, on the playing fields.

Because of the use of the prepositions in and at may depend on the point of view of what the speaker means, it can also cause difficulty to the students in learning prepositions.

III. 12. In some cases it may be more difficult to explain the use of a preposition in terms of dimension - type : at the seaside (compare with : on the coast); in the world (compare with : on (the) earth). Even here, however, the implications of at, on and in are felt to be different.

At the seaside suggests a point of contact with the sea, rather than a one-dimensional coastline.

On the earth sees the world as a surface (for example as a geologist might see it) rather than as a place where people live.

All of these also make the students have difficulty

in learning prepositions, since they have to understand exactly the different meaning between the use of the preposition at in at the seaside and the use of the preposition on in on the coast when they want to use them properly. The students might wonder why the preposition on cannot be applied to the seaside, although at the seaside has the same meaning as on the coast.

III. 13. Students also have some difficulty in learning time-when prepositions. It is said that at is used for points of time (chiefly clock-time : at ten o'clock, at 6.30 p.m., at noon, etc), also idiomatically, for holiday seasons : at the week end (British English), at Christmas, at Easter - referring to the season of Christmas / Easter, not the day itself and for phrases at night, at the/ that time, and so on.

On is used with phrases referring to days : on Monday, on the following day, on New Year's Day.

In or, less commonly, during is used to indicate periods of time : in the evening, during Holy Week, in August, in the months that follow, in summer, in 1981, in the eighteenth century, and the like.

However, one also says on Monday morning, on Saturday afternoon, on the following evening, etc.

Observing the examples above, one might consider the use of time-when prepositions inconsistent. Students also have to understand exactly the use of the prepositions if they want to express the idea properly. Students have to know that on with a complement is used to refer to a part of a day, rather than a whole day. This use also extends to other cases where the time segment is a part of a day which

is actually mentioned, for example, on the morning of 24th June, etc. But, with phrases like early morning, later afternoon, it is normally to use in, for example, in the late afternoon of 24th June.

III. 14. One may find the following sentences :

- He shot at the Commander-in-Chief.
- He shot the Commander-in-Chief.
- He ran at me.
- He ran to me.

These sentences above also make students confused in learning prepositions. They may wonder which sentence is correct and which sentence is not. In the first sentence the preposition at is used, but not in the second sentence. In the fourth sentence the preposition at is changed into the preposition to, but to in the fourth sentence cannot be omitted.

Looking at the examples above, one may deduce that the use of prepositions, in some cases, is inconsistent.

On this matter, students have to understand exactly that the sentence ' He shot at the Commander-in-Chief ' is different from ' He shot the Commander-in-Chief ' in terms of meanings. To the first one could add ' but missed him ',

Talking about the fourth and fifth sentences, the writer may say that where the verb is intransitive, to must be used if the attainment of the goal is to be stressed.

Furthermore, students should also have to understand the significant difference between at and to when they are combined with verbs of utterance such as roar, bellow, shout, mutter, and growl.

' He shouted at me ' suggests that I am being treat-

ed merely as a target (for example, of abuse), while 'He shouted to me' implies that the shouter is communicating with me, that is that I am the recipient of the message. At usually suggests hostility here.

Special problems

In addition to the explanation on the source of difficulty in learning prepositions, students may still face two particular difficulties which may stem from :

- a. The previous teaching and
- b. Interference from their native language

The previous teaching

There is the possibility that in the previous teaching the teacher explains :

AT is used :

- a. To denote the place where something (or someone) is, or where something occurs.
 - The murder occurred at the railway station.
 - The bank is at the corner of the street.
- b. To denote a point in time.
 - The concert started at half past seven.
 - The school begins at seven o'clock in the morning.
- c. After the verb ' to arrive ', to express a point reached.
 - They arrived at the cave at one o'clock.
 - It was past ten o'clock when she arrived at the office.
- d. To express the rate of movement.
 - He drove the car at sixty miles an hour.

IN is used :

- a. To express position or enclosure within a particular place, area or object and entry to or to place within such place, object or area.
 - She put the magazine in her bag.
 - I saw her go in the shop.
- b. To indicate a period of time throughout the whole of which, or within which, something takes place.
 - A fast train does the journey to London in three hours.
 - We have to finish this work in five days.
- c. To indicate lapse of time by reference at a point at the end of a specified period.
 - I cannot see you now, come back in half an hour.
 - The taxi will be here in five minutes.
- d. To indicate location.
 - Selfridge's is in Oxford Street.
 - I have rheumatism in my left shoulder.

ON is used :

- a. To indicate position in relation to another object.
 - The cat was sleeping on the mat.
 - The dictionary was on the desk.
- b. To represent a place, an object, or a part of the body.
 - She knocked on the door.
 - The stone hit him on the head.
- c. To indicate time (used only for a specific days).
 - I met his sister on Saturday.
 - Christians usually go to church on Sunday morning.

- d. To indicate the subject of a book, article, talk, lecture, and the like. In this sense on mean more or less the same as about, or concerning.
- He read an article on space travel.
 - Mr. Hendro gave a lecture on Tennyson.

TO is used :

- a. To convey the meaning ' in the direction of '.
- (This is the basic, and most of the others are developments from or extensions of it.)
- He turned to his companion before he replied.
 - He pointed to an object on the horizon.
- b. To indicate destination.
- She is going to Jakarta next week.
 - They always went to Paris for their summer holidays.
- c. To express the meaning ' as far as '.
- We walked on to the next village.
 - The temperature rose to 70° Fahrenheit.
- d. To indicate the person or the thing to which an activity is directed. We may call this the objective use of to, since the word that follows it rather resembles a grammatical object in its relation to the verb and preposition.
- I will speak to your father about the matter.
 - He talked to my father about the problem.
- e. As the equivalent of an indirect object. (though this does not imply that the two mean precisely the same, or that they can always be interchanged.)
- She gave the orange to each of the children.
 - He sent a letter to his girl friend.

- f. With the meaning ' from the point of view ', or ' so far as someone or something is concerned '.
- It looks all right to me.
 - It does not matter to me where you go.
 - To a child, unfamiliar noise may be frightening.
- g. In an objective sense after certain adjectives, to denote the person affected by the notion expressed in the adjective.
- She was always kind to children.
 - You should never be cruel to animals.
- h. To express the idea of approach towards and contact with.
- She put her hands to her head.
 - He raised the cup to his lips.
- i. To express a relationship between two persons or things in their relative positions : near to me; next to me; apposite to me; etc.



Observing the explanations above, it is logical that the students may certainly apply what has been learned or understood from the previous teaching automatically to doing the tests without thinking about or paying attention to the preceding verbs, since what has been learned or understood is really familiar to them.

This can obviously be observed when the writer corrects the students' work. Coinciding with this, the writer wants to present the outstanding errors made by the students when they have to choose the correct alternative given.

Number 5 in part I, for example, most of the students choose the preposition ON for the verb to come. They choose

on because the following word indicates time, that is Fri-
day. In relation to this, the students do not think about
the preceding verb, to come, which actually determines the
proper preposition. In short, the previous teaching also
influences the way they think, choose and determine the
prepositions. This leads to what is called overgeneraliza-
tion. The students overgeneralize what they have already
had in their mind and apply it to the sentences without
thinking of the preceding verbs.

Overgeneralization occurs because the students have
been partially exposed to the target language. The students
have already developed their hypotheses that correspond nei-
ther to their mother tongue nor to the target language. At
this stage, they have left the system of their mother tongue
or their native language, but they have not been successful
yet in gaining the system of the target language they are
learning. They have obtained what might be called approxi-
mative system, that is the level or degree which correspond
to neither their native language nor the target language.
This degree, later, will lead them to the target language, the
correct use of the new language they are studying. Consequent-
ly, the students still make a lot of errors, since they merely
apply what they have already understood or learned to the
sentences without knowing or realizing that what is applied
is not always correct in view of the new language they learn.
Thus, previous experience may influence the way they think,
decide, and do the exercises or tests.

Interference from their native language

In their efforts to master a new language, students
often make a lot of errors. It can also be caused by the

interference from their native language. George, in Error Analysis edited by Jack C. Richards, also finds that one third of the deviant sentences from second language learners can be attributed to language transfer.⁸ Richards also states that sentences in the target language may exhibit interference from the mother tongue. This of course is considered to be the major, but not the only, source of difficulty in learning the new language.

The interference appears because the students perceive the system in the new language in terms of their native language or other languages to which they have earlier been exposed. The following are the data made by the students which can illustrate the concept above.

I. Choose the correct alternative between brackets.

3. They reached (at, to, in, -, on) the beach at 7 a.m.
6. Last week my father attended (at, to, in, -, on) a Chinese wedding with my mother and sisters.
13. When Joyce reached (at, to, in, -, on) 25, she began to feel uneasy.

II. Translate the following Indonesian sentences into proper English. Use the provided verbs in brackets.

3. Mereka sampai di pantai tersebut pada pukul tujuh kemarin pagi. (to reach)
6. Minggu lalu ayahku menghadiri perkawinan orang Cina dengan ibu dan saudara perempuanku. (to attend)

In fact, the students prefer using prepositions for the verbs to reach and attend to using no prepositions at all. They prefer to use prepositions because of the inter-

8. Error Analysis. Jack C. Richards. Language Transfer. Page 5.

ference of their native language. In Indonesian, if we want to indicate a point of arrival ' sampai ', we must use the preposition di and never ke if the following object is a place. Thus, we say ' Setelah kereta api itu sampai di (kota) Yogyakarta, para penumpang turun ' ; ' Setelah dia sampai di rumah, dia menanak nasi '. That is why most of the students choose either the preposition at or on for the verb reach, which has the meaning of ' sampai ', when they do the tests. Indeed, we may also hear ' sampai kota ' ; ' sampai rumah '. However, these two phrases are considered colloquial.

This is, actually, not true in the system of the new language they are learning. The students also apply the system of their native language when they do number 6, both in part I and part II. They use a preposition for the verb attend, and this is obviously wrong in view of the system of the new language they are studying. The verb attend in English does not take any preposition at all if the meaning of it is the same as the meaning of ' to go to ' or ' be present at '. The students make such errors because they use and apply the system of their native language in doing the tests with translation as the basis.

Indeed, there are also some prepositions in Indonesian which correspond exactly to the English equivalent, for example :

- Buku-buku tersebut ada di atas meja itu.
The books are on that table.
- Mereka pergi ke Pangandaran minggu lalu.
They went to Pangandaran last week.
- Sita belajar bahasa Inggris di (dalam) kamarku.
Sita studied English in my room.

- Dia bekerja pada / di suatu perusahaan asing.

He worked at a foreign company.

However, in many ways, the prepositions which occur in Indonesian sentences need not always occur in English sentences. In indicating a point of arrival in Indonesian, one does need a preposition if it refers to a place, but it is not so in English. If one has to translate ' Mereka sampai di puncak gunung tersebut kemarin malam ' into proper English, he has to say ' They reached the peak of the mountain last night '. In this respect, the verb reach does not take any preposition at all. But one must use the preposition di for the verb 'sampai' in Indonesian if the following word is referring to a place.

Such concepts cause the students to make errors in learning prepositions. All of these occur because their native language influences the way of their thinking when they have to use the target language.

IV. Remedial Teaching

Before talking about the remedial teaching, the writer thinks that it would be better to present some experts' opinions on teaching and learning prepositions.

Pittman states " Among those who teach or learn the English language, prepositions have earned a reputation for difficulty if not a downright unpredictability." ⁹

MacCarthy states " As any English teacher well knows, our prepositions are a particularly troublesome lot to the nonnative speaker of English." ¹⁰

According to Takashi " Much of the difficulty in teaching and learning prepositions is due to the fact that English speakers, even those who teach, are unable to offer a logical explanation for the occurrence of such prepositions or a conceptual guide of their usages. As long as definitions and examples of usage are lacking or inadequately represented in school texts, reference books, and dictionaries, the learning of prepositions will continue to depend mainly on memorization and familiarization." ¹¹

After reading such statements mentioned above, the writer intends to help students to overcome such difficulty and to help them to learn the prepositions easily and properly. There are several ways to help students to learn the prepositions :

1. By using pictures
2. By using demonstration
3. By using definition
4. By using translation
5. By using comparison and contrast

9. Teaching English Prepositions. FORUM. Volume XVII. Number 3, July 1979. Page 24.

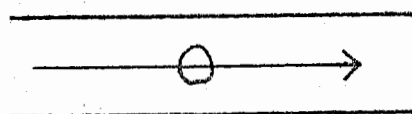
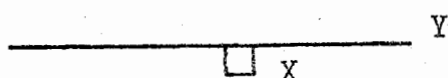
10. Ibid

11. Ibid

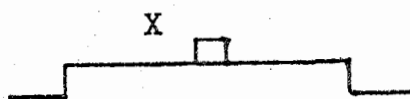
1. Pictures

Besides being interesting, pictures of various kinds can be very helpful in showing the meanings of some prepositions. The pictures can be drawn by lines, dots, arrows, or circles depending on the goal the teacher wants to obtain.

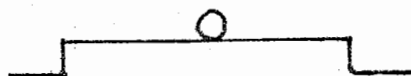
To teach the preposition on which indicates position in relation to another object, a teacher may draw the following pictures on the blackboard.



We are on the motorway.

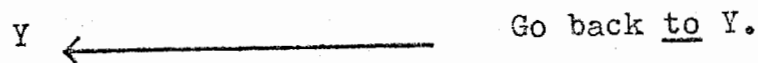
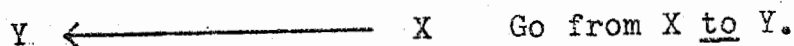


X is on the platform.



Stay on the platform.

To teach the preposition to which indicates destination, a teacher may draw the following pictures on the blackboard.



2. Demonstration

Sometimes pictures alone are not sufficient to teach

the meanings of prepositions because not all the meanings can be conveyed through pictures. To overcome this, demonstration can help to teach the meanings of the prepositions concerned.

To teach the use of the preposition to which indicates the result of a transformation or change, a teacher may drop a piece of chalk onto the floor. Then he can say to his students that now the chalk breaks to pieces.

A teacher can also crush a piece of chalk to explain the use of the preposition to indicating the result of a transformation or change to his students. After he has crushed the chalk, it becomes powder. Now he can say to his students that the chalk has crumbled to powder.

To teach the preposition to which indicates the person or thing to which an activity is directed, a teacher can say the following sentences to his students :

- Now I am talking to you.
- Now I am speaking to you.
- Just now we prayed to God.

Similarly : to call to, to shout to.

By saying the sentences above, it is expected that the students can understand the use of the preposition and also its meaning exactly.

3. Definition

Definition can also help a teacher to teach the meanings of prepositions. Definition means explaining something by using words which are simpler and more familiar with the students' understanding of the language they are learning. Thus, definitions here are not those found in a dictionary, since dictionary definitions sometimes may not clarify the

meanings to the students, but confuse them.

To explain the use of the preposition on indicating a means of supporting life, a teacher may use definition to clarify its meaning to his students, since explanation through pictures, demonstration, and comparison and contrast might be difficult to use in explaining the meaning of the preposition. The following are the examples which illustrate the use of the preposition concerned.

- They lived mostly on vegetables from their garden.
- He finds it difficult to live on his salary.
- You cannot afford luxuries, on an income of twenty dollars a week.

In this matter, a teacher may define or explain that on in the sentences above means supported by, provided for, or it indicates the source on which one can live, or which one can afford.

4. Translation

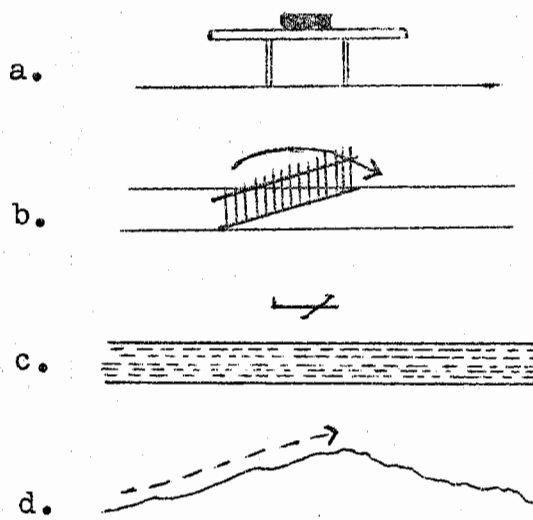
If the other ways cannot be used to show the meanings of the prepositions, translation can be used to clarify the meanings of the prepositions, but it can be accompanied by some explanation, that is by showing two or more words that have the same meanings, but they may be different in usage. The translation should not be explained separately from the context, but should be put in sentences or at least phrases so that students can understand both the meanings and the usage of the prepositions.

To teach the preposition on which indicates position in relation to another object, a teacher may have lots of questions from his students concerning the meaning of it. This appears because students may find other English prep-

ositions, such as above, up, over, which also have the same meaning as that of on if they are translated into Indonesian, that is di atas. To clarify all of these a teacher may give some examples to his students, and he may also use pictures, if necessary, to explain the meanings of the prepositions concerned. The following are the examples :

- a. The book was on the table.
- b. He jumped over the fence.
- c. We were flying above the water.
- d. They climbed up the mountain.

All of the prepositions above have something to do with atas in Indonesian. In this respect, a teacher can use pictures to clarify the differences both in meaning and in usage among those prepositions. The following are the pictures which can illustrate the differences of the prepositions above.



The explanations of the uses of the prepositions in relation to the sentences above are as follows :

On is used to indicate a thing or a person which is on the surface of another thing. Over is used to indicate at or to a level higher than, but not touching. Above is to

refer to higher than. This can be contrasted with below. And up is used to express towards the top of.

5. Comparison and contrast

Comparison and contrast can also help a teacher to teach the meanings of prepositions. What is meant by comparison and contrast here is showing the differences in both usage and meaning of the prepositions in the target language and those in the students' native language.

The following is the explanation which might be helpful for us to understand the concept mentioned above.

To teach the prepositions at, in and on which denote the place where something or someone is, a teacher may use comparison and contrast to clarify the differences and similarities among the prepositions in terms of meaning and usage to his students, and at once he may compare the prepositions with those in Indonesian. For this, he may give the following sentences to his students to understand the differences and similarities in both usage and meaning of the prepositions concerned.

- He is at the office.
- Wenny worked at a foreign company.
- The accident occurred at the crossroads.
- I will meet you at the railway station.
- Jesus died on the cross.
- The fluorescent lighting is on the ceiling.
- The dictionary was on the desk.
- The students are in the classroom.
- The shuttle is in the drawer.
- They are in the language dictionary.

After observing the sentences above, we can say that

all of the prepositions used in the sentences may be translated into di or pada in Indonesian. However, it is also necessary to understand that they are different in usage, although they may have the same concept in terms of meaning in general, that is to indicate the place or the position where something or someone is, or where something occurs.

The explanations of the uses of the prepositions in relation to the sentences above can be given as follows.

At is used to denote the place where something or someone is, or where something occurs. In is used to express a position or enclosure within a particular place, area or object ; while on is used to indicate position in relation to another object.

Thus, if we observe the uses of the prepositions explained in detail mentioned above, we can understand that they may have slight differences in meaning. Yet, they may be translated into one Indonesian preposition di.

In addition to those discussed above, the writer also agrees with Close's approach and Pittman's opinion in teaching prepositions to students.¹²

Close suggests that prepositions should first be taught as representing relationships in space, so that they should be seen and felt as precise expressions of position or movement in a certain direction. This should be accomplished through illustrations that the student can observe or make himself or through actions that he can perform or watch. Next, he says, they should be studied as expressions of relationship in time and, finally, as relationships of a more abstract kind. In this way, he concludes, they will be

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found to have clear meanings and to fit into some kind of system. He suggests that for abstract relations the student should learn which prepositions are usually associated with what verbs, nouns, and adjectives.

Thus, what has been talked about by Close can be clarified as follows :

First, a teacher may teach the prepositions of place, for example :

- The dictionary is on the desk.
- The dictionary is in the desk.
- The sandals are under the bed.
- The cross is on the wall.
- The naughty boy hid behind the door.
- The church is across the square.
- Mount Merapi is above Plawangan.
- Plawangan is below Mount Merapi.
- The teacher stood in front of the class.
- The sky is over the world.
- The bank is by the square.

Second, the teacher may teach the prepositions of movement, for example :

- They climb down the mountain.
- They climb up the mountain.
- They poured the tea into the glasses.
- They row the children across the river.
- Throw the ball to me.

Third, the teacher may teach the prepositions of time, for instance : ¹³

- a. at a time : at six o'clock
at noon ; at midnight

on a day : on Monday
 on July 21st
 on Christmas Day

in a period : in August
 in summer
 in the morning
 in the afternoon

Exceptions :

at night

at Christmas

at Easter

on the morning / afternoon / evening of a certain date :

- The battle started on the morning of the 24th.

b. on time = at the time arranged

in time = not late

- The 10 a.m. train started on time (= at 10 a.m.)

- We were in time for the train (= we arrived before 10.0)

c. at 6 a.m. ; at noon ; etc = at the time precisely

by 6 a.m. ; by noon ; etc = at that time or before it

Finally, the teacher may teach a more abstract kind of prepositions, which Pittman also talks about, for instance, the teacher can lead his students from the demonstrable on meaning " attached to ", as in on a string/ rope / thread/ etc, to on a stalk, etc, from there to on a list, etc and eventually to on the staff, etc.

Pittman's "demonstrable" uses ¹⁴

Pittman suggests that a teacher may start with the demonstrable uses of the prepositions. The teacher should provide classroom situations in which prepositions and prepositional phrases can be used and practised in visual contexts. He presents the demonstrable uses of at under several categories :

1. at (a point in space)

He is at the door.

He is at the window.

He is at the table.

He is at the desk.

etc

2. at (a part of the body)

It is at your feet.

It is at your heel.

It is at your side.

etc

3. at (a point in time)

It arrived at 5:13.

4. at (a line)

They are at the fence.

They are at the seaside.

etc

5. at (a position)

They are at the front (of the queue)

They are at the rear (of the queue)

He further says that the teacher then moves from the demonstrable to the abstract, providing one semantic

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variety at a time. The following are his examples which are concerned with the uses of the preposition in.

1. Say it in English.

French

German

Spanish

etc

2. They are in a crowd.

group

cluster

etc

3. I would do it in my spare time.

my leisure

working hours

etc

4. We walked in the field.

meadows

park

woods

forest

etc

Pittman also states that the teacher should emphasize and develop links between the physical and abstract uses. Success here depends on the intelligence of the students and on their mother tongue.

What is meant by Pittman here is that a teacher, in teaching prepositions to his students, should first be able to make his students understand the uses of the prepositions in the light of the physical ones, and gradually he should be able to make his students understand the

abstract uses of the prepositions. The following are the examples of the uses of the preposition in which may illustrate Pittman's idea.

First, the teacher may teach the uses of the preposition in as follows :

- Yesterday I bought a magazine and a bag. Now the magazine is in the bag.
- All the students were in the auditorium.
- The parcel was wrapped in paper.

Then, he may teach the uses of the preposition in which are a bit abstract to his students, for example :

- They lost themselves in the fog.
- They lost themselves in the dark.
- They lost themselves in the rain.

Similarly : in the snow, in the wet, in the cold, in the dusk, etc.

Afterwards, the teacher may teach the abstract uses of the preposition in to his students, for example :

- People like living in peace.
- He spent his life in poverty.
- You should consider yourself in luck to get such an opportunity.

Similarly : in comfort, in luxury, in difficulty, etc.

In connection with learning prepositions viewed from the students' mother tongue, Pittman's opinion can be explained as follows :

If the students' mother tongue has a lot of similarities in terms of prepositions to the language they

are learning, it would be easier for the students to learn the prepositions of the target language.

Indonesian learners of English might, actually, be helped a bit in learning English prepositions, since Indonesian also has several prepositions which correspond exactly to the English prepositions. The following are some of the examples of the corresponding Indonesian - English prepositions :

- Dia bersembunyi di belakang pintu itu.
He hid behind the (that) door.
- Mereka duduk di bawah pohon itu.
They sat under that tree.
- Penku ada di dalam kotak ini.
My pen is in this box.
- Kereta api itu akan tiba pada pukul enam.
The train will arrive at six o'clock.
- Ayahku pergi ke Bali minggu lalu.
My father went to Bali last week.

Then, the teacher may choose the prepositions which are important and useful and have high frequency. Stannard Allen in his book Living English Structure presents the most common English prepositions that should be known to students within their first two years of study. The following are the prepositions : ¹⁵

about	<u>at</u>	between	from	like
after	before	by	<u>in</u>	near
along	behind	down	in front of	(next to)
among	(beneath)	for	into	of

15. Living English Structure. Allen, W.S. Page 292 - 308.

off over (since) to (towards) with
on past through under without
out of round till (until) up

If the students have mastered the above prepositions, they may learn the following prepositions.

above below concerning inside outside
across beside despite in spite of
against beyond except opposite

Perhaps, Stannard Allen considers that these above prepositions, such as above, across, against, etc, do not have high frequency in conversation.

The writer thinks that if the teacher has explained all mentioned above, he may give his students oral drills, oral exercises then written exercises. If the students have mastered them all, the teacher may teach a preposition or prepositional phrase which is a bit difficult and complex.

In short, a teacher should start teaching the prepositions from the simple and demonstrable ones to the more and more difficult, complex and abstract ones. To begin with, a teacher may use what might be called classroom expressions or classroom phrases before he teaches the prepositions to his students. The teacher may start with situations which are as real and relevant to his students as possible, that is, to make his students exactly understand the uses of the prepositions concerned. The following are the examples of the classroom phrases :

- Come in.
- Go to the blackboard.
- Put your books on your desks.
- Sit at the back of the room.

- I will see you at lunch.
- I will see you before lunch.
- I will see you after lunch.

By doing and practising the classroom phrases, the students may understand the uses of the prepositions. It is expected that the students can perform the actions in accordance with the meanings of the prepositions used in the classroom expressions. It is also hoped that the students can see, observe and feel the actions caused by the prepositions used.

Classroom phrases are, indeed, very helpful and useful for the learners who are learning prepositions, since the prepositions used in the classroom phrases are those which can be seen, felt, observed and acted out. Besides, the prepositions used are easy and demonstrable. Classroom phrases may be considered good as the prepositions used in conversation are presented in a real communicative situation.

All of these meet the requirements of Close's and Pittman's suggestions, namely : the prepositions, which are going to be taught to students, should be simple and demonstrable. Besides, the prepositions might be seen, felt and observed by the students.

V. Common Guidelines

A preposition is a word which shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun, gerund, a clause introduced by what, or other conjunctions except being introduced by that and another word in the sentence. In other words, a preposition functions as a connective between the words preceding the preposition and the objects of the preposition. Thus, it indicates the relationship between them.

Examples :

They are in the classroom.

In here connects classroom and are to indicate ' where they are '.

However, besides connecting the words preceding the preposition and the objects of it, a preposition at once introduces a new type of phrase, that is a prepositional phrase.

Examples :

the classroom

The underlined word above makes up a noun with no indication of being a place where someone or something is, but when the preposition in is added, it shows the placement of something. The new phrase is then called a prepositional phrase indicating a place. Similarly :at the store, at the university, at the hospital, in his office, on the beach, etc.

A preposition is usually placed before the noun or pronoun which it governs, but a preposition is also used at the end of a sentence in the following three cases :

- (1) if it qualifies a relative pronoun which is implied but not expressed.
- This is the boy I gave the book to.
 - (or : This is the boy to whom I gave the book.)
- (2) if that is used instead of the relative pronoun which or who(m).
- This is the house that I was born in.
 - (or : This is the house in which I was born.)
- (3) if the sentence is introduced by an interrogative pronoun.
- What are you listening to ?

A preposition is usually placed before the noun or pronoun governed. Often the preposition follows immediately after the verb, as may be seen from most of the examples.

- You must abide by the rule.
- The King departed from the airport.
- He ventually retired from business.
- The performer trembled with emotion.

If the verb takes a direct object, the preposition follows the direct object and immediately precedes the noun or pronoun which it governs.

- He borrowed a lot of money from me.
- He compared Smith to a wild animal.
- The headmaster presented a book to the boy.

The ability to distinguish between a particle and a preposition in a collocation often helps to throw light on the difficult problem of word order.

Much of the confusion associated with phrasal verbs has been caused by failure to distinguish between verb and

particle forms (phrasal verbs) and verb and preposition forms. The mere fact that a verb and a preposition may form a collocation possessing an entirely new meaning is no indication of the formation of a phrasal verb.

The following verbal collocations, for example, are not phrasal verbs : they are figurative verbs followed by prepositions and may be classed as prepositional verbs, but never as phrasal verbs.

- I came across an old friend in town. (= met accidentally)
- This old hat will do for Aunt Sarah. (= will be suitable for)
- He immediately set about cooking a meal. (= began)

Most of the prepositions usually do not affect the meaning of the verbs they follow. Note the position of the preposition in the following sentence patterns :

<u>Verb</u>	+	<u>Prep</u>	+	<u>Object of Prep</u>
abide		by		the law
concentrate		on		a task
look		at		a person
recover		from		an illness
succeed		in		doing something

<u>Verb</u>	+	<u>Object</u>	+	<u>Prep</u>	+	<u>Object of Prep</u>
abandon		a position		to		the enemy
acquit		a person		of		a charge
concede		victory		to		an opponent
obtain		information		from		a person
persuade		a person		into		doing something

Adverbial particles are placed immediately after the verb when the sentence contains no direct object, for instance :

- You must try to bear up even though you feel sad.
- Suddenly the whole barrel blew up.

When a sentence contains a direct object rather than a pronoun, the adverbial particle may follow either :

a. immediately after the verb

- He carried on his business.
- The enemy blew up the bridge.

b. immediately after the direct object especially when the direct object is a noun or a short noun phrase and the verb and particle are separable.

- The firemen soon put the fire out.
- They soon put it out.
- The enemy blew the bridge up.
- They held the meeting over. (= postpone)

Adverbial particles do not denote a relationship between a noun or pronoun and another word, since they are linked to verbs not to nouns. Adverbial particles function as adverbs and modify the verbs with which they are associated.

Adverbial particles differ from other adverbs in certain ways. Most of them are best regarded as helping to form a new verb, for they change or add to the meaning of the verb, however slightly. Thus, the particle is really an integral part of the phrasal verb, separable often in word order but nevertheless constituting a single unit.

Most particles generally function in one of the

following ways :

(1) Many cause a verb to assume a new or subsidiary meaning.

- Let's take a rest, I am done for. (= worn out)
- Long dresses have gone out this year. (=ceased to be fashionable)

(2) Some particles assume a new or special meaning with a verb but do not change the normal meaning of the verb.

- He talked down to his pupils. (= talked condescendingly to)
- Speak out. (= speak loudly)

As the verb retains its usual meaning in such cases, it is often possible to deduce the meaning of the whole collocation, e.g : look over = inspect ; swict on = connect.

(3) Others function in a similar way to ordinary adverbs, helping to form a collocation which maintains a literal meaning.

- She got in her car and drove away (off) without speaking.
- He decided to go out and see a film.
- He jumped up as soon as I entered.

(4) Other particles provide stress, emphasis, or a sense of completion.

- Let me finish off before I leave.
- She gathered up the toys.
- Hurry up or we shall be late.

(5) A number of particles are similar in function to prepositions. Although they are linked to



the verb and conform to the same rules or word order, etc., as other adverbial particles, a noun equivalent following them is often understood though not expressed.

- Take your hat off (your head).
- She came down (the stairs) to greet her guests.
- All Tony's friends rallied round (him).

The particle that follows the verb, which makes the combination become a phrasal verb, can change the transitive verb into an intransitive phrasal verb. The verb give is normally transitive, but by adding the particle up to it, the phrasal verb give up is intransitive in the following sentence :

After the third unsuccessful attempt to scale the north face of the mountain, the climbers gave up and went home.

The verb carry is normally transitive, but with the particle on, the phrasal verb carry on is intransitive in the following sentence :

Don't wait for me to begin eating, please carry on.

Phrasal verbs thus offer a convenient means of making intransitive use of transitive verbs by the addition of a particle.

Adverbial particles can be followed by a preposition.

- He is cut out for a teacher. (is fitted for)
- I cannot put up with his arrogant manner.
(tolerate)

Adverbs normally receive stress, whereas simple prep-

sitions (especially monosyllables) normally do not.

- He thrust 'in his hand. (in = adverb)
- He swam in the lake. (in= unstressed preposition)
- They ran 'down as soon as they saw me waiting.
(down = adverb)
- They ran down the hill. (down = preposition)

Usually a prepositional adverb can be explained as a prepositional phrase from which the complement, having a definite understood meaning has been deleted :

- Is Mary around ? (= 'around the house/building/
etc')
- There is a bus behind. (= ' behind us/the car/house,
etc ')
- Poor George nearly fell off. (= ' off the horse /
bus/roof, etc')

However, adverbs do not always correspond to equivalent prepositional usages, namely there is no equivalent preposition for the adverbs over and off in :

- At last the war was over.
- He was going off on his travels again.

In the most general terms, a preposition expresses a relation between two entities, one being that represented by the prepositional complement. Of the various types of relational meaning, those of place and time are the most prominent and easy to identify. Other relationships such as instrument and cause may also be recognized although it is difficult to describe prepositional meanings systematically in terms of such labels. Some prepositional uses may be elucidated best by seeing a preposition as related to a clause, for example :

- The man with the red beard (= the man who has the red beard)
- My knowledge of Hindi (= I know Hindi)

The following is the diagram of prepositions which may be considered helpful and useful and indicates relations of meaning between a number of prominent prepositions of place.

destination	position	destination	position
to → X	at ● X	(away) from X →	away from X ●
on(to) ↓	on ●	off ↘	off ●
in(to) ↓	in ●	out of ↗	out of ●

Note :

- Some of the prepositions in the above diagram can be replaced by other prepositions with the same meaning :

upon is a formal equivalent of on ; inside and within can substitute for in, and outside for out of.

Usually there is a cause-and-effect relationship between the notions of simple prepositions (or static location) and destination (movement with respect to an intended location).

destination	position
Tom went <u>to</u> Cambridge.	as a result: Tom was <u>at</u> Cambridge.
Tom fell <u>on(to)</u> the floor.	as a result: Tom was <u>on</u> the floor.
Tom dived <u>in(to)</u> the water.	as a result: Tom was <u>in</u> the water.

A prepositional phrase of position can accompany any verb, although the meaning is particularly associated with verbs of stative meaning, such as be, stand, live, the meaning destination generally accompanies a verb of dynamic 'motional' meaning, such as go, move, fly, and so on.

Nelson Francis says that almost all simple prepositions may also appear as full parts of speech, usually adverbs. Some may be homonymous of several lexical words; thus the word round can be noun, verb, adjective, adverb or preposition.¹⁶

Examples :

- A round of toast is very expensive here.
(round = noun)
- You have to round your lips when you make the sound / u: /. (round = verb)
- The round table was very beautiful.
(round = adjective)
- Don't turn round ! (round = adverb)
- The earth moves round the sun.
(round = preposition)

Thus, his statement is correct, namely that some prepositions can be used as other parts of speech.

However, a preposition cannot become other parts of speech by the addition of affixations to it. The following are the examples which can clarify the concept above.

in (Prep) - in + ment
 in + tion
 in + fy
 in + ly

on (Prep) - on + ment
 on + tion
 on + fy
 at (Prep) - at + ment
 at + tion
 at + fy
 at + ly

From the examples above, we can say that the attachment of the suffixes make the prepositions meaningless. So, it is quite obvious now that prepositions cannot undergo an affixation.

Unlike some other parts of speech, such as verbs, adjectives and nouns, they can be used to derive words from other parts of speech. The following are some of the examples :

develop (V) - - - - can be changed into a noun
 by adding the suffix - ment
 to it. Thus, it becomes develop-
 ment.

civilize (V) - - - - can be changed into a noun
 by adding the suffix - tion
 to it. Thus, it becomes
 civilization.

beauty (N) - - - - can be changed into a verb
 by adding the suffix -fy to
 it. Thus, it becomes beautify.

careful (Adj) - - - - can be changed into an ad-
 verb by adding the suffix
 - ly to it. Thus, it becomes
 carefully.

A preposition and its object or a prepositional phrase performs various functions as follows : ¹⁷

1. Adverbs

- The passengers were singing on the bus.
adv. of place
- He arrived in the evening.
adv. of time
- He wrote the letter with care.
adv. of manner

2. After a linking verb, a prepositional phrase serves as a predicative adjective.

- The country is at peace.
- She is in a purple dress.
- They are at work.

3. Prepositional phrases serve as objects or complementations of the verbs or adjectives.

- It depends on you.
- I am longing for her.
- She is interested in music.

4. Prepositional phrases serve as post modifiers in a noun phrase.

- The passengers on the bus were sleeping.
- The dictionary on the desk is my sister's.
- The people at the railway station felt restless.

17. A University Grammar of English. Randolph Quirk, Sidney Green Baum. Syntactic functions of prepositional phrase. Page 145.

VI. Conclusion

The facts show us that students of English as a second language face various difficulties related to the use of prepositions. The difficulties arise because of the complexity of the prepositions themselves. In English there are simple prepositions and complex prepositions. Most English prepositions usually have several meanings and there are a great number of exceptions and special uses. The other difficulties in learning prepositions are that the uses of prepositions, in some cases, are unstable, also the prepositions may have the same forms as adverbial particles in phrasal verbs. Besides, the students' native language and the previous teaching may also influence the way they are learning prepositions. In relation to the last two concepts, the influence of their native language and the previous teaching, the students may build their own strategy in responding or gaining the teaching materials they are going to learn, and this is not always the right way to learn the prepositions.

To overcome such difficulties the writer presents several ways to help students to learn the prepositions correctly and accurately. The ways are as follows :

1. By using pictures
2. By using demonstration
3. By using definition
4. By using translation
5. By using comparison and contrast

In addition to those mentioned above, the writer also thinks that an English teacher, before teaching prepositions to his students, should also choose the preposi-

tions that are important and useful and have high frequency. Afterwards, he may start teaching the prepositions which are simple and demonstrable first, without ignoring the situations which are as real and relevant to his students as possible. Next he can move to the abstract ones.

If the students have mastered all of these, he may give his students oral drills, oral exercises, and at last the written exercises. If the students have mastered these, he may teach a preposition or prepositional phrase which is a bit difficult and complex.

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