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SOURCES OF ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS

By

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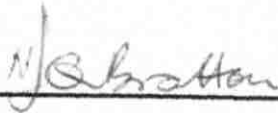
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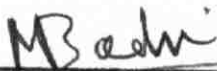
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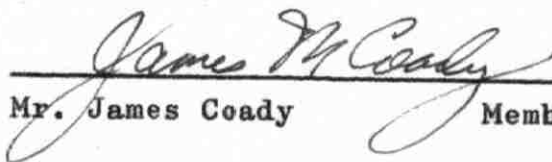
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ABSTRACT

Prepositions and prepositional phrases are a main source of difficulty for learners of English as a second language. One of the reasons that accounts for this difficulty is the manner in which they are taught. Both the traditional and the structural classifications of prepositions are based on their distribution and various uses. However, the writer assumes that a classification of prepositions based on their sources will be more coherent.

Prepositions have different sources through which they may be grouped. In this study, they are classified according to their lexical and non-lexical sources. The lexical prepositions and prepositional phrases have their meanings directly derived from the lexicon. These constitute a major group of English prepositions which can be divided into two main categories, namely, locational and directional. The non-lexical prepositions and prepositional phrases do not have their meanings derived from the lexicon but from their particular syntactic relations to the words they relate in a sentence. They are grouped according to four main sub-sources, namely, prepositional phrases, verb-particle constructions, actants and reduced clauses. The actants, in turn, are discussed in terms of the ergative, agentive, instrumental, comitative and dative.

In this study, certain pedagogical applications are given to aid the teacher in setting up a lesson plan for teaching prepositions.

INTRODUCTION

The word preposition has a Latin origin which consists of two words, namely, prae meaning before and positio meaning position. As the meaning indicates, prepositions stand before other words, usually noun-like items, and relate them to the rest of the items in a sentence. Sometimes, however, the items we call prepositions are more closely related to the words which precede them e.g. verb-particles such as look up.

Prepositions have been referred to as function words by some grammarians, i.e. the structuralists, by which they mean that their "meaning" is determined by the grammatical functions they perform rather than their lexical content.¹ Traditional grammarians, however, claim that the meanings of prepositions are ascribed to them by means of the capacity of the native speaker to comprehend the constructions in which they occur. Such a capacity is referred to in terms of the intuitive responses of the native speakers.² The traditionalists are not explicit about the intuitive responses because they do not specify any means by which to identify

¹Charles Fries, Linguistics And Readings (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1962), p. 71.

²Ibid., p. 70.

them. Consequently, they have to depend on enumerating the usages of prepositions to indicate their various meanings.

The method of enumeration is best illustrated by the Oxford English Dictionary which lists a number of uses for each of the prepositions. Charles Fries has calculated the average number of different shades of meaning allotted by the Oxford English Dictionary to nine of the commonly used prepositions. The average is thirty six and a half separately numbered senses given to each of the nine prepositions. The following tabulation shows the number of uses given by the Oxford English Dictionary to the nine prepositions:

<u>Words</u>	<u>Separately Numbered Senses Given in the Oxford English Dictionary</u> ³
of	63
in	40
with	40
at	39
by	39
to	33
for	31
on	29
from	15

This method of explaining prepositions is not only used in

³Charles Carpenter Fries, American English Grammar (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1940), pp. 112-113.

dictionaries, but also by traditional and structural grammarians. In the following pages, there is a brief survey of the points of view of the latter and brief criticisms are given which attempt to show up the inadequacies of such a method.

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Generally, traditional grammarians such as Curme, Jespersen and Strang seem to have discussed prepositions in terms of their meanings, functions and forms. They assumed that certain meanings, called grammatical meanings were embodied in the sequence of words in an utterance. Such meanings were not derived from the lexical meanings of the individual words of the utterance, but were assumed to be the comprehensive reactions of the native speaker to the whole string of words as lexical items. The traditional grammarians did not raise the question as to the means by which such meanings could be identified. They simply attached technical names to these meanings e.g. The girl bought a dress. This sentence makes a statement of fact. It does not ask a question or give a command. Therefore, it is labelled a declarative sentence. Through some "knowledge of grammar," the traditionalists assumed that the performer of the action, the action performed, and the thing upon which the action was performed could be identified. These, in turn, were assigned the names subject, predicate and direct object consecutively.⁴

⁴Fries, Linguistics And Readings, loc. cit.

Accordingly, when considering the form of prepositions, traditional grammarians classified them according to the manner in which they appear in an utterance. The traditionalists said that prepositions may occur as single words e.g. the boy is in the room; they may occur in phrases e.g. the boy sat in front of me; or they may occur with verbs e.g. the girl was laughed at. The traditional grammarian noted also that prepositions perform various functions depending on their position in an utterance e.g. my day's work is over. Over is a predicate adjective. He arrived in the evening. In the evening is an adverb of time. The specific points of view of the traditional grammarians regarding prepositions will be illustrated by quoting the ideas of Jespersen, Curme, Zandvoort and Strang. The works of Jespersen and Curme are dated 1928 and 1931 respectively, whereas the works of Strang and Zandvoort were published as recently as 1962. However, in spite of the time factor present, the ideas of the four writers may be said to be traditional in inclination. All four discuss prepositions in terms of their meanings, functions and forms.

George Curme traces the origin of certain prepositions in English to cases that are lost e.g. the old locative case was replaced by the prepositions in, inside, within, on, at, by, under, etc.; the old instrumental case by with,

by, through, by means of, on account of, etc.; the old ablative case by from, out of, etc.; and the old dative case by to, towards, at, etc. Curme claims that the function of the above mentioned prepositions in present-day English is to bring a noun or other words into relation with a verb, noun, adjective etc. Originally, he says, the prepositions were adverbs linked to the verb of the sentence e.g.:

Mary works in the house. Here in brings house into relation with the verb works. Originally, however, in was an adverb modifying the verb works. The idea now conveyed by in the house was at this early period expressed by house in the old locative case. The adverb in with the meaning inside expressed the same idea as the old locative case, but expressed it more concretely, hence more forcibly. Gradually in came into a closer relation with house, so that it became more intimately associated with house than with the verb and thus developed into a preposition, and since its force was stronger than the old locative, the latter gradually disappeared as superfluous.⁵

However, Curme does not list all the prepositions that replaced the old cases, but fills the gap with etc. Curme assumes that with the loss of the old case forms, improved means of expression emerge which are accounted for by the constant formation of new prepositions. He assumes that one could form prepositions not only from adverbs, but also from nouns and present participles. Hence, in his list of the most

⁵George O. Curme, A Grammar of the English Language, Syntax (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1931), p. 561.

common prepositions, he includes according to, touching, concerning, respecting, abaft, anent, aslant, astern of, athwart, ere, pursuant to, minus and plus. Some of these prepositions such as anent, abaft and aslant are not as commonly used as other prepositions like concerning for example.⁶

Barbara Strang also includes the participial form of some verbs in her list of prepositions such as concerning, considering, following and regarding. The reason she gives for including them is that these participles, like other prepositions, indicate relationships between one noun-like item and another. Strang defines all prepositions by their syntactic function of relating noun-like items, and by their main position as prenominals.⁷

Both Jespersen and Strang discuss two-word verbs in considerable detail. Strang classifies them into three kinds, namely, prepositional verbs, phrasal verbs, and prepositional-phrasal verbs which are different from the verb+particle. She sets several criteria in addition to the criterion of idiomaticness to distinguish the three kinds of

⁶ Ibid., pp. 561-565.

⁷ Barbara M.H. Strang, Modern English Structure (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd., 1962), p. 172.

two-word verbs from the verb-particle. To Strang, the two-word verb which forms an idiom has to be learnt as a whole because it cannot be understood from the lexical meanings of its components. e.g. I came across an old friend this evening. She says that the verb came across cannot be understood from the lexical meanings of came and across. She then describes the three kinds of two-word verbs in terms of the following criteria. She defines a prepositional verb as consisting of a verb which functions as a verb on its own, and a preposition which functions as a preposition on its own. It is a transitive verb and when in the active form, must be followed by its object. e.g. We came across him again only recently. The verb-particle corresponding to the prepositional verb, she claims, may be either intransitive or transitive in which case the object must be placed between the verb and the particle e.g. I took the case to him. However, the example given by Strang does not illustrate a verb-particle combination. To in this sentence is not associated with the verb took but with the indirect object him. An exact paraphrase of the sentence which eliminates the preposition to is: I took him the case. As for the phrasal verb, Strang says that it consists of a verb together with a particle that can be either a preposition or an adverb. Besides, it may be either transitive or

intransitive. If it is transitive, the pronominal object must be placed between the two parts of the verb, but the nominal object may occur either between or after them. She gives the following as examples:

He turned the light (it) off.
He turned off the light.

Moreover, Strang believes that adverbs cannot be placed between the components of a phrasal verb, but they can in a sequence of a verb-particle. She illustrates this by:

He turned off the road suddenly.
He turned off the light suddenly.
He turned suddenly off the road.
* He turned suddenly off the light.

Finally, she defines the prepositional-phrasal verb as having two particles plus the verb in an uninterrupted sequence such as I can't put up with it any longer.⁸ In spite of the fact that she gives a detailed classification of the form of two-word verbs, she does not clearly distinguish between them and the verb-particle. She does not mention what a verb-particle consists of except by eliminating prepositional verbs, phrasal verbs and prepositional-phrasal verbs.

Jespersen, on the other hand, presents his classification of two-word verbs by grouping them according to the prepositions they pair with. For instance, under about, he

⁸Ibid., pp. 156-158.

includes examples and brief explanations of mind about, know about, and forget about. Similar sections include verbs that take against, at, for, from, in, into, of, on, upon, over, to, and with. However, the examples he gives do not illustrate the verb-particle combinations well because in many instances, the prepositions belong to the noun phrase following and not to the verb. e.g. enter into a room, into is a preposition that has both locational (in) and directional (to) components which describe more the parts of the room where the action is done. Besides, an elimination of the preposition does not change the action done. Another example is fight with. Even though Jespersen admits that with generally has the meaning of togetherness, yet he claims that it pairs with the verb fight and not with the following noun phrase. Another example he gives is: Lord C joined with Lord W in supporting the bill. With is a comitative preposition that describes the "togetherness" of Lord C and Lord W, and not a preposition that pairs with join.⁹ Jespersen states that in some combinations of verb + particle + an object, it is difficult to determine whether the particle is an adverb or a preposition. When two words have the same form, he distinguishes them as being either adverbs or prepositions by their meaning and by the stress they carry. The example

⁹Otto Jespersen, A Modern English Grammar, Syntax (Vol. II; London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1928), pp.252-272.

he gives, I couldn't get in a word, has in described as an adverb because of its meaning and because of the long [n] it has. However, when such criteria are insufficient to reveal the distinction, Jespersen resorts to word order by stating that "when the particle comes after the object, this must be governed by the verb, and the particle accordingly is an adverb; but when the particle precedes the object, both alternatives are possible."¹⁰ He gives the following as examples:

I must give over this life.
I will give it over.

According to Jespersen, both the meaning and the position of over after it show that it is an adverb. He mentions also that an adverb allows other words to intervene between it and the object such as I went over in my mind the girls I could ask.¹¹ No examples were given to illustrate the use of over as a preposition.

In discussing the form of prepositions, traditional grammarians seem to lay too much importance on the surface structure of constructions with prepositions. Hence, they discuss prepositions according to their position, namely,

¹⁰Ibid., p. 273.

¹¹Ibid., p. 274.

before noun-like items. Jespersen devotes separate sections to enumerate and give examples of the prepositions that occur before that such as in and for. He also discusses some prepositions that take interrogative clauses as their object such as of, about, at, by, from, in, on, over, to and with. e.g. Didn't my mother say anything about when she'd be in? or It must depend on how far the husband had been in fault.¹² By so doing, Jespersen grouped together prepositions that are basically different in reference to their structure. On is linked with the verb depend, whereas about is related to the following noun phrase. Besides, one can say something about something else, but one cannot depend someone on someone else. In other words, the sequence of depend on cannot be disrupted by the intervention of an object as is the case with say about.

Zandvoort resorts to surface structure in distinguishing various kinds of prepositions. He labels them according to the position they occupy in a construction. For instance, he calls the dative to that which signals the indirect object in a transitive construction such as: I gave the letter to the man. But he does not mention the similarity present with the to in the following sentence: This is the man to whom I gave the letter.¹³

¹²Ibid., p. 46-47.

¹³R.W. Zandvoort, A Handbook of English Grammar (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1962), pp. 20, 160.

In relation to the infinitive to, both Zandvoort and Curme classify it as that which precedes the verb. Moreover, Curme discusses it according to its origin and meaning. He says that originally it was a preposition governing a noun in the dative case. It meant toward and pointed to that toward which the activity of the principal verb is directed. As an example, he gives: Jealousy drove him to do it.¹⁴ Similarly, Zandvoort gives the following example to illustrate the infinitive to: It is bad for him to smoke.

Finally, Zandvoort mentions another kind of to which is obligatory in the end position of a construction with what such as: It all depends on what you are accustomed to.¹⁵ It seems that such an approach to the analysis of prepositions is not very sound because it analyses prepositions according to the structures they are used in irrespective of their true nature. Consequently, it disregards whether prepositions are associated with verbs, with noun phrases or whether they are simply the outcome of reduced clauses. Moreover, this approach does not clarify the fact that the to in the above example could belong to more than one source e.g. You are accustomed to eat, and you are accustomed to it.

¹⁴Curme, op. cit., p. 456.

¹⁵Zandvoort, op. cit., p. 253.

Traditional grammarians ascribe certain functions to prepositions which explain the relation of the preposition to other words in the construction. For instance, Zandvoort states that prepositions such as before, after, until, till and since may function as conjunctions. He then mentions that as, but and than may function either as prepositions or as conjunctions when they are followed by a personal pronoun parallel with the subject of the construction, e.g.,

She is as tall as I.
She is as tall as me.

He claims that in the second sentence, as is a preposition because it is followed by a pronoun in the object form.¹⁶

Curme assigns the following functions to the prepositional phrase or clause by stating that it is used with the force of:

- a. A predicate adjective: The sun is up.
- b. An attributive adherent ... adjective: an up-to-date dictionary. An attributive appositive adjective ... The day after he came was beautiful.
- c. An object of a verb or an adjective: I am sick of it.
- d. A prepositional phrase is very often used as an adverb of ... place ... time ... manner proper ... manner specification ... attendant circumstance ... result ... degree ... restrictive ... cause ... condition ... concession ... purpose ... means ... agency.¹⁷

¹⁶Ibid., p. 235.

¹⁷Curme, op. cit., pp. 570-571.

- e. A noun or pronoun may be modified by a prepositional phrase, which usually follows it ...
a girl with black hair.¹⁸

However, to state the functions of prepositions does not tell much about their nature. Of the more enlightening remarks that Curme makes about prepositions are that some of them function as case markers e.g. of marks the genitive case, to marks the dative case, and for, on, upon and from may also be dative case signs, e.g.,

The glass is full of water.
 To me, she is pretty.
 She's setting a trap for you.
 He stole a watch from me.
 He shut the door on me.¹⁹

None of the previously mentioned traditional grammarians explains the structural reasons why two prepositions of the same form are given separate labels. They merely distinguish them by classifying them according to their surface structure differences. This was illustrated by Zandvoort's treatment of various kinds of to. From hence, they depend on the intuition of the native speaker in bringing forth the various shades and grammatical meanings of the prepositions. On the other^{hand}, structural grammarians, as Fries claims, recognize the grammatical meanings of the traditionalists, but reject the assumption that recognition of these

¹⁸Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 106-107, 110, 113.

meanings is through the intuitive response of the native speaker. The structuralist assumes:

that whatever 'grammatical meanings' there are, are definitely conveyed by signals; that these signals consist of structures, identified by contrastive patterns of functioning structural 'units'; and that these patterns can be described in terms of the contrastive arrangements and forms of these functioning 'units'.²⁰

* It is for this reason that Nelson Francis divides prepositions into three groups, simple, compound and phrasal prepositions, on the basis of their morphemic structure. In the category of simple prepositions, he includes words that have only one base. He subdivides this group further according to the number of morphemes found in the preposition. Some prepositions have a single morpheme such as:

after	from	on	through
as	in	out	till
at	like	over	to
but	near	per	under
by	of	round	up
down	off	since	with
for			

Some have two morphemes such as:

about	around	between	toward
above	before	beyond	underneath
across	behind	despite	unlike

²⁰Fries, Linguistics And Readings, op. cit., p. 71.

along	below	during	until
amid	beneath	except	unto
among	beside		

Some have three morphemes such as:

against
concerning
considering
opposite
regarding

It is interesting to note at this point that the participial forms of some verbs are considered by both traditional and structural grammarians as prepositions, though they differ in the method by which they are classified. Francis classifies as compound prepositions those that consist of two or more free bases. Usually, he says, the first base is an adverb and the second, a simple preposition. Of the most common compound prepositions he lists:

across from	down from	off of	together with
along with	due to	onto	upon
alongside of	except for	out of	up to
apart from	inside of	outside of	up with
away from	instead of	ever to	within
lack of	into	throughout	without

As for the phrasal preposition Francis specifies that it consists of three words in this order: a single preposition, a noun, and another single preposition usually to or for.

The examples he gives of it are the following:²¹

in regard to	by means of	on top of	
on account of	in addition to	in	} behalf of
in spite of	in front of	on	

A similar classification of prepositions according to the number of bases is done by Fries. He divides the prepositions, according to their surface structure, into two groups namely simple and compound. He then subclassifies the compound prepositions in the following manner:

1. There is, first, the expansion of the function word which amounts to an analysis and emphasis of the precise meaning relationship involved. Thus, at which by itself may refer to position or time, becomes expanded to at the place of his abode ..., at the time of the occurrence ..., at the rate of \$ 25 per week ...
2. There is, second, the use of two function words (it makes little difference whether they are called two prepositions or an adverb and a preposition) side by side, so joined in use as to operate as a unit ... into, unto, until, upon, throughout, within,

²¹W. Nelson Francis, The Structure of American English (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1958), pp. 306-308.

without ...

3. There is, third, the combining of such adjectives as according, owing, relating and due with the function word to so that the two words operate as a single word ...²²

Structural grammarians in discussing prepositions do not probe deep into the structure of the language but are content to analyze its surface structure. The best illustration of this approach is the study done by Charles Fries.

✧ Fries, in his book American English Grammar, studies the occurrences of each preposition in Standard English and in Vulgar English. He concludes that prepositions occur most commonly with nouns and less often with pronouns. In Standard English, 92.4% of the instances occur with nouns and only 7.6% with pronouns. In Vulgar English, 82% of the instances occur with nouns and 18% with pronouns. Fries calls these prepositions function words used with substantives, which means that they are words that have little or no meaning apart from the grammatical idea they express by relating the noun-like items to other words. Of these prepositions, he found nine that occur in 92.6% of the instances in Standard

²²Fries, American English Grammar, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-118.

English.²³ Before presenting Fries' findings, a few comments need to be made on this approach. The fact that Fries classifies prepositions by merely recounting their occurrences in various English dialects exemplifies the superficiality of the approach. Fries does not go beyond this stage whereby he would examine prepositions in relation to the deep structure of the language. Instead, he is contented with enumerating his statistical findings. Such classifications are valuable, but not as ends in themselves. In other words, Fries' findings should not be regarded as the truth about prepositions, but simply as descriptions of these so called function words.

The following table presents some of Fries' findings about prepositions:

of	906	instances	
in	573	"	
to	428	"	
for	333	"	
at	229	"	
on	228	"	
from	216	"	
with	164	"	
by	<u>128</u>	"	
Total	3,205	"	out of 3,448

²³Ibid., p. 112.

Of the twenty nine single prepositions that occur in Standard English, among, onto, and within do not occur in his corpus of Vulgar English. Of the thirty six single prepositions that occur in Vulgar English, around, as, beneath, beside, but, concerning, except, like, off and till do not occur in his corpus of Standard English.²⁴ It is very clear that the approach used by Fries and the other structuralists is merely an investigation of the surface structure of the language. Such an investigation, particularly when it is based on a limited corpus may yield misleading results such as the ones Fries ended up with, e.g., Fries stated that a preposition such as around is not commonly used by the speakers of Standard English dialect merely because it does not appear in his corpus.

Fries then tries to determine the functions of prepositions by the kinds of grammatical relationships they put substantives into. He concludes that these relationships describe substantives, mainly nouns, as modifiers of other nouns, verbs or adjectives; as various types of objects; as predicate adjectives; as appositives; and as object complements.²⁵ Francis agrees with Fries in that either single

²⁴Ibid., pp. 111-112.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 119-124.

prepositions or prepositional phrases may function as modifiers. He states that prepositional phrases may be verb adjective, adverb, or sentence modifiers. Some of the examples he gives are:

He spoke about his work.	(verb)
easy on the eyes	(adj.)
good for nothing	(adj.)
away for a week	(adv.)
outside in the cold	(adv.)
In the end, he agreed with me.	(sentence)

Moreover, he mentions that prepositional phrases such as the following act as sentence links.²⁶

at least	as a result
in the next place	for example
in contrast	after a while
in addition	on the other hand

In spite of the fact that no complete grammar has been advanced which studies prepositions fully, yet certain enlightening remarks have been made on the subject. Otto Jespersen, in 1924, wanted to bring together adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections and call them particles. He explained his reasons by giving examples of prepositions regarded as belonging to different word classes e.g.

²⁶Francis, op. cit., pp. 319-324, 417.

i

put your cap on
 he was in
 he climbs up
 he falls down

ii

put your cap on your head
 he was in the house
 he climbs up a tree
 he falls down the steps

Jespersen said that it would be better to classify these two instances of the same word as belonging to one class, but that in, on, up and down are sometimes complete in themselves like the examples in column (i), and are other times followed by an object like the examples in column (ii).²⁷ Bruce Fraser, in his article "Some Remarks on the Verb-Particle Construction in English," considers prepositions similar to those in column (i) as reduced adverbs whose complete form is expressed in constructions similar to those in column (ii) thus approving the analysis suggested by Jespersen.²⁸

Another such remark on prepositions was made by George Curme in 1931, when he claimed that certain prepositions go back in origin to cases which are lost such as the locative, instrumental ablative and dative cases. A similar approach has recently been advanced again by Charles Fillmore in "A Proposal Concerning English Prepositions" where he

²⁷ Otto Jespersen, The Philosophy of Grammar (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1924), pp. 87-89.

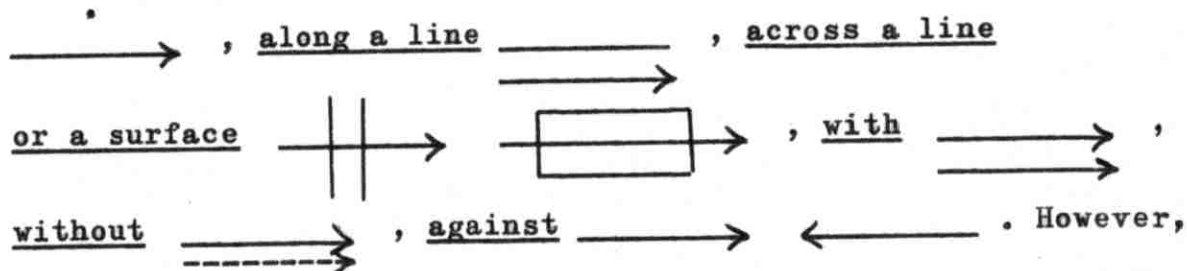
²⁸ Bruce Fraser, "Some Remarks on the Verb-Particle Construction in English," Reports of the Seventeenth Annual Round Table Meeting On Linguistics and Language Studies, ed. F.P. Dinneen (No. 19; Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1966), pp. 22-23.

considers the ergative, dative, locative, instrumental and agentive as noun phrases each beginning with a preposition in the deep structure of the language.²⁹

Very recently, books one and two of The Key to English Prepositions were published in which prepositions are classified into broad semantic categories such as place and motion, direction and motion, time, manner, agent or instrument, and measurement. A list of idiomatic usages of prepositions is provided with each category. Separate sections discuss nouns with prepositions, adjectives with prepositions and verbs with prepositions.³⁰ In 1967, R.A. Close wrote a book of a similar nature about prepositions. However, his approach differed in that he claimed that prepositions should, first, be seen and felt as expressions of relationships in space. To achieve this purpose, Close illustrates the various relationships in space by means of sketches or diagrams e.g. by a point is diagrammed as follows:

²⁹Charles J. Fillmore, "A Proposal Concerning English Prepositions," Report of the Seventeenth Annual Round Table Meeting On Linguistics And Language Studies, ed. F.P. Dinneen (No. 19; Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1966), pp. 22-23.

³⁰English Language Services, The Key to English Prepositions (2 vols. London: Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1964).



Close does not explain that more than one preposition can represent the diagrams in his book e.g. against may sometimes be replaced by opposite, with may sometimes be replaced by alongside of and through a space may sometimes be replaced by from one side of ... to another. Close then claims that prepositions should be studied as expressions of time. He illustrates this by stating that an event happens at a point in time, on a day or date, and in a period of time. Finally, he says that prepositions should be studied as abstract expressions. At this last level, the student should learn which prepositions are associated with what verbs, nouns and adjectives.³¹

³¹R.A. Close, Prepositions (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1967), pp. 1-25.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Prepositions and prepositional phrases are a main source of difficulty for learners of English as a second language. Arabic-speaking students are often found translating prepositions from their native language, thus making mistakes except where the prepositions have parallel usage and distribution in both languages. One of the reasons that accounts for the difficulty of learning English prepositions is the manner in which they are taught. Until very recently, most of the textbooks used in teaching Arab-speaking students English have used either the traditional or the structural approaches to prepositions. In fact, some of the books utilized today in our schools are a combination of both approaches. Examination of one such series will be included in this study.

Prepositions have different sources through which they may be grouped. One may distinguish the lexical and the non-lexical sources of prepositions, and from there, subclassify each source into the various groups of prepositions that fall into it. The writer assumes that a classification of prepositions based on their sources will be more coherent than one based merely on their distribution.

It is assumed also that the presentation of prepositions according to their sources instead of according to their usages, will facilitate both the teaching and learning tasks of the teacher and the pupil respectively. Hence, the purposes of this study are threefold:

- a. to determine the sources of prepositions in English;
- b. to compare prepositions from two of these sources with those in Classical Arabic;
- c. to draw some pedagogical applications in the teaching of prepositions.

PROCEDURE

The procedure used in this study will be stated in terms of steps which are:

- a. to distinguish the different sources of English prepositions;
- b. to establish what are the prepositions and prepositional phrases that come from each source;
- c. to find the Arabic equivalents of prepositions and prepositional phrases that come from a lexical source, and contrast them with the English items from the same source;

- d. to state how a textbook presents prepositions and prepositional phrases for teaching Arabic- speaking students English;
- e. to provide possible applications for the teaching of English prepositions.

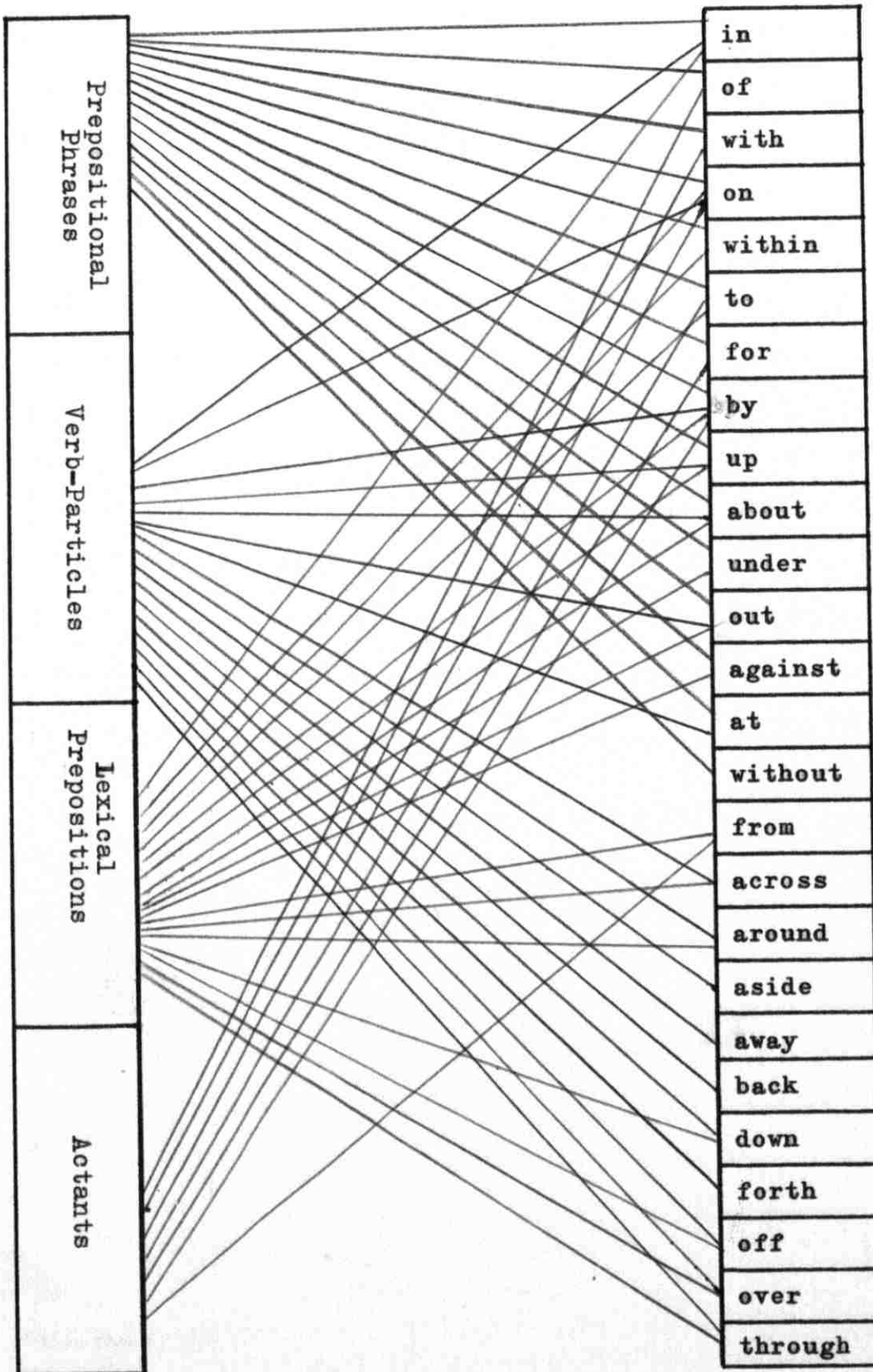
CHAPTER II

NON-LEXICAL SOURCES OF PREPOSITIONS AND PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Discussion of prepositions and prepositional phrases in terms of their sources necessitates their classification into lexical and non-lexical groups. Lexical prepositions and prepositional phrases have their meanings directly derived from the lexicon. These will be examined and analyzed in the following chapter. Non-lexical prepositions and prepositional phrases do not have their meanings derived from the lexicon but from their particular syntactic relations to the words they relate to each other in an utterance. They are grouped according to four main sources which will be conveniently referred to as prepositional phrases, verb-particle constructions, actants, and reduced clauses.

As previously mentioned, grammarians have discussed prepositions according to their various functions, forms or meanings. In other words, they have been regarding each preposition separately, and then by enumerating its various uses and shades of meanings, they try to fit it into the more complex system of prepositions. It seems that such an approach is what accounts for the many gaps and ambiguities left untackled in the area of prepositions. However, a

classification of prepositions based on their sources appears to be more coherent than one based merely on their surface structure. The following is a diagram of four lexical and non-lexical sources of prepositions with the various prepositions that originate from them.



Four Lexical and Non-Lexical Sources of Prepositions

The above diagram does not include prepositions that come only from a lexical source such as above, amidst, amongst, before, behind, below, beneath, etc... It is meant to illustrate the complexities that one encounters when discussing the distribution of each preposition individually. The indication of such complexities is the great deal of overlapping one has to consider if the diagram is approached from the level of individual prepositions in a descending manner. The complexities are obviously minimized when, on the other hand, prepositions are considered to come from various definite sources. It is assumed that this deduction bears important pedagogical implications which will be referred to in Chapter IV, and which, when utilized effectively by the teacher, will render his task of teaching prepositions easier than it is at present.

Prepositional Phrases

In discussing prepositional phrases, Curme and Strang include some of what they regard as prepositional phrases in their lists of the most common prepositions. However, Francis specifically notes the form of a prepositional phrase as consisting of a function word of the class called preposition and a lexical word usually but not always a noun.³² Of these,

³²Francis, op. cit., p. 296.

he only includes a representative list. Heaton, on the other hand, devotes a whole section to prepositional phrases in his book about prepositions. To him, a phrase is prepositional if it consists of a preposition, sometimes an article, a noun and another preposition. Because Heaton's list is the most inclusive compared to the other lists previously mentioned, it shall be used for the purposes of this study.

In his list of prepositional phrases, Heaton includes phrases that have a lexical meaning such as at the bottom of, in/at the center of, in the direction of, in/at the front of, in the middle of, in the midst of, in/at the rear of, on the side of, by the side of, and on/at the top of. Because these phrases are considered to have their meanings directly derived from the lexicon they were not included in this category of non-lexical prepositional phrases. Heaton's list was then surveyed, and single-word prepositions appearing either at the beginning or at the end of the phrases were sorted out. For instance, Heaton includes such phrases as in accordance with, from which in and with were sorted out. The total number of such prepositions is fifteen: in, of, with, on, within, to, for, at, by, without, up, about, under, out and against. Consequently, the sources of these prepositions is said to be prepositional phrases. The following is a

representative sample of the prepositional phrases given by Heaton:³³

in accordance with
 in addition to
 on behalf of
 at the head of
 on the lines of
 for the love of
 under the command of
 against the will of
 within sounds of
 by order of
 out of proportion to

Although it is debatable sometimes whether the preposition which comes at the end of the prepositional phrase is part of it or part of the following noun phrase, yet, the writer believes that the phrase has to be learnt as a whole and not as separate lexical items. The fifteen single prepositions which are sorted out from prepositional phrases are said to come from a non-lexical source which means that the meaning of the phrase cannot be concluded from separate entries of the individual components. The phrase has to be taken as one unit.

³³J.B. Heaton, Prepositions And Adverbial Particles (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1965), pp. 11-17.

Verb-Particle Construction

The second non-lexical source of prepositions is the verb-particle construction. This construction has been previously examined by grammarians, and many attempts have been made to list various verbs that are followed by prepositions. However, such attempts at classifying verb-particles according to surface structure have not been thorough, and were often misleading. For instance, Strang, in her discussion of the verb-particle gives the following example to illustrate it: I took the case to him. As was previously mentioned, to is not of the verb construction but is a preposition used to indicate the indirect object in the sentence. Consequently, it is affiliated to the noun phrase following and not to the verb. A more rigorous presentation was recently given by Bruce Fraser in an article about the verb-particle construction in which he examines such sequences and tries to determine whether or not verb + particle are to be treated as separate entries in the lexicon or as single verb + particle entries. Fraser's attempt, though not exhaustive, seems to be the best so far. The remarks in this section are made in light of Fraser's findings on the verb-particle constructions.

In this study, the word particle is used to refer to both prepositions and adverbs that occur with verbs. To determine whether there is a verb-particle sequence or not, the sentence is put in the passive voice. If the particle remains with the verb, and if it can be immediately followed by the agentive, then it is a verb-particle sequence. e.g. They talked over the matter. When put in the passive form, it becomes the matter was talked over by them. Running the same test on the example given by Strang as a verb-particle construction will illustrate this point further. I gave the case to him becomes The case was given by me to him in the passive form. To is separated from the verb given, hence, it is not a verb-particle construction.

Verb-particle constructions fall into two main categories namely separables and unseparables. Such a classification is based on the characteristics exhibited by the particle in the construction. A separable construction consists of a verb and a preposition in a sequence which may be disrupted by an intervening noun phrase such as an object e.g. They talked over the matter may be restated as They talked the matter over. If, however, the object is a pronoun, it should come between the components of the construction and cannot be placed elsewhere. e.g. They gave it back, and not

* They gave back it. Other examples of separable constructions are look up, blow up, jot down, zip up, stick up, and quiet down. An inseparable construction consists of a verb and a preposition in a sequence which may not be disrupted by intervening words. e.g. They laughed at the boy may not be restated as * They laughed the boy at. Other examples of inseparable constructions are abide by, depend on, approve of, argue about, dispense with, believe in, consent to, disapprove of, and confide in.

Sometimes verbs are followed by reduced adverbs which take the form of simple prepositions such as in. Fraser distinguishes between these and the verb-particles first, by applying the nominalization transformation, and second, by moving the particle to the end of the sentences. e.g.

The man looked up the information.

The butler carried in the dinner.

Apply the nominalization transformation to both, we get:

The man's looking up of the information (surprised his boss).

The butler's carrying in of the dinner (pleased our host).

Moving the particle to the end of the sentences we get:

* The man's looking of the information up (surprised his boss).

The butler's carrying of the dinner in (pleased our host).

Fraser concludes that in is a reduced adverb of direction such as into the room, whereas look up is a verb-particle.³⁴

Fraser also mentions that not all verbs in English occur with even one particle. Besides, verbs co-occurring with one particle may not occur with more such as got which occurs only with down, while get occurs with fifteen particles. Moreover, in his final analysis of the verb-particle, he lists the following which function as particles: about, across, around, aside, away, back, by, down, forth, in, off, on, out, over, through and up.³⁵ The writer, however, believes that at also functions as a particle with verbs e.g. laugh at. Hence, it is included with the others in the chart of 'Sources of Prepositions'.

Fraser, then, tries to account for the verb-particle occurrence on semantic grounds. In his attempt, he identifies two groups of verb-particle combinations namely the systematic and the unsystematic. He states that some verbs do not change their meaning even if a particle is added to them. e.g.

The woman mixed up the batter.

The woman mixed the batter.

³⁴Fraser, loc. cit.

³⁵Ibid.

He calls such verb-particle combinations systematic as compared to the unsystematic ones. e.g.

The woman ran up the hill.

* The woman ran the hill.

The systematic combinations are then subclassified into literal, completive, and a group which is neither. The particle of the literal systematic combinations has a retained adverbial sense such as dish out, give out, hand out, pour out, glue up, hang up, nail up, give over, and hand over. The particle of the completive systematic combinations gives a completive sense to the meaning of the verb such as mix up, stir up, shake up, coil up, fold up, wind up and roll up. The particle of the third subclassification that Fraser gives has the characteristics of neither the completive nor the literal particles. Its effect on the verb is not derivable from the meaning of the verb and the particle such as note down, copy down, scribble down and write down.³⁶

As for the unsystematic verb-particle combinations, Fraser distinguishes two subclasses. The first class consists of verbs that were originally nouns such as button, stamp,

³⁶Ibid., pp. 51-52.

bolt, tack, nail, pin, screw, glue, paste, cement, tape and staple occur in combinations with down. e.g. He glued down the loose edge of the rug. The second class consists of verbs adjoined with particles which were originally a part of directional adverbials.³⁷ However, Fraser is inconsistent at this point because at the beginning of his article, he makes a definite distinction between reduced adverbs and verb-particle combinations. It seems to the writer, that reduced adverbs are better classified under reduced clauses than verb-particle combinations.

In summary, one may state that the verb-particle constructions are of two kinds: separable and inseparable. The name is self explanatory for it indicates that some constructions may be separated by intervening elements in contrast to other constructions whose components may not be separated. The above classification of the verb-particle constructions is in terms of their structure. Fraser, however, advocates another classification of such constructions on the basis of semantics. He calls the first group the systematic verb-particles where the verb does not change its meaning even if a particle is added as contrasted with the unsystematic verb-particles which constitute his second group.

³⁷Ibid., p. 55.

Actants

A third non-lexical source of prepositions are the actants. Charles Fillmore recently wrote an article about prepositions in which he introduced a new structure for analyzing prepositional phrases. He analyzes prepositional phrases in relation to the various constituents that immediately dominate them. These constituents he calls actants, a term borrowed from Tesnière. To understand what Fillmore means by actants, it is essential to present some of the proposals he advances in his new grammar.

Fillmore claims that the major constituents of a sentence are modality, auxiliary and proposition. Of these, he assumes that the modality elements such as sentence adverbials, interrogatives and negatives are optional. The proposition elements, however, consist of the verb and all the nominal elements which are needed for the subclassification of verbs. Of the nominal elements, he lists the ergative, dative, locative, instrumental, agentive and footnotes other elements about which he is hesitant such as the comitative, extent and benefactive. He states that all of these nominal elements are noun phrases, and every noun phrase begins with a proposition. The noun phrase, however, has other lexical items such as the determiner and the noun which, along with

the preposition, take the name of the actant dominating the phrase. For instance, if the actant agentive is dominating a particular noun phrase, the preposition, determiner and noun constituents of the phrase take the name agentive so that we have an agent preposition, an agent determiner and an agent noun. Sometimes, the preposition preceding the noun phrase does not appear in the sentence. Fillmore accounts for that by saying that in certain contexts, preposition deletion takes place. For instance, all prepositions are deleted in subject position. Moreover, some verbs delete the prepositions of the actants which follow them immediately. e.g. if a proposition consists of a verb and an ergative, and if the verb is read and the ergative noun is books, then the verb deletes the ergative preposition giving read books. However, there are certain contexts in which prepositions deletion does not take place such as nominalization. Nominalizing the above sentence, we get: the reading of books in which of is the ergative preposition.³⁸

This information about actants specifies only one of the sources of prepositions which Fillmore mentions. He claims that there are two other sources namely the lexicon

³⁸Fillmore, op. cit., pp. 22-24.

and the verb-particles. He states that some prepositions are filled in from the lexicon such as over, under, in, and on, and bring with them semantic information. He also states that a group of prepositions are assigned by the inherent syntactic features of specific verbs such as blame which requires for as the ergative preposition and to as the dative preposition.³⁹ Of the above mentioned sources, the actants will be considered in this section, and only the ergative, agentive, instrumental, comitative and dative of them.

Ergative

The ergative is one of the nominal elements which Fillmore claims to be relevant to the subclassification of verbs. Traditionally, it was referred to as the nominative case, but as used by Fillmore, it describes the relation between the subject of the intransitive verb and the object of the transitive verb such as:

The door opened.

The janitor opened the door.

By nominalizing the above, we get:

The opening of the door

The opening of the door by the janitor

The above show that of is the ergative preposition.

³⁹Ibid., p. 23.

If the ergative phrase is alone, it is the subject e.g. The door opened. If the ergative phrase has an instrumental phrase with it, it is still the subject e.g. The door opened with a key. However, if an agent phrase accompanies the ergative and the instrumental phrases, then the former becomes the subject. e.g.

The janitor opened the door with a key.

In this sentence, the instrumental preposition is with. By applying the passive transformation we get: The door was opened by the janitor with a key which brings out by as the agent preposition. Moreover, as previously mentioned, the nominalization transformation brings out the ergative preposition of. Fillmore concludes his discussion of the ergative by stating that "the ergative preposition is of if it is the only actant in a preposition or if the preposition contains instrument or agent phrases; it is with otherwise."⁴⁰ An example of the latter is:

(in) the garden swarms with bees
(with) bees swarm in the garden

When the locative or ergative phrases are in subject position, their prepositions are deleted.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 22-23.

Agentive

The agent preposition is claimed to be by, and it precedes the agent noun phrase except when it fills the subject slot in which case it is deleted. e.g.

The door was opened by the janitor.

The janitor opened the door.

In regard to the agent noun, Fillmore states that it should be always an animate noun.⁴¹ It is interesting to note at this point that what has been referred to by the traditional grammarians as the performer of the action fits well with the agent noun, though it does not always occur in the subject position. When the verb is passivable, the ergative is in the subject position, whereas the agent phrase occurs optionally after the verb or does not occur at all. e.g.

The door was opened by the janitor.

The door was opened with a key by the janitor.

The agent preposition is always by and not with though it may seem to be so in some contexts. e.g.

He was confronted by his friends.

He was confronted with his friends.

These two examples have different meanings.

⁴¹Ibid.

The first example means that his friends confronted him, whereas the second example implies that someone confronted him with his friends, and consequently, he was confronted by someone with his friends.

Instrumental

The name of this actant is self explanatory of its function. Fillmore in his discussion of the instrumental states that if the proposition consists of the verb, the ergative and the instrumental, then the latter becomes the subject such as:

The key opened the door.

The knife cut the meat.

However, if an agentive occurs with the two phrases mentioned above, then it becomes the subject in which case the instrumental preposition is with such as:

The janitor opened the door with the key.

The man cut the meat with the knife.

Fillmore claims that if the agent phrase was not present in a proposition, then the instrumental preposition is by.⁴² However, the writer believes that the instrumental preposition is either with or by, but it is not determined by the presence or absence of the agentive phrase. e.g.

⁴²Ibid.

She dried her face with the towel.

He made good shoes by hand.

In both, the agentive is present and yet, there is an instrumental prepositional phrase.

Comitative

Previously, the instrumental with and the comitative with were considered as the same word but having various usages. Dictionaries have one entry for both in spite of the fact that, when examined closely, one finds that they behave differently. In other words, they do have different sources though identical forms. The following test distinguishes between the two withs in that it yields acceptable sentences only when there is a comitative with. Suppose that a sentence has the following structure: NP, V with NP₁ where NP stands for determiner plus noun and V stands for verb. If with is comitative, then NP₂ V with NP, or NP, and NP₂ V yield acceptable sentences e.g.

England allied with France.

France allied with England.

France and England allied.

However, if with were instrumental, the transformations do not produce acceptable sentences. e.g.

The door opened with the key.

* The key opened with the door.

* The key and the door opened.

Comitative with does not only occur in structures such as NP_1 V with NP_2 , but also in structures such as NP_1 VNP₂ with NP_3 where NP_1 is the agent phrase, and consecutively has an animate noun. e.g. He coordinated his feet with his hands. Transforming the above structure into NP_1 VNP₃ with NP_2 or NP_2 and NP_3 V_{psv} by NP_1 where V_{psv} is the verb in the passive form yields acceptable sentences e.g.

He coordinated his hands with his feet.

His feet and his hands were coordinated by him.

A third structure in which comitative with occurs is NP_1 VNP₂ with NP_3 where both NP_1 and NP_3 are necessarily phrases with animate nouns e.g. He shared the food with his family. Transformations of this structure such as NP_3 VNP₂ with NP_1 , or NP_1 and NP_3 V NP₂ give acceptable sentences. e.g.

His family shared the food with him.

He and his family shared the food.

Hence, one may conclude what the comitative preposition is with and it is of a different nature than the instrumental with.

Dative

Traditional grammarians ascribed the term dative to the case which signaled the indirect object of a construction. Fillmore, on the other hand, refers by dative to the nominal element in a proposition dominating a noun phrase in which the indirect object occurs. As noted earlier, Curme mentions that to, for, from and on were used to indicate the indirect object. These same prepositions will be shown as dominating the dative noun phrase e.g.

The army gave the city to the enemy.

The army abandoned the city to the enemy.

The army supplied rifles to the peasants.

Though the three above examples appear to be identical on the surface, yet they undergo various transformations. Example one has the structure of $NP_1 V_t NP_2 \text{ to } NP_3$ where V_t is a transitive verb. It may be restated as $NP_1 V_t NP_3 NP_2$ with the elimination of the dative preposition. e.g. The army gave the enemy the city. The second example has the structure of $NP_1 V_t NP_2 \text{ to } NP_3$ which may not be restated as $NP_1 V_t NP_3 NP_2$ but as $NP_1 V_t \text{ to } NP_3 NP_2$. e.g. * The army abandoned the enemy the city. The army abandoned to the enemy the city. The third example has the structure of $NP_1 V_t NP_2 \text{ to } NP_3$ which may not be restated as either $NP_1 V_t NP_3 NP_2$ or $NP_1 V_t \text{ to } NP_3 NP_2$ but as $NP_1 V_t$

NP₃ with NP₂ e.g.

- * The army supplied the peasants rifles.
 - * The army supplied to the peasants rifles.
- The army supplied the peasants with rifles.

In the above examples, to is the indirect object indicator, hence it is the dative preposition. However, on, for and from may also be indirect object indicators as is illustrated by the examples taken from Curme:⁴³

- He shut the door on me.
- I want you to run an errand for me.
- He stole a watch from me.

The dative, therefore, as used by Fillmore, indicates the nominal element which contains the indirect object in a sentence. Four prepositions, namely, to, for, from and on are used to signal the occurrence of the indirect object in these nominals, and hence, are called dative prepositions.

To summarize what has been stated in relation to the third non-lexical source of prepositions i.e. the actants, one may enumerate the ergative, agentive, instrumental,

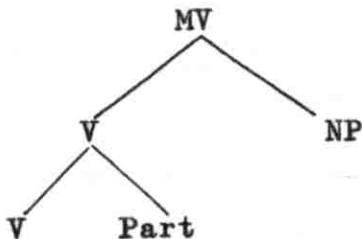
⁴³Curme, op. cit., pp. 106-107.

comitative and dative as constituent nominal elements. As Fillmore claims, each of these nominal elements starts with a preposition which has the name and function of that particular nominal it belongs to. Hence, the instrumental, for example, has with as its preposition, and the agentive has by as its preposition. Consequently, these prepositions, along with others previously mentioned, have a non-lexical source, namely, the actants.

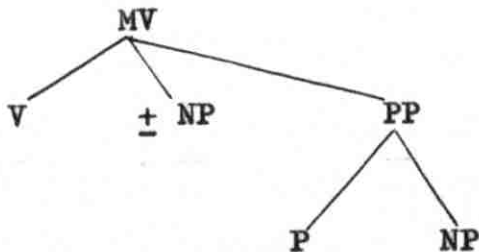
Reduced Clauses and Phrases

It seems that this non-lexical source of prepositions could be best understood when compared to the verb-particle. After analyzing the verb-particle construction, we concluded

that the preposition belongs to the verb and not to the noun phrase which may follow. This can be illustrated by means of a branching-tree diagram in which MV = main verb, V = verb, part = particle and p = preposition.



However, when the preposition is not a part of the two-word verb, it belongs to a following noun-phrase. This may be illustrated as follows:



The above prepositional phrase may come from various sources. It may be locational e.g. She sat before me; or directional e.g. I went into the house; or dative e.g. He gave the book to me; or agentive e.g. The lecture was given by the teacher; or instrumental e.g. The man cut the meat with the

knife; or comitative e.g. Yellow harmonizes with red; or ergative e.g. The garden swarms with bees; or reduced clause which will be discussed briefly in this section.

Clauses may be reduced to prepositional phrases consisting of a preposition and a noun phrase e.g. They denounced the duke for treachery. The prepositional phrase for treachery may be restated as because he was treacherous, hence, we say that the prepositional phrase is in essence a reduced clause. Likewise, with embarrassment in He blushed with embarrassment is a reduced clause which may be restated as because he was embarrassed.

In addition to these reduced clauses, the writer is inclined to include a certain group of the so called idioms in this category of prepositional phrases e.g. We do things by accident, or by instinct or by mistake. It is worthwhile to mention at this point that the three prepositional phrases may be narrowed down to a single word adverb such as accidentally, instinctively and mistakingly.

It was noted earlier that reduced adverbs are better classified with this category than with verb-particle combinations. The reason for this is that the preposition in such constructions has a closer relation to the noun phrase which has been eliminated than to the verb. This is best

illustrated by the example given by Fraser: The butler carried in the dinner or The butler carried the dinner in which implies into the room or any other locational or directional prepositional phrase.⁴⁴ Other examples of reduced adverbs were given as early as 1924 by Otto Jespersen and were mentioned earlier in Chapter I.⁴⁵

In summary, four non-lexical sources of prepositions were surveyed in this section, namely, prepositional phrases, verb-particle constructions, actants and reduced clauses and phrases. The reason behind labelling them as non-lexical sources is that the prepositions belonging to these groups do not have their meanings derived from entries in the lexicon, but from their particular syntactic relations to the words they relate to each other in the sentence.

⁴⁴Fraser, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

⁴⁵Jespersen, The Philosophy of Grammar, loc. cit.

CHAPTER III

LEXICAL SOURCES OF PREPOSITIONS AND PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Prepositions and prepositional phrases whose meanings are directly derived from the lexicon will be referred to as lexical prepositions and prepositional phrases. They constitute a major group of English prepositions which can be divided into two main categories namely locational and directional. The locational prepositions refer in their dictionary meanings to specific positions in relation to particular points or objects of reference. Examples of such prepositions are in, out, on, under, over and beside. The directional prepositions, as the name indicates, refer in their dictionary meanings to motion in certain directions. Examples of these prepositions are to, from, up, down, and towards.

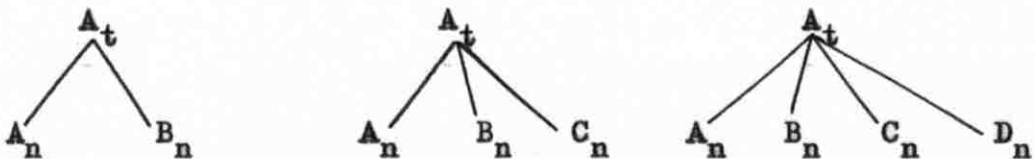
The writer assumes that lexical prepositions are easier to learn by the foreign learner of the language than non-lexical prepositions, because the meanings of the former may be looked up in dictionaries. When the lexical prepositions have literal equivalents in the learner's language, and when their distribution and usage are parallel in both the native and the target language, then the learner finds

it easy to acquire the uses of prepositions in the target language. In such case, an exact translation of the use of the preposition from the native to the target language will not commit the learner to error. This point will be clarified further by means of the following diagrams.

Suppose that A_t , B_t , C_t , D_t , E_t and F_t are prepositions in the target language which have A_n , B_n , C_n , D_n , E_n and F_n as their equivalents in the native language of the learner. If A_t has A_n as its only equivalent i.e.

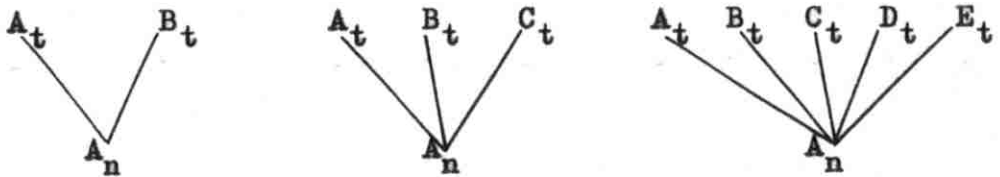


then, the learner finds no difficulty in learning A_t . Moreover, if a particular preposition in the target language, A_t , has more than one equivalent in the native language, A_n , B_n , C_n , D_n ..., then the learner does not face any learning problem because his choice is limited to only one preposition from the target language. Following are diagrams of such a situation:

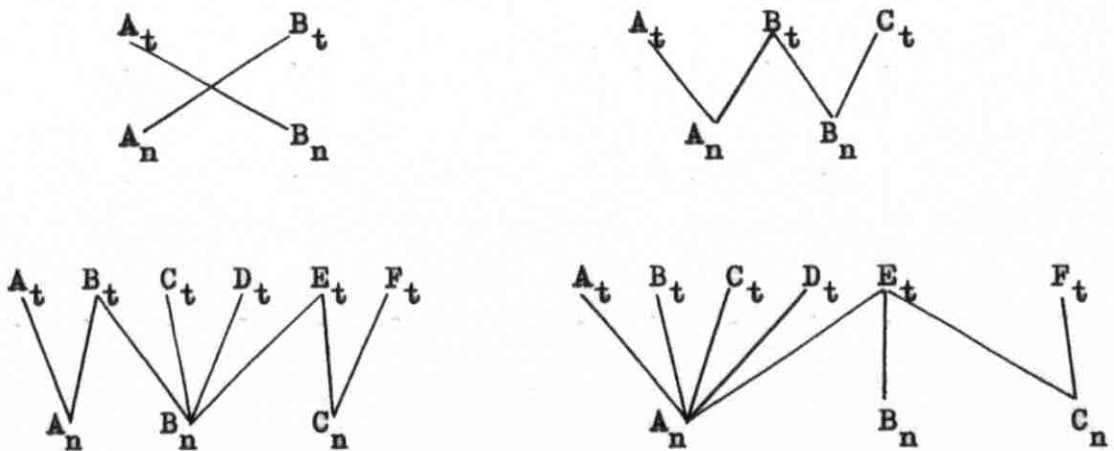


If, however, the target language has more than one equivalent to a particular preposition in the native language, a

difficult learning situation arises because the learner has to choose, from among the equivalents, the one preposition with the appropriate shade of meaning to fit the context. Following are some diagrams to illustrate this learning problem:



It is worthwhile mentioning at this point that relationships of prepositions from the target language with prepositions of the native language are not usually as simple as is shown through the above diagrams. Overlapping in uses of prepositions in either the target or the native language may make the diagrams appear as complicated as the following:

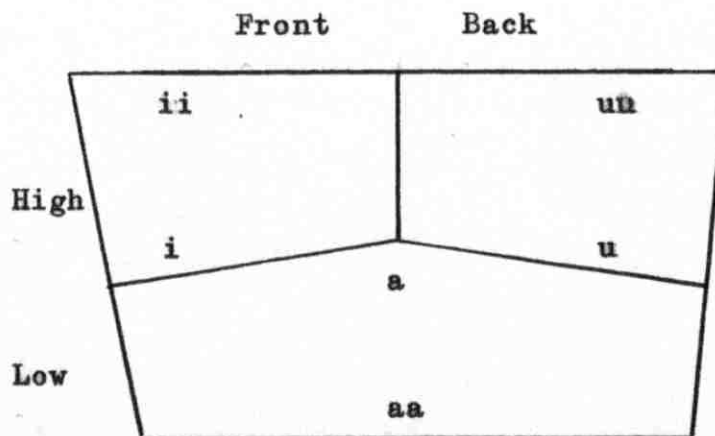


In the following pages, English lexical prepositions and prepositional phrases will be discussed thoroughly according to the two major categories they fall under. They have been grouped together on the basis of particular areas of meaning such as the area of nearness which includes near, beside, by, by the side of, and on/at the side of. These groups of prepositions and prepositional phrases will, then, be compared to their equivalents in classical Arabic by means of diagrams that show the overlappings in their meanings. From such analysis, certain linguistic problem areas are pointed out with a few hints at their pedagogical implications.

The use of classical Arabic in this chapter calls for utilizing a transcription system in writing the Arabic prepositions, prepositional phrases and examples. The symbols in the following chart represent the consonants of Arabic, and are described in terms of the points of articulation and the manners of articulation.

		Points of Articulation										
		Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Interdental	Pharyngealized	Alveopalatal	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Manner of Articulation	Stops vl.			t		ʔ			k	q		ʕ
	vd.	b		d		ʔ						
	Fricatives vl.		f	s	θ	ʃ	ʃ		x		ħ	h
	vd.			z	ð	ʃ			χ		ħ	
	Affricates vd.						tʃ					
	Nasals vd.	m		n								
	Laterals vd.			l		ɭ						
	Vibrants vd.			r								
Semi vowels vd.	w						y					

In a similar manner, the Arabic vowels are represented by the following symbols described according to their points of articulation and manners of articulation in the mouth.



In this presentation of English prepositions and prepositional phrases with their equivalents in Arabic, the purpose is not to build up to a contrastive analysis of both English and Arabic prepositions. It is to present the English prepositions in an orderly classification, and to indicate the presence of possible problematic areas where there seems to be more than one equivalent in English to a single Arabic preposition.

Locational Prepositions

The group of locational prepositions in English have been classified into eleven areas of meaning which are numbered from 1-11 according to their degrees of complexity. The criterion used for determining the degrees of complexity is the number of English equivalents that are present to the Arabic preposition or prepositional phrase. Hence Area 1 has a 1:1 relationship between the English and the Arabic prepositions, whereas Area 11 has, at one point, a 6:1 relationship.

Area 1

opposite \longleftrightarrow muqaabila

There is a Mosque opposite our house.

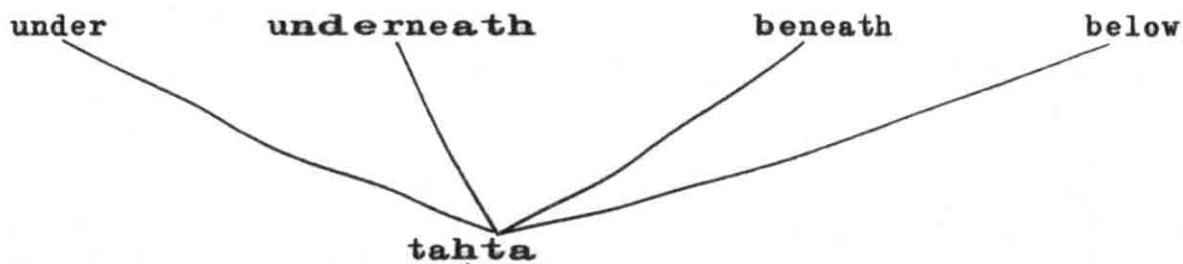
yuužadū žaami9un muqaabila baytina

The wood is beyond the river.

The wood is after the river.

?algaabatu ba9da nnahri

Area 5



The book is under the table.

The book is underneath the table.

The book is beneath the table.

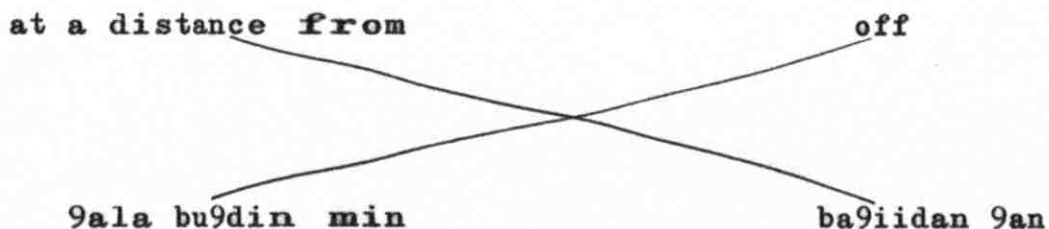
The book is below the table.

?alkitaabu tahta ttaawilati

The gun was hidden under his jacket.

kaanati lbunduqiyyatu muxabba?atan tahta sitratihi

Area 6



He lives at a distance from the main road.

He lives off the main road.

yaskunu 9ala bu9din mina ššaari9i rra?iisiyyi
 yaskunu ba9iidan 9ani ššari9i rra?iisiyyi

Each of the areas 2,3,4 and 5 consists of one or more English prepositions and prepositional phrases with only one equivalent in Classical Arabic. However, this does not present any learning problem to the Arab learner of English, as previously suggested, for the mere fact that the English prepositions within each area are interchangeable among each other. For instance, in area 2, in front of may be replaced by before in the same context; in area 3, round may be replaced by around; in area 4, beyond may be replaced by after; and in area 5, under, underneath, beneath and below may be substituted for each other in the same context as revealed by the example. Area 6 consists of two English items equivalent to two Arabic items. The English items are interchangeable for the same reason. Hence, this area does not present any linguistic problem to the student.

Area 7

	out	outside
fi	lxaariži	?ila lxaariži

He went out.

He went outside.

ḍahaba ʔila lxaariži

He is out.

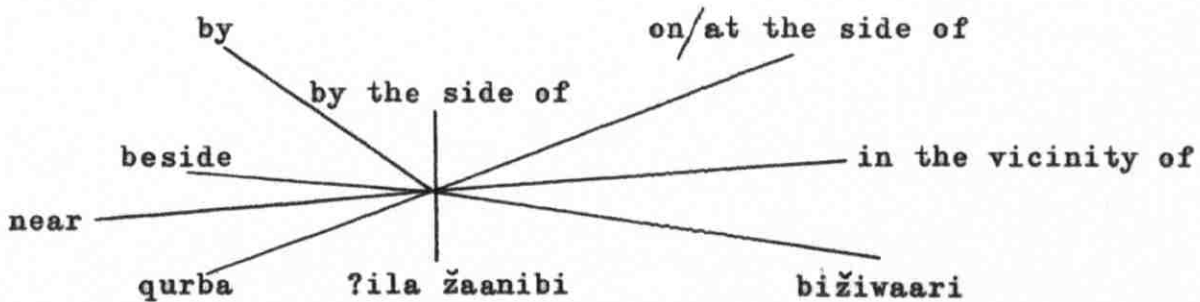
He is outside.

huwa fi lxaariži

In Arabic, fi lxaariži has a locational meaning, whereas ʔila lxaariži has a directional one. This distinction should be explained to the Arab learner of English, otherwise he might fall into the error of placing a directional preposition to before outside which is the English equivalent of both ʔila lxaariži and fi lxaariži. It seems that the locational fi and the directional ʔila are accounted for in English by the verbs used with out and outside. For instance, the verb went indicates motion towards or from a place, whereas is does not embody this shade of meaning. Although in Arabic, the verb ḍahaba does indicate motion towards or from a place, yet the language necessitates a redundancy by adding ʔila to the following noun-like item. It is noteworthy to mention at this point that finding Arabic equivalents of English prepositions and prepositional phrases is likely to commit us to weaknesses of style. For instance, it is not grammatically incorrect to say ḍahaba ʔila lxaariži. However, in Classical Arabic, oftentimes xaraža is substituted

for it. Likewise, it is not incorrect to say huwa fi xaariži lbayti to mean he is outside the house. However, it is much more eloquent to say huwa xaariža lbayti. These differences in style should be brought to the attention of the learner.

Area 8



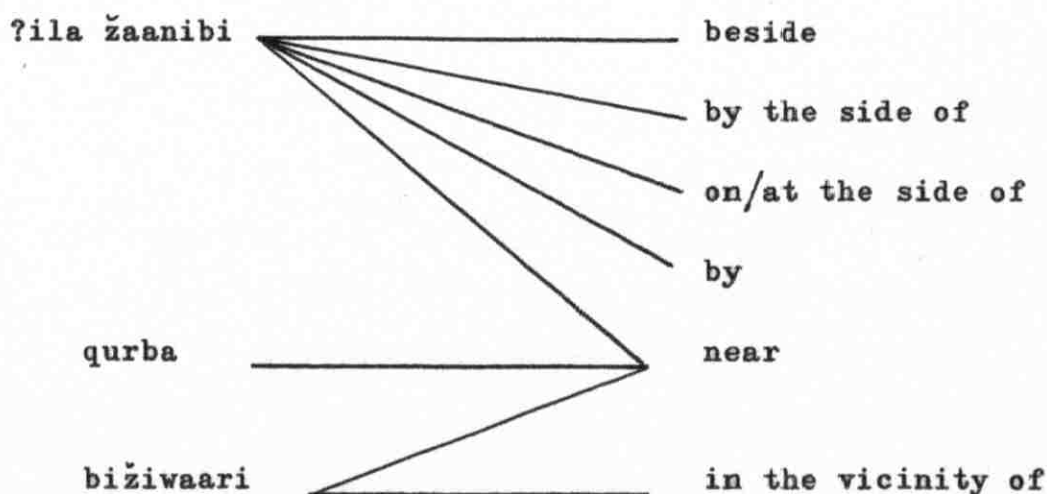
She sat near me.
 She sat beside me.
 She sat by me.
 She sat by my side.
 She sat on/at my side.

žalasad qurbi
 žalasad ?ila žaanibi
 žalasad bižiwaari

She wanted to be buried by her husband.
 ?araadat ?an tudfana qurba zawžiha.

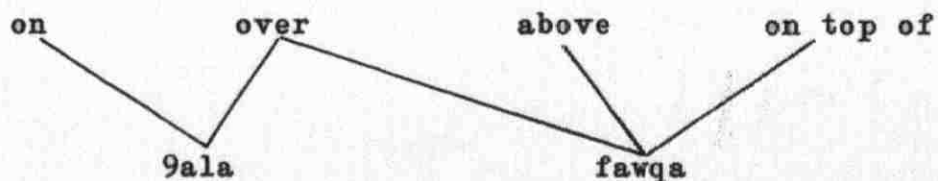
Generally, the six English prepositions and prepositional phrases that bear the meaning of nearness may be translated into any of the three Arabic equivalents. However, there exists among them various shades of meaning which, when

brought to notice, would group them according to the degrees of nearness they refer to. The literal meaning of in the vicinity of is bižiwaari. However, the latter may also mean near. Near covers, in turn, an area which is qurba or ?ila žaanibi. ?ila žaanibi, on the other hand, refers to the closest degree of nearness and is literally translated as by the side of. It is also equivalent to beside, on/at the side of, and by which refer to the same degree of nearness. These relationships can be diagrammed as follows:



An Arab learner of the English language should have these shades of meaning explained to him.

Area 9



The cat is on the roof.

?alhirratu 9ala ṣṣaṭhi

The bird flew above the trees.

ṭaara l9uṣfuuru fawqa l?aṣṣaari

She put a veil over her face.

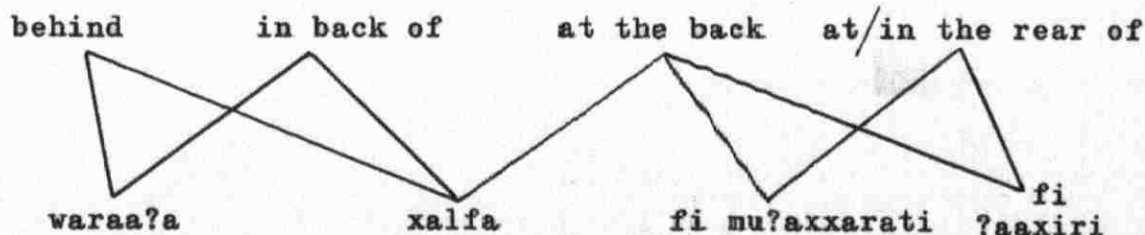
wada9at hiṣaaban 9ala waḣhiha

My book is on top of all the books.

kitaabi fawqa lkutubi kulliha

The English prepositions over, above and the prepositional phrase on top of, as distinguished from on, have a common meaning of location which excludes the placement of more items other than the ones directly related by the preposition. For instance, my book which is on top of all the books does not have other books on top of it. This same shade of meaning is embodied in fawqa as distinguished from 9ala which is the English equivalent of on. However, on and over are oftentimes substituted for each other, thus eliminating a source of difficulty for the Arab learners.

Area 10



The house was painted within.
 The house was painted from inside.
 duhina lbaytu mina ddaaxili

The people are within doors.
 The people are inside.
 ?annaasu fi ddaaxili

He is inside the house
 huwa daaxila lbayti
 huwa fi daaxili lbayti

He stayed inside the house.
 He stayed in the house.
 baqiya fi daaxili lbayti or daaxila lbayti (for stylistic
 variation)
 baqiya fi lbayti

I was in the crowd.
 kuntu bayna lžumhuuri

I stood between my father and my mother.
 waqaftu bayna ?ummi wa ?abi

The lecturer stood among the people.
 waqafa lxatiibu bayna nnaasi

The great man stood amidst the people.
 The great man stood in the midst of the people.
 The great man stood in the middle of the people.
 waqafa rražulu l9adiimu bayna nnaasi

The lecturer stood in the midst of the crowd.
 waqafa lxatiibu fi wasati lžumhuuri

She is standing in the center of the room.

hiya waaqifatun fi wasaṭi lḡurfati

The prepositions and prepositional phrases of this area have the general meaning of being placed within boundaries of a particular volume or surface. However, there are particular shades of meaning which should be brought to the attention of the Arab learner. The prepositional phrase fi wasaṭi has amidst, in the middle of, in the midst of and at/in the center of as equivalents in English. Hence, the Arab student has a free choice among five alternatives. However, he should note that at/in the center of states location in more precise terms than in the middle of. Likewise, bayna has in the midst of, in the middle of, amidst, in, amongst and between as equivalents. However, a distinction should be made between the last two prepositions, namely that between refers to the placement of an object between two others, whereas amongst refers to the presence of more than two other items. It is worthwhile mentioning that such a distinction is not greatly emphasized in present-day English.

Directional Prepositions

The group of directional prepositions in English consists of nine areas of meaning which will be numbered from 1-9 depending on their degrees of complexity.

Area 1

past ←————→ ?ila maa ba9da

She walked past the school.
mašat ?ila maa ba9da lmadrasati

Area 2

from ←————→ min

I came from home running.
ži?tu mina lbayti raakidatan

Area 3

from-to ←————→ min-?ila

The distance from my home to school is three miles.
?almasaafatu min bayti ?ila lmadrasati ealaaatu ?amyaalin

Area 4

to ←————→ ?ila

The boy returned to the village.
9aada lwaladu ?ila lqaryati

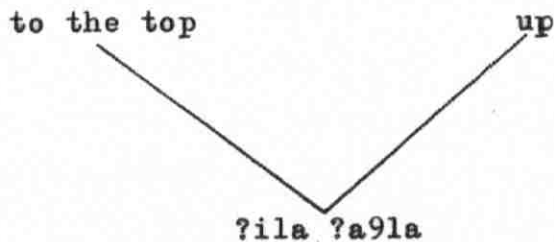
Area 5

into ←————→ ?ila daaxili

I went into the house.
dahabtu ?ila daaxili lbayti or
(daxaltu lbayta)

Area 1-5 present a 1:1 relationships between the English and Arabic prepositions and prepositional phrases. Hence, the possibility of any linguistic problem for the Arab learner of English is eliminated. However, the example given in Area 5 presents a stylistic problem area similar to that discussed in Area 7 of the locational prepositions. Attention should be drawn to it as well.

Area 6

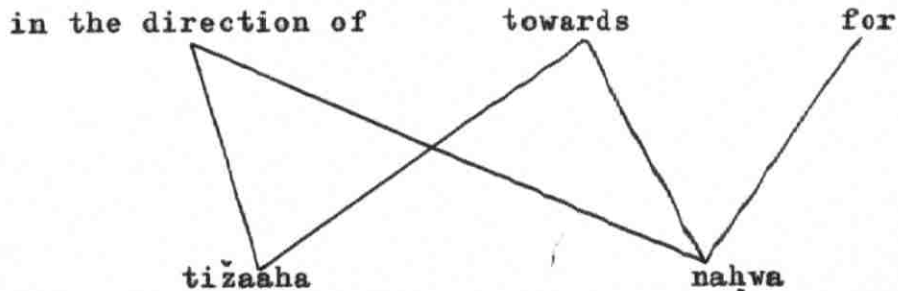


He climbed up the ladder.

He climbed the ladder to the top.

tasallaqa ssullama ?ila ?a9laah

The prepositional phrase to the top indicates a fuller meaning of ascension than the preposition up. Someone who climbed up the ladder may or may not have reached its top. However, the meaning of ascension is complete in he climbed the ladder to the top. The literal translation of to the top is ?ila ?a9la.

Area 7

The ship sailed for the East.

The ship sailed towards the East.

?abharati ssafiinatu naḥwa ššarqi

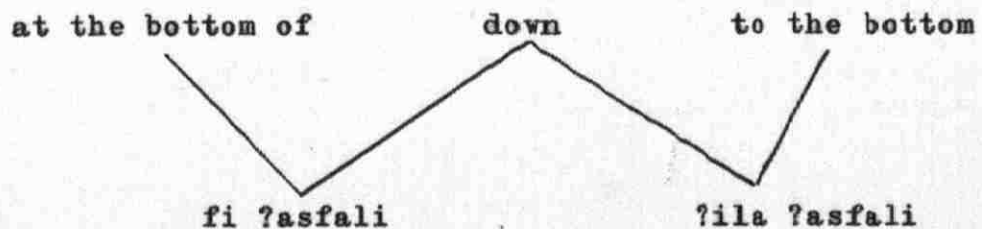
They walked towards the church.

They walked in the direction of the church.

mašaw naḥwa lkaniisati

mašaw tižaaha lkaniisati

Towards, for and in the direction of may be translated into naḥwa or tižaaha. However, tižaaha is the literal translation of the prepositional phrase in the direction of. Hence, an Arab learner of English should be encouraged to use the prepositions towards and for except where a literal translation of tižaaha is necessary.

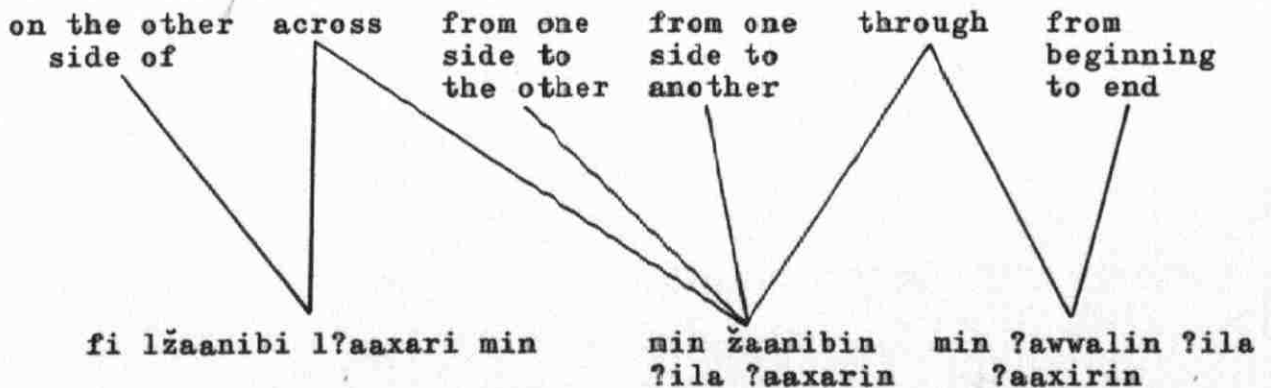
Area 8

We scrambled to the bottom of the mountain.
 We scrambled down the mountain.
 nazalna ?ila ?asfali lžabali.

The bucket is at the bottom of the well.
 The bucket is down the well.
 ?addalwu fi ?asfali lbi?ri.

The English preposition down functions as a directional preposition and as a locational preposition. When it functions as a directional preposition, it may be replaced by its equivalent to the bottom. However, when it functions as a locational preposition, it has a slightly different shade of meaning than at the bottom of though it may be replaced by it. Locational down does not necessarily imply at the lowest point of the object referred to. It may mean nearly at the bottom but not quite.

Area 9



My house is on the other side of the street.

My house is across the street.

bayti fi lžaanibi lʔaaxari mina ššaari9i

I crossed the street from one side to the other.

I crossed the street from one side to another.

qaṭa9tu ššaari9a min žaanibin ʔila ʔaaxarin

I walked from the beginning of the tunnel to its end.

I walked through the tunnel.

mašaytu min ʔawwali nnaṭa9i ʔila ʔaaxirihi

The prepositional phrases from beginning to end, from one side to another and from one side to the other have the same meaning as through when they refer to a sheltered or contained passage such as a tunnel, otherwise they refer to plane surface. The literal translation of from beginning to end and from one side to the other are min ʔawwalin ʔila ʔaaxarin and min žaanibin ʔila ʔaaxarin consecutively. Across may be substituted for from one side to the other when it has a directional meaning. But sometimes, across has a locational meaning in which case it is substituted by on the other side of whose literal translation is fi lžaanibi lʔaaxari min.

Having surveyed both directional and locational prepositions, little remains to be said about prepositions and prepositional phrases that have a lexical source. The writer believes that it is sufficient only to hint at a very

small group of prepositions, which may be referred to as time prepositions, due to their similarity to both the directional and locational prepositions. Such a similarity arises from the fact that these prepositions derive their meanings from relationships of time, in particular. For instance, at, in the X hour and by when used as time prepositions refer to a specific point in time. Similarly at, in and by when used as locational prepositions refer to specific positions or places. The following are diagrams with examples of some of the time prepositions to illustrate what has been said about them. Like the directional and the locational prepositions, they will be presented in order of complexity i.e. according to the number of English prepositions there are for the Arabic equivalents. Hence, prepositions and prepositional phrases that are time indicators will be grouped into seven subcategories or areas:

Area 1

between \longleftrightarrow bayna

The trip takes between eight and ten hours.

tastaʔriqu rrihlatu bayna eeamaani wa l9ašri saa9aatin

Area 2

before \longleftrightarrow qabla

She came before two o'clock.

žaaʔat qabla ssaa9ati eeaaniiyati

Area 3

about \longleftrightarrow hawaali

She came about two o'clock.

žaaʔat hawaali ssaa9ati eeaaniyati

Area 4

until
 ?ila ?an hatta

Read until it is time to go to bed.

?iqra? ?ila ?an yaħiina waqtu nnawmi

?iqra? hatta yaħiina waqtu nnawmi

Area 5

for for the time of
 \ /
 limuddati

He talked for two hours.

takallama limuddati saa9atayni

He talked for a long time.

takallama limuddatin tawiilatin.

He will meet me in two hours.

He will meet us after two hours.

sayulaaqiina ba9da saa9atayni

He answered the questions in ten minutes.

?ažaaba ?ala l?as?ilati fi muddati 9ašri daqaa?iqin

?ažaaba ?ala l?as?ilati xilaala 9ašri daqaa?iqin

I will be back within two hours.

sa?a9uudu xilaala saa9atayni

sa?a9uudu fi muddati saa9atayni

Many people were killed during the war.

qutila ?unaasun kaθiiruuna fi ?aenaa?i lħarbi

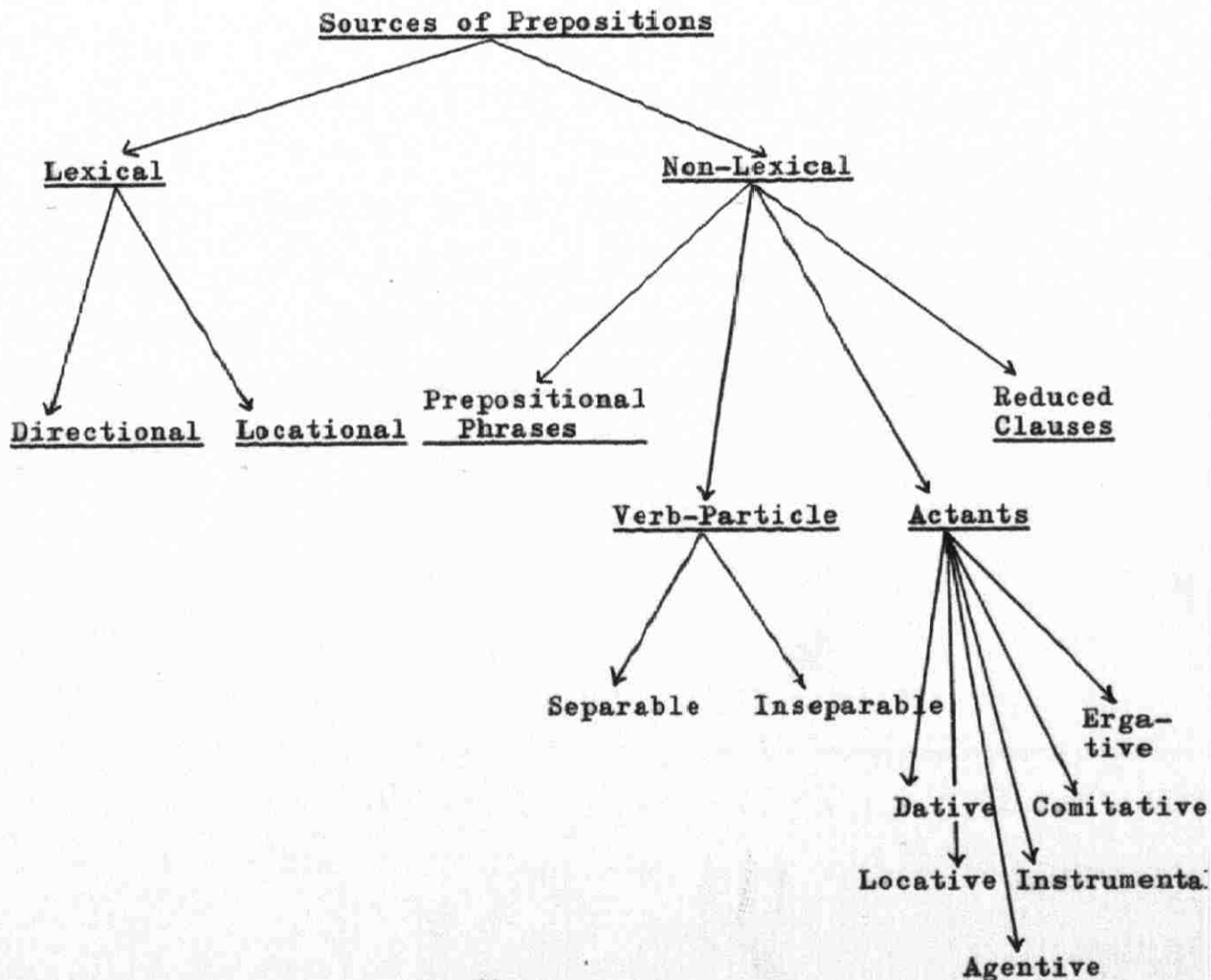
qutila ?unaasun kaθiiruuna xilaala lħarbi

From the above, one may conclude that the following are sometimes used as prepositions with a lexical reference to specific points in time or to time in general: between, before, about, until, for, at, in, by, after, beyond, within and during. Of these only about, until and during are used exclusively as time prepositions.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In conclusion a chart will be presented to show the various lexical and non-lexical sources of prepositions and prepositional phrases which have been discussed in Chapters II and III.



Of the fifty eight lexical prepositions and prepositional phrases, thirty nine are locational and nineteen are directional. The locational prepositions and prepositional phrases are opposite, in front of, before, around, round, beyond, after, under, underneath, beneath, below, at a distance from, off, out, outside, near, beside, by, by the side of, on/at the side of, in the vicinity of, on, over, above, on top of, behind, in back of, at the back, at/in the rear of, in, between, amongst, amidst, in the middle of, in the midst of, at/in the center of, inside, within, and from inside. The directional prepositions and prepositional phrases are past, from, from-to, to, into, to the top, up, in the direction of, towards, for, at the bottom of, down, to the bottom, on the other side of, across, from one side to the other, from one side to another, through and from beginning to end.

The total number of different prepositions that may begin or end a prepositional phrase is fifteen. These are in, of, with, on, within, to, for, at, by, without, up, about, under, out and against. As previously noted, this count is based on the list of prepositional phrases given by Heaton. As for the prepositions that may form a verb-particle construction, Fraser mentions sixteen, namely, about, across, around,

aside, away, back, by, down, forth, in, off, on, out, over, through and up. The writer, as mentioned in Chapter II believes that at is also capable of forming verb-particle constructions when affiliated to certain verbs. Hence, the total number of single prepositions in this group adds up to seventeen.

Of the six actants shown on the chart, only five were discussed with the exclusion of the locative. The reason is that the writer believes prepositions falling in this group have already been discussed with locational prepositions. The rest of the actants dominate noun phrases that may begin with either of ten prepositions. The dativ has to, for, on and from subordinated to it. The comitative is represented by with. The ergative is also represented by with and by of. The instrumental dominates noun phrases beginning with with or by. Finally, the agentive is always represented by the preposition by.

Due to the limitations of this study, the prepositions which begin prepositional phrases that are in essence reduced clauses, may not be enumerated. However, some such prepositions are for, with, by, and in.

Upon closer investigation of the above counts, one notices that some prepositions of the same form originate

from four or five different sources. For instance, on may occur with prepositional phrases, verb-particle constructions, locational prepositions and actants. As was noted earlier in Chapter I, The Oxford English Dictionary lists twenty nine separate senses and meanings for on. It seems to the writer that teaching the preposition on as coming from four different sources rather than as having twenty nine different meanings renders the task of teaching smoother and the task of learning simpler. Hence, in the following sections, prepositions taught in English This Way will be surveyed, and suggestions for teaching them in light of what this study has established will be put forward.

Survey of Prepositions in English This Way

English This Way consists of twelve volumes prepared by the English Language Services for the teaching of English as a second language. Presently, it is being used by some of the high schools in Lebanon as the English text. The first three books of the series present prepositions in various contexts but not as particular grammar points to be discussed separately. For instance, Book 1 has examples of locational prepositions: on the blackboard, in your notebook; directional: Are you going to school? reduced adverbs: sit down, stand up; dative markers; I'm going to talk to him, No

not for me; time prepositions: The day after Sunday is Monday, The day before Monday is Sunday; and reduced clauses: Give short answers with yes.⁴⁶ However, though these prepositions are of varying degrees of difficulty, yet, they are presented haphazardly, and with no intention of classifying them. Book 2 presents prepositions in a similar manner. The first attempt at presenting prepositions as a particular grammar point appears in Book 3 in a section titled On, In and At. In it, sentences with on, in and at are grouped together such as:

On the table
 On the ceiling
 On the house
 On Washington Street

In the classroom
 In the box
 In the city
 In the cup

At school
 At home
 At the airport
 At the hospital
 At the store
 At the office⁴⁷

⁴⁶English Language Series, English This Way (12 vols. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), I, pp. 10,63,2,9,64, 54,41.

⁴⁷Ibid., III, p. 35.

Even though the simple prepositions in each group have the same form, yet at times they are not of the same source e.g. on the bus has on which is usually of the verb-particle construction get on the bus. This differs from on the table where on is purely a locational preposition. Later in Book 3, time prepositions are grouped in a similar fashion under in, on and at such as:

Sentences with in

In 1939

In autumn

In May

Sentences with on

On Friday

On January 15th

Sentences with at

At half-past six

At noon

At midnight⁴⁸

The first attempt to phrase a grammar rule related to prepositions appears in Book 3 also. It states that "when the direct object is a pronoun, the indirect object (which may be a noun or pronoun) becomes a phrase with to or for."⁴⁹

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 50.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 125.

Book 4 presents a comparison between the uses of for and since by means of a substitution drill such as for two years and since 1943.⁵⁰ Book 5 has a group of sentences in a section titled Used to, Be Used to and Get Used to which presents the infinitive to along with a different to such as I used to go ... and We're getting used to our new classroom.⁵¹

Only one section in Book 6 is devoted entirely to prepositions in which two phrases, namely, some of and the rest of are contrasted in sentences as follows:

Where do you keep your money?

I keep some of it ⁵²at home, and I keep the rest of it at the bank.

However, in attempting to illustrate the uses of some of and the rest of, the authors ended up with an awkward structure which is rarely used in spoken English. The more probable answers to the question asked are: I keep some of it at home, and the rest at the bank, or I keep some at home and the rest at the bank.

Book 7 introduces a good section for teaching some of the locational and directional prepositions in a conversation titled What's the Address. Such prepositions as on,

⁵⁰Ibid., VI, p. 111.

⁵¹Ibid., V, p. 81.

⁵²Ibid., VI, p. 118.

between, from, at, to, in the middle of, across, up and on the ... side of are used in the conversation.⁵³ Book 8 gives a definition of two-word verbs as being "a structure consisting of a verb and an adverb which together make up a unit of meaning and which may be separated by a noun or pronoun object. Examples: put on, take off, pick up, pick out, look over, call up, take out, put down."⁵⁴ Book 9, then, has an exercise which asks the student to fill in the blanks with appropriate two-word verbs listed for that purpose.⁵⁵ This seems to be a good way of teaching verb-particles, only it does not explain how they can be differentiated from verb + preposition which is related to the noun phrase following it.

Books 9, 10 and 11 provide various exercises of the type of fill-in-the-blanks along with lists of prepositions to be used such as for, by, across, of, at, in, to, with, on, and from. Finally, Book 12 has some English prepositional phrases described in context and used in sentences such as run out of, by chance, and for fear that.⁵⁶

⁵³Ibid., VII, p. 3.

⁵⁴Ibid., VIII, p. 7.

⁵⁵Ibid., IX, p. 48.

⁵⁶Ibid., XII, p. 41, 114.

From the above description of prepositions as presented in this Series, one may conclude that it is based on an understanding of the various uses of prepositions and on their distribution but not on their basic structure. The authors of the Series, however, state at the end that the Key To English Prepositions which has been surveyed earlier in this study, ought to complement the text in teaching prepositions.

Pedagogical Applications

One of the most important conclusions of this study is that the form of a preposition is not the sole determiner of its meaning. Its meaning is partly determined by the sources from which it originates. It seems, therefore, that presenting groups of prepositions according to their sources is more coherent than presenting them according to their various uses. In light of this conclusion, certain pedagogical applications for teaching prepositions will be stated below.

The writer suggests that prepositions and prepositional phrases which have a lexical meaning should be taught before other prepositions. The reason behind this is that their meanings may be clearly defined either in terms of the

lexicon, or in terms of diagrams as given in Chapter III, or in terms of illustrations like those drawn in the book about prepositions by Close. Moreover, most of the directional prepositions may be acted out in a classroom which facilitates their being comprehended by students. In regard to the time prepositions, the writer believes that a calander setting is one of the best possible audiovisual means that can be utilized for practicing them.

It is believed that the second unit in teaching prepositions should take up two-word verbs. The reason why they are so called should be explained to the students. This may be done by contrasting a verb-particle construction with a sequence of verb + preposition which is not related to the verb such as a locational preposition e.g. contrast look up a word with climb up the stairs by applying the transformations discussed in Chapter II under Verb-Particle.

As for prepositional phrases, the writer suggests that the students be presented with a sample of such phrases given in contextual sentences. Prepositional phrases ought to be learned by means of continued practice.

The fourth lesson plan on prepositions should take the dative, comitative, instrumental and ergative prepositions into account. Teaching these groups has to depend

primarily on semantics. The dative to, for, on and from may be taught as being indicators of the indirect object of a sentence. However, this assumes that the grammar would have explained to the students by then, what an indirect object is. If this is not the case, the indirect object may be semantically labelled as the person who "benefits" from the act expressed in the sentence. Therefore, he is the beneficiary. The dative prepositions are marks to indicate who the beneficiary is.

The semantic idea of "togetherness" may be used in teaching the recognition of the comitative with. The student should be presented with the various forms of comitative constructions which are discussed in Chapter II. These may be used in exercises as the bases by which to determine whether a certain with is comitative or not. Another with ought to be introduced at this point, namely, the instrumental with. Semantically and as the name implies, it signals the tool or instrument utilized for performing a certain action. This idea will be clarified further by having the teacher ask each of the students to construct a sentence of the following structures:

I do X with Y where X stands for an action, and Y stands for

the instrument used in doing the action. Finally, the ergative of and with should be identified as preceding (but not always) that which has the closest relationship to the verb in the sentence.

As for teaching the genitive by, it is believed that it can be easily achieved by means of an exercise which calls for transforming sentences in the active form to sentences in the passive form and by indicating the doer in the latter. This establishes the fact that in passive constructions, by indicates the doer.

By using the above mentioned applications as guide lines in planning for teaching prepositions, it is assumed that better learning will occur and at the same time the teaching task will be rendered easier than before. However, due to the limitations of this study, this hypothesis remains to be tested in an actual classroom situation.

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