THE USE OF PARTICLES IN LINGUISTICS, THEIR EXPRESSION AS LINGUISTIC UNITS

Introduction. Every literate person needs at least a minimal understanding of parts of speech in order to be able to use such commonplace items as dictionaries and thesauruses, which classify words according to their parts and sub-parts of speech. For example, the American Heritage Dictionary distinguishes adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, definite articles, indefinite articles, interjections, nouns, prepositions, pronouns, and verbs. It also distinguishes transitive, intransitive, and auxiliary verbs. Writers and writing teachers need to know about parts of speech in order to be able to use and teach about style manuals and grammar. Regardless of their discipline, teachers need this information to be able to help students expand the contexts in which they can effectively communicate.

Literature review. In traditional grammar, the common definition of a preposition is a word that controls other words, and usually goes before a noun or pronoun and connects it to the surrounding words (noun or pronoun). The term controls here means that the preposition establishes the case of the noun or pronoun (in some other languages, certain prepositions control a preceding accusative noun/pronoun and others a dative noun/pronoun). In the English language, those pronouns, which hold distinct case forms often, present the accusative after prepositions.

Modification: they allow only a modest amount of modification

Huddleston points out that these properties are typical of “clear members of the closed preposition class in English.” In other words, there are certain prepositions which do not belong solely to the class of prepositions and can function as, for instance, adverbs (e.g. above, in, down, to) or conjunctions (e.g. after, as, but, for). Huddleston’s criteria thus apply only to instances in which such polysemous words are used as prepositions.

According to Carter and McCarthy, “there are over 100 prepositions in English, including complex and marginal prepositions” All prepositions are traditionally divided into two groups according to their composition:

simple prepositions: e.g. about, at, before, for, in, into, on, out, over, through, to, under, with;

complex prepositions: e.g. (two-word) because of, due to, instead of, (three-word) as far as, in accordance with, on behalf of.

Another way of dividing prepositions into groups is the classification according to the type of relation they express. It should be noted that prepositions usually have more than one meaning and, therefore, can be used to show several types of relations depending on the context. Quirk et al. offers the following categorization:
prepositions denoting spatial relations, such as position (at, on, in), destination (to, in(to), out of), passage (across, through) or orientation (beyond, across);

prepositions denoting time relations, such as time position (at, on, in), duration (for, until, up to) or measurement into the future (in);

prepositions denoting relations of the cause/purpose spectrum, such as cause (because of), reason (for), motive (out of), purpose (for), destination (for) or target (at);

prepositions denoting relations of the means/agentive spectrum, such as manner (with), means (by), instrument (with), agentive (by) or stimulus (at);

prepositions denoting relations of accompaniment (with);

prepositions denoting relations of support and opposition (for, against);

prepositions denoting other relations, such as concession (in spite of) or respect (with regard to).

**Research Methodology.** Since prepositions as a grammatical category comprise numerous members with diverse nature, individual studies set typology of prepositions based on their semantics. For example, Bennett divides the usage into spatial uses and temporal uses; Nam classifies locative prepositions into topological invariants, symmetric locatives, orientational locatives, and directional locatives based on their semantic characterization; and Tyler and Evans divide them into those making use of the vertical axis, spatial particles of orientation, and those of bounded landmarks. However, the present study does not classify the sample prepositions in order to see the general picture of the prepositional category as a whole, instead of one of individual prepositions or of their subsets.

One of the functions of prepositions is that they can serve as heads of prepositional phrases. Although nouns are the most common objects of prepositions, other word classes can follow prepositions as well. Chalker gives the following list of possible objects of prepositional phrases:

- a) nouns (at night, in the shop);
- b) pronouns (for us, to me);
- c) wh-clauses (They argued about how to do it.);
- d) -ing clauses (by working hard);
- e) (unusually) adverbs (before now) and adjectives (in short).

Prepositional phrases can perform various functions in a sentence. According to Leech and Svartvik, they can function as:

- adverbials, as in My brother works in an insurance company,
- postmodifiers in a noun phrase, as in The people on the bus were singing,
- verb complements, as in I want to congratulate you on your exam,
- complements of adjectives, as in I’m terribly bad at mathematics,
- subject, complement, etc., as in Before breakfast is when I do my best work, and The view from above the shore is magnificent.

Prepositions are regarded as heads of phrases, phrases equivalent to those headed by nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. This is a change of concept, which points to a significant increase in the list of words included in the category of prepositions.

When prepositions lead to the construction of head phrases, these are recognized to be similar in structure to those headed by nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. A new look at what words pertain to in a category is necessary. Considering this structure, there are distinctions of phrases in order to include a set of words in addition to those that are traditionally determined as prepositions.

Nouns and pronouns do not only appear after prepositions, but also prepositional phrases, adverbial phrases, interrogative clauses and adjectival phrases. This is in contrast to the usual definition for preposition in dictionaries and traditional grammars. For instance:

- The magician emerged (from behind the curtain). (prepositional phrase)
- I didn’t know about it (until recently). (adverbial phrase)
- We can’t agree (on whether we should call in the police). (interrogative clause)
- They took me (for dead). (adjectival phrase)

In traditional grammar, it is accepted that there can be prepositional phrase, adverbial phrase, or adjectival phrase complements of prepositions. However, they do not allow declarative content clauses. A word equivalent to a preposition and taking a complement of a declarative content is basically analyzed as a subordinate conjunction:

- I remember the accident / He left after the accident. (noun phrase complement)
- I remember you promised to help / He left after you promised to help. (declarative complement)

Nouns do not usually come with a noun phrase as an internal complement, except on very few occasions since the noun phrase is connected with the head noun by a preposition. For instance, the clause they destroyed the city is connected with the noun phrase their destruction of the city. Here the noun phrase the city is connected with the noun destruction through the preposition of. Adjectives function in the same way as in the following phrases: proud of her achievements, keen on opera and very pleased with yourself. Otherwise, many verbs take noun phrases as internal complements. Other verb phrases take a prepositional phrase complement highlighted by a grammaticised preposition: it depends on the weather; I owe everything to her.

Thus, the traditional definition contains these grammaticised uses quite appropriately. The grammaticised uses of by, of and with from the examples above, for instance, may be compared with the non-grammaticised uses viewed in I left the parcel by the back door. That is of little importance. He’s with Angela.

Considering the position of the preposition relative to its complements, in the traditional definition, prepositions normally appear before the noun phrase they govern. For example, one reason is that a small number of English prepositions can support the complement. An example of this exception is the preposition notwithstanding that means in spite of (Notwithstanding the weather; head + complement). This preposition may come in a different order (the weather notwithstanding: complement + head). Another reason is that the complement occurs in the initial part of the phrase in the clause and the preposition is consequently in an abandoned or last position. An example is the open interrogative what are you looking at? Traditionally, in canonical constructions, prepositions are always ahead of their complements.
Regarding the general definition, the number of prepositions is smaller than the number of nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs. Even though new prepositions are added to the language on occasions, there is not a morphological process for developing them.

For instance, the most common preposition, of, comes from a prepositional meaning away from. Hence, this characteristic of prepositions together with the grammatical usage, supplies the general definition of the category: “Preposition: a relatively closed grammatically distinct class of words whose most central members characteristically express spatial relations or serve to mark various syntactic functions and semantic roles”.

In addition, the most relevant properties of prepositions in English are:

1) Complements: the most central prepositions can take noun phrase complements. Many prepositions permit some types of complements.
2) Functions: prepositions may head prepositional phrases as a function of non-predicative adjunct, and many of them may also head prepositional phrases as a function of complement.
3) Modifiers: a subclass of prepositions is identified as modifiers in such adverbs as right or straight (where both words directly carry the meaning).

1) Complements: a) noun phrases in traditional grammar, prepositions are seen as words taking noun phrase complements. Adverbs do not take noun phrase complements, but uniquely four adjectives do, in particular worth, due, like and unlike. The only words that contain noun phrase complements are verbs and prepositions, and therefore, prepositions are normally identified from verbs by means of inflection and function.

b) Non-expandable content clauses - when declarative content clauses do not allow the subordinator that, they are called non-expandable. For instance:
   - We left before the meeting ended (non-expandable).
   - I'll come with you provided (that) it doesn't rain (expandable).
   - Complementation in general: prepositions permit different kinds of complements, and verbs facilitate those subclasses.

Most of these prepositions allow either an optional or an obligatory complement.
2) Functions: a) Non-predicative adjunct: one of the main characteristics that distinguish prepositions from adjectives is when prepositional phrases serve as an adjunct in a structure not in a predicative relation to the subject. For instance:
   - Ahead of the ship, there was a small island. Ahead of the ship, the captain saw an island on which to land (prepositional phrase).
   - Tired of the ship, the captain saw an island on which to land (adjectival phrase).

The word owing may be classified as a preposition or as a gerund-particle. As a preposition owing to, that means because of, takes a to phrase complement and it is not predicative. Owing to my stupid bank, there's no money for the rent (preposition).

b) Complement: there are some cases where the complement is obligatory. For instance, I put it in the drawer. He darted behind the curtain. There are some transitive verbs such as put or place and intransitive verbs such as dart or slither. Here they are the prototypical prepositional phrases containing preposition and noun phrase complement. Another case where the complement is also obligatory is in clauses with the verb to be. E.g., Jill is in the office. The proposal is without merit.

3) Modifiers: there are adverbs such as right and straight whose functional sense appears clearly as modifiers of prepositions, but not with verbs, adverbs or adjectives. For instance, they pushed it right under the bed. She went straight inside the house. This modification is employed with prepositions identifying spatial or temporal relations.

In general terms, considering prepositions and adjectives, the following characteristics are provided:
- Central prepositions permit noun phrase complements. Adjectives do not permit them.
- Central prepositions admit modifiers such as right and straight. Adjectives do not admit them.
- Prepositions, which have noun phrase complements usually, occur with these complements in relative and interrogative structures. For instance, the knife with which she cut it or I don't know to whom you are referring.
- Adjectival phrases may admit the verb to become as complement. Prepositional phrases may not admit them.

Considering prepositions and verbs, verbs are indeed distinguished from prepositions by their ability to appear as heads of the main clause and by their ability to be used in different inflexions or tenses. For example:
- There are five of them counting/including the driver.

In short, grammar prepositions function as heads of phrases that allow a complement phrase. There are functional differences between prepositional phrases and adverbial phrases. The syntactic distinction between prepositions and adverbs refers to complementation. Many prepositions permit an obligatory or optional complement, with only a handful of exceptions, and these cases belong to the spatial domain.

**In conclusion.** Previous research has been helpful after comparing some studies written by other linguists and authors who explain the use of prepositions and their meaning in different contexts. Therefore, I have noticed that part of the information and clarifications come from dictionaries, one part from linguistic books and another part from grammar books, all of which are necessary to develop knowledge of prepositions. Because of the variety in the number of usages of prepositions in English, those for whom it is not their first language will find such information invaluable.

**REFERENCES**

4. Huddleston’s comments on these properties have been abridged as their full version is not relevant to the thesis PP stands for ‘prepositional phrase’.
7. The division is based on Quirk et al (1985). Other linguists such as Crystal (1995), use instead the terms ‘single-word’ and ‘multi-word’ respectively.