

## IN, ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS

**Yulia Wahyuningsih<sup>1</sup>**  
**Universitas Muhammadiyah Lampung<sup>1</sup>**  
**Yuliaw.yw@gmail.com**

### **Abstract**

*This research is a qualitative research which aims to describe the grammatical form of preposition in. This study uses Concordance to process Britain Awake's discourse in terms of Corpus Linguistics. This study shows that the preposition in can be in the form of simple prepositions and complex prepositions. These two forms of prepositions conform to the provisions put forward by experts, particularly the preposition formulas Preposition + Noun + Preposition. From the corpus data on concordance, the simple prepositions is 73 (seventy three) and complex prepositions are 6 (six). The preposition in contains 13 (thirteen) of the 40 (forty) existing meanings.*

**Keywords:** *in, grammatical form, elements of order, elements of meaning, Corpus Linguistics*

---

submit date: 20-02-2021 accept date: 11-03-2021 publish date: 13-03-2021

Correspondence author: Gali Alrajafi, Lampung, Indonesia. E-Mail: rumahgaliarajafi@gmail.com

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.36929/sigeh%20elt.v1i1.358>



Journal SIGEH licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

## INTRODUCTION

Lumiwu, O. (2017). English is an international language which is spoken in many countries both as a native language and as a second or foreign language. English as the world's lingua franca has a special position in its use. In some parts of the world English is used as a second language (Second Language), some still consider it a foreign language (Foreign Language). The massive use of English requires speakers to communicate well, especially from a grammatical and lexical perspective. At the grammatical level, foreign English speakers often do not pay attention to word order so that there is an inaccurate use of the lexical in English sentences which of course have an SVO pattern, for example the choice of prepositions or prepositions in one sentence. For example, Due to the rain, I was late should be Because of the rain, I was late.

Prabawati, D. (2011). Types of language errors that students often make include errors in using prepositions. In English when an imprecise preposition is used to connect verbs, nouns and other words, the sentence has a different meaning. This is understood by all native English speakers, but sometimes not for foreign English speakers. Because of this difficulty, generalizations of English

prepositions are made to facilitate learning. English prepositions are of two types, namely simple (simple prepositions) and stratified (complex prepositions).

Suzanne, N. (2017). The use of the right prepositions can affect the quality of the information given in spoken language. Both types of prepositions are difficult and one must use conscience in their use. Either simple prepositions or graded prepositions have their respective emphases. One thing that these two types of prepositions clearly contain is their function in the sentence which can be spatial or temporal. The incompatibility between the meaning of temporal and spatial prepositions often occurs in simple or stratified types of prepositions. The discrepancy is reflected in the example in lieu of and in the event of in a sentence. The difference in form and meaning will affect the function of these two examples of prepositions, so that it becomes the reason for the incompatibility of usage which tends to be wrong. In order to provide a little understanding and explanation of the discrepancy, this paper contains a description of the form and meaning of prepositions in English which is focused on these prepositions.

A preposition is a particle which in the language of the normal VO (verb and object) pattern lies in front of a noun and connects to other words in an exocentric bond; for example in Indonesian at, to, from (Kridalaksana, 2008). However, the meaning of prepositions in English is slightly different from this opinion. Curme (1931) defines a preposition as a word that comes before hanging words, while Yates and De Laney (1951) explained that a preposition is a word that shows a relationship between nouns or pronouns, then called the object, and several other words in one sentence. So that it can be simplified as a preposition as a preposition or the Latin term *prae position*.

There are over a hundred prepositions in the English language, including graded and marginal prepositions. They are generally divided into two groups based on their composition: (1) simple prepositions, for example about, at, before, for, in, into, on, out, over, through, to, under, with, (2) graded prepositions, consisting of of two words, for example because of, due to, instead of, consists of three words, for example as far as, in accordance with, on behalf of (Carter and McCarthy, 2006). Crystal (in Quynh, 2011) thinks that a stratified preposition is

composed as (preposition + noun + preposition). Greenbaum and Quirk (in Quynh, 2011) argue that graded prepositions are divided into two types: (1) simple prepositions preceded by articles, adjectives, adverbials or conjunctions, as in owing to, devoid of, away from, because of, (2) a simple preposition followed by a noun then a simple preposition, as in charge of, by means of, at variance with, as result of.

## **METHOD**

In connection with the understanding of the definition of the preposition, this paper is studied with Corpus Linguistics or Corpus Linguistics. Mc Enery and Wilson (2001) explain that Corpus Linguistics is described as a language study based on examples of language use in real life. Bennett (2010) also argues that Corpus Linguistics can be used to determine patterns associated with lexical and grammatical features. Corpus Linguistics examines language in its use with corpora which can provide linguistic information on constructs regarding its forms, frequencies, registers, and how language is used (Meyer, 2002 and Bennett, 2010). Corpora may come in two forms: unannotated or annotated. Unannotated is meant to appear in the form of raw discourse, while annotated means that the words in the text are affixed by word types, descriptions, semantics, discourses and linguistic text annotations, phonetic transcriptions, and prosody (Yusuf, 2009). In order to understand the forms of these prepositions, the writer needs a colligation guide. Yusuf (2009) states that colligation is similar to a syntactic pattern. Colligation is processed according to the concordance results. Concordance shows the types of words that tend to appear immediately from the word given (Butler in Yusuf, 2009). In this paper, the corpora is in the form of unannotated, namely Britain Awake discourse.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Forms of Prepositions in**

From the concordance table, this preposition has 26 (twenty six) colligation patterns. The arrangement of this prepositional pattern consists of several other

types of words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, conjunctions, and adverbs. Following are the computational results of this preposition with the R. J. C Watt Concordance program (2009):

Table 1: Concordance Colligation Pattern

Number	Pattern	Concordance	Example
1.	Noun + Preposition + Possessive Pronoun + Noun	2	moments in our history (130), peril in their Defence White Paper (70)
2.	Noun + Preposition + Noun	10	light in Moscow (128b), role in world (115), passage in delivery (114), coalition in Italy (108a), terrorism in Northern Ireland (74b), mood in America (49a), power in Portugal (39a), status quo in Eastern Europe (34a), intervention in Angola (31), failure in human (15)
3.	Preposition + Conjunction + Preposition + Preposition + Noun	1	in and out of Government (128a)
4.	Preposition + Article + Noun	6	In the meantime (127), in the battle (112), in the efforts

		(103), In the Conservative (91), in the world (48), In the past (18)
5.	Noun + Preposition + Article + Noun	9 power in the world (124), place in the world (117c), role in the councils (116), intervention in the economy (96b), role in the past (52), president in an election (49b), rules in the contest (41), navy in the world (11), power in the world (9), people in the Labour (7)
6.	Pronoun + Preposition + Article + Noun	2 we in the Conservative (123), We in the Conservative (51)
7.	Verb + Preposition + Noun	11 omitted in delivery (121), saw in 1975 (110b), believe in democracy (100), happened in Australasia (99), ends in North Africa (90a), doing in Angola (89),

		doing in Angola (86), remains in Government (55b), do in Angola (47b), writing in Pravda (43a), do in Portugal (47a)
8.	Adverb + Preposition + 2 Noun	sometimes in danger (117b), ahead in 1976 (109)
9.	Verb + Preposition + 1 Preposition + Article + Noun	Caught up in the problems (117a)
10.	Verb + Preposition + Article 2 + Adjective + Noun	result in a further decline (110a), happening in a far- away place (80)
11.	Noun + Preposition + 1 Article + Adjective + Noun	groups in the European Parliament (108b)
12.	Noun + Preposition + 5 Adjective + Noun	expertise in this country (102a), people in this country (95), politicians in this country (93), forces in this area (83), power in only one sense (14)
13.	Verb + Preposition + 1 Possessive Pronoun +	provided in his powerfully argued

	Adverb + Adjective + Noun		speeches (101)
14.	Preposition + Possessive Pronoun + Adjective + Adjective + Noun	1	In their two electoral avalanches (96a)
15.	Article + Noun + Preposition + Noun	2	the situation in Angola (90b), an investment in détente (88)
16.	Possessive Pronoun + Noun + Preposition + Noun	2	their way in Angola (85), our troops in Germany (21)
17.	Noun + Preposition + Possessive Pronoun + Adjective + Noun	2	headway in its current offensive (76b), diplomacy in its broadest sense (102)
18.	Preposition + Noun	4	In Angola (76a), in Labour's view (74a), in fact (71), In return (34b)
19.	Possessive Pronoun + Noun + Preposition + Article + Noun	1	our heads in the sand (67)
20.	Preposition + Adjective + Noun	1	In other words (55a)
21.	Pronoun + Preposition + Noun	2	We in Britain (46)
22.	Noun + Preposition + Adjective	1	statement in which (44)
23.	Adverb + Preposition + Article + Adjective + Noun	1	especially in the troubled area (22)

24.	Article + Noun + Preposition + Article + Noun	2	the battles in the Third World War (39b), The men in the Soviet (13)
25.	Noun + Preposition + Noun + Preposition	3	troops in order to (74c), offensive in order to (43b), war in order to (27), it in order to (16)
26.	Preposition + Article + Noun + Preposition	3	in the hope of (40), in the art of (102b), in the conditions of (32)

From the above calculations it is found that these prepositions tend to be simple in form. The first syntactic pattern that appears a lot is Verb + Preposition + Noun (at number (7)) 11 (eleven) times. The syntactic pattern of this preposition does not reflect the stratified form of the preposition which Crystal decomposes (in Quynh, 2011) with the pattern of Preposition + Noun + Preposition. Thus, the preposition in which appears in the syntactic pattern Verb + Preposition + Noun is in the form of a simple preposition. The simplest form of this preposition appears in the number patterns (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (18), (19), (21), (22), (23), and (24).

The number pattern (20) can be classified into the simple form of the preposition in, but In other words (55a) acts as the phrase used to propose a simpler explanation than the previous explanation. While the number pattern (25) Noun + Preposition + Noun + Preposition and (26) Preposition + Article + Noun + Preposition can be classified as a complex preposition in the provisions of the preposition + noun + preposition, namely in order to without linking the noun in beginning and in the hope of, in the art of, in the conditions of with the article + noun being a unified noun.

2. Meaning of prepositions in

Based on the data of this paper, there are 79 (seventy nine) uses of this preposition in the corpus. This preposition has varied meanings according to its location in the sentence. In the Oxford Dictionary in as a preposition it has 40 (forty) meanings which are classified as part (inclusion), situation (situation), position (position), presence (existence), action (action), within limits of time (within limits of space) ), time (condition), circumstances (circumstance). The following is a classification of the meanings of this preposition described in the table:

Table 2: Meanings of In Prepositions based on the Lines in the Corpus

Meaning of Prepositions In		Line								
Of position or location	1a	9	11	48	115	117c	124	93		
		95	102a	83						
	1b	-								
	1c	39a	34a	85	76a	31	89	86		
		47b	90a	99	90b	43a	21	46		
		128b	74b	49a	47a	108a				
	2a	13	91	116	7	51	123	55b		
		108b								
	2b	-								
	3	-								
	4	-								
	5a	-								
	5b	80								
	6	-								
7	70									
8	-									
Of condition, occupation, manner,	situation, state, action, form,	9a	67							
		9b	-							
		9c	-							
		9d	14	102c	117a	117b	112	76b	110a	

material, and other		22	74a	
circumstance and attributes	10a	-		
	10b	-		
	11a	-		
	11b	-		
	11c	-		
	11d	-		
	12a	-		
	12b	-		
	12c	101	121	114
	12d	-		
	13a	-		
	13b	-		
	13c	-		
	14	-		
	15	-		
	16	-		
	17	-		
	18	-		
Of time	19a	-		
	19b	130	96a	
	19c	52	18	39b
	20	-		
	21	-		
	22a	-		
	22b	-		
	22c	109	127	110b
	22d	-		
22e	-			
Pregnant uses	23	-		

sometime due to ellipsis	24	-						
	25	-						
	26a	15						
	26b	-						
	26c	-						
	27	-						
	28	-						
	29	-						
	30	-						
	Of motion or direction	31a	-					
31b		-						
31c		-						
32a		-						
32b		-						
32c		-						
Constructional uses	33a	100						
	33b	44						
	33c	102a	40	32				
	34	-						
	35	-						
	36	-						
	37	103	96b	41	34b	49b	88	71
	38	-						
Phrases	39	128	55a					
	40	16	27	43b	74c			

**Information:**

1a	: Of place or position in space or anything having material extension
1b	: After in, the article is often omitted, esp. when the function is the prominent notion

---

1c	:	In is used with the proper names of continents, seas, countries, regions, provinces, and other divisions, usually also of large cities, esp. the capital of a country, and of the city or town in which the speaker lives.
2a	:	= on (of position)
2b	:	= at
3	:	In is now regular with collectives thought of as singular (in an army, a crowd); among with plurals, or collectives thought of as plural (among the people); but through Latin influence in was formerly used also with plurals.
4	:	With numerals, nouns of quantity, and the like, expressing ration or rate.
5a	:	Defining the particular part of anything in which it is affected.
5b	:	In phrases implying incidental distribution
6	:	Expressing relation to that which covers, clothes, or envelopes, its materials, its colors, etc.
7	:	The physical sense of location often passes into one more immaterial
8	:	With non-physical realms, regions of thought, department or faculties of the mind, spheres of action, etc., treated as having extension or content.
9a	:	Of situation, i.e. kind or nature of position
9b	:	Situation expressed by material instruments
9c	:	Situation as to light, darkness, and atmospherical environment
9d	:	Situation within the range of sensuous observation or the sphere of action of another
10a	:	Of condition or state, physical, mental or moral
10b	:	The condition may be expressed by a concrete sb.
11a	:	Of occupation or engagement
11b	:	In the process of, in the act of, in case of; often equivalent in sense

---

	to temporal clause introduced by when, while, if, in the event of.
11c	: After the verb be, and some other verbs, in was formerly used to express the relation of occupation before a verbal sb. where it varied with a, and is now omitted, functioning as a present participle active.
11d	: In was formerly used with a verbal sb. expressing the action or process to which a thing or person was subjected.
12a	: Of manner (way, mood, style, fashion)
12b	: Of form, shape, conformation, arrangement, order
12c	: Of manner of speech or writing
12d	: Often dependent upon a superlative or a commendatory epithet: within the sphere of a particular class or order of things
13a	: Of means or instrumentality: now usually expressed by with.
13b	: Uses in which the senses of in (on) and with (by) are both present
13c	: May be added after eat, drink, pledge, etc.
14	: Of material, constituents, and the like
15	: Of degree, measure, extent
16	: Expressing object, aim, or purpose: with an abstract thing, as in affirmation, answer, denial, memory, etc.
17	: Expressing reference or relation to something
18	: With a following something forming attribute phrases
19a	: Within the limits of a period or space of time
19b	: With other thing implying time
19c	: With processes occupying time
20	: Of the length of time occupied; in the course of
21	: Of a limit of time: before or at the expiration of; within the space of
22	: Formerly (and still sometimes) used, where at, on, during, for are now in use, or where the preposition is omitted.
22a	: = at

22b	:	= on
22c	:	= during
22d	:	= for
22e	:	Where no preposition is now expressed
23	:	With reflexive pronoun: in himself, in itself, etc.
24	:	In spiritual or mystical union with
25	:	In the person or case of
26a	:	Belonging to, as an internal quality, attribute, faculty, or capacity, inherent in; hence, within, etc.
26b	:	Nothing, nor much, little
26c	:	In it: an advantage
27	:	In the hand of: in the control or power of: legally vested in
28	:	Partaking, sharing, associated, or actually engaged in
29	:	Of representative character or capacity, as in name of, in right of
30	:	Elliptical for (a) in the name of (b) in the character of
31	:	Expression motion or direction from without to a point within, or transition from one thing to another = into
31a	:	Illustrations of earlier usage, now obs. or dial
31b	:	Illustrations of current usage after the verbs cast, fall, lay, put, throw, thrust, etc.
31c	:	In the face of
32a	:	The sense of motion or direction formerly gave rise to various modifications, = upon, on
32b	:	= against, towards
32c	:	= over
32d	:	= unto, to
33a	:	To believe, trust, hope in, and the like
33b	:	To partake, share, concur, engage, join, deal in, to consist in, to succeed, fill, etc.
33c	:	With transitive verb: to instruct in, to convict, condemn, mulct in,

---

	to baffle, disappoint, limit in, to spend (money, time, etc.) in
34	: Expressing the relation of an adjective to some sphere or department to which its qualification is limited
35	: Expressing the relation of a substantive to a certain sphere
36	: Expressing the relation of number or quantity to the dimension or amount in question
37	: With a substantive, forming an adverbial phrase
38	: In many prepositional phrase, as in case of, in face of, in favour of, etc.
39	: In so far; in such measure r degree; to such extent
40	: In that: in the fact that, in its being the case that, in presence, view, or consequence of the fact that, seeing that; as, because.

---

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of a brief study of the prepositions in English, it was found that these prepositions in this paper can be in the form of simple prepositions and complex prepositions. Both of these prepositional forms conform to the provisions put forward by experts, in particular the prepositional formulas in the level of Preposition + Noun + Preposition. From the corpus data on concordance, the number of simple prepositions is 73 (seventy three) and the numbered prepositions are 6 (six). This preposition, in this paper, contains 13 (thirteen) of the 40 (forty) existing meanings. Of course this paper is only able to provide a little understanding of this preposition in terms of its form and meaning, so that further and in-depth research on this preposition is needed.

## **REFERENCE**

- Carter, R. and M. McCarthy. 2006 Cambridge Grammar of English: A Comprehensive Guide. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kridalaksana, Harimurti. 2008. Kamus Linguistik: Edisi Keempat. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

- LUMIWU, O. (2017). Preposisi Bahasa Inggris Dan Bahasa Melayu Manado. *JURNAL ELEKTRONIK FAKULTAS SASTRA UNIVERSITAS SAM RATULANGI*, 1(5).
- McEnery, T. and A. Wilson. 2001. *Corpus Linguistics*. 2nd ed. Edinburgh: Edinburgh
- Meyer, C. F. 2002 *English Corpus Linguistics: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Prabawati, D. (2011). Penggunaan Kata Depan Dalam Karangan Deskripsi: pada siswa kelas VII SMP Waskito tahun pelajaran 2010/2011 (sebuah analisis kesalahan berbahasa).
- Quynh, Pham Thi Tuyet. (2011) *An Investigation into English Complex Prepositions and Their Equivalents in Vietnamese*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Danang, University of Danang.
- R. J. C. Watt (2009) *Concordance (Version 3.3)* [Computer Program]. Available at [www.concordancesoftware.co.uk](http://www.concordancesoftware.co.uk) (diakses pada 18 November 2014).
- Suzanne, N. (2017). An analysis of preposition errors: The case of in, on, and at. *Lingua Didaktika: Jurnal Bahasa dan Pembelajaran Bahasa*, 11(1), 13-21. University Press.
- Yates, Paulene M dan Edward N. De Laney. 1951. *The New Building Better English*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Yusuf, Yunisrina Qismullah. (2009) 'A Corpus-Based Linguistics Analysis on Written Corpus: Colligation of "To" and "For"', *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 104-122.