International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences
Vol-11, Issue-6; November-December, 2026

Peer-Reviewed Journal
Journal Home Page Available: https://ijels.com/
Journal DOI: 10.22161/ijels

Problems with Prepositions

S. Rohini

Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Yogi Vemana University, Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh, India

Received: 30 Sep 2026; Received in revised form: 25 Oct 2026; Accepted: 30 Oct 2026; Available online: 06 Nov 2026
©2026 The Author(s). Published by Infogain Publication. This is an open-access article under the CC BY license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Abstract— *A preposition is a word to describe the relationship between other words in a sentence. "Pre" is a Latin Word, which means* ***"before****" Prepositions are words that we use before noun or pronoun in a sentence. It links noon, pronoun and phrases to show their relationship with other words in a sentence. In this paper problems of prepositions and the traditional methods of common problems and possible solutions in solving these problems in preposition has been described.*

Keywords— ***English prepositions, grammatical errors, prepositional usage, preposition selection, mother-tongue interference, bilingual learners, prepositional phrases, prepositions at the end of sentences, English language learning.***

I. INTRODUCTION

The English learner faces many problem in using English prepositions for preparation of their project, essay, articles etc., A preposition is one of the eight parts of speech. Specially, a preposition is a connector. Preposition functionis to connect a noun or pronoun to another noun or pronoun in a sentence. Preposition shows the relationship of direction, position, time and place simple preposition consists of only one work such as in, on, at, with of by etc., whereas compound preposition consists of two or more words such as instead of, in the middle, of, by the side of, in between instead of, in the middle of, by the side of, in between etc., Using English preposition cannot be separated from other important aspects of the English language and the prepositions are problematic in nature. We try to identify the reasons behind these problems.

II. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

We're offer reminded Abraham Lincoln with his fashionable phrase' of the people by the people and for the people' when we start to learn the skilful use of preposition. Imitating the purists in English, being an Indian English speaker I'm very often puzzled to handle problem verbs and troublesome plurals –

Should I write **cargoes or cargos?**

Should it be the **media was** informed or the **media** were informed?

The hen has lain in the sun all day of the hen has laid in the sun all day?

Being a beginner in English I'm rather confused to confront the various tricky grammatical choices:

I'd stop that if I was/were you

I like thosekind of cars / those kinds of car

Beaon and eggs is/are among my favorite foods.

Every one must arrange his/their own transport.

Between you and I/me he's failed.

Who/whom do you think caused the accident?

And I often dispute with the traditional dispute over expressions and phrasing in English.

Split infinitives (to boldly go)

Gerunds (I hope you don't mind me my asking) Misrelated or dangling participles (on arriving at the hospital, the door was opened by a cheerful nurse).

The above mentioned problem and troublesome usages seen to be earlier to over some when I confront the perplexed usage of the preposition.

Let's try to express our ideas elegantly and effectively by overcoming the prlblems of the preposition :

Compared with /to? A notorious case

Note : The traditional distinction between compare with and compare to is now widely neglected, though worth preserving.

To compare to means 'to listen to' – to note similarities between dissimilar things'.

Shall I compare the tv a summer's day. She compared my hairstyle to shredded wheat.

To compare with means 'to examine side by side with both for similarities and difference.

a. Compare Britain's trade record in recent years with France's

b. Why are local trains so tartly compared with in the city trains?

Note: curiously, however, compensable to often serves both functions; and in comparisons with almost always does.

Perfect Communication, handling of preposition Skilfully are far from guaranted, Walking on the tightrope (Acrobatic) required a perfect balancing and breath control. Similarly the placement of prepositions to convey the desired meaning in a sentence is rather more difficult for normative English speakers, while minds are preoccupied by their mother-tongue. In other words the bilingual problem is a great obstacle. Let's overcome some of the obstacles by constant practice. Here let's try to sight the behavior of the prepositions. (Simpson, 2014; Cole, 2006).

1. Puzzling Prepositions

Let us view some of them.

Passionate interest for opera

Passionate interest in operation.

Passion for opera

2. a. simultaneous affection and irritation with Henry.

A. simultaneous affection for and irritation with Henry

2. Phrases and Preposition Choice

1. If you are fond of children, you have a fondness for (not of) them.

2. "you may show a dislike of small dogs, but take a dislike to the neighbours.

3. A person acts in view of new information, but with a view to new successes.

4. The police may charge someone with manslaughter, but the suspect is arrested on a charge of manslaughter.

2.1 More Than One Possible Choice

Adequate to or for a party.

a. You might ask a question apropos the party or apropos of the party.

b. To conform to or with a custom is to observe it.

c. You might replace an old hat by or with a new hat.

d. A man can either tyrannise or tyrannise over this clerk.

2.2 Admit, Admit To and Admit Of

or admits to something be or she confession:

He admits (to) having stolen the jewels.

When a person admits to something he or she confesses it. He admits (to) having stolen the jewels. When something admits of something it, permits it, as in: the facts admit of only one explanation.

2.3 Consists Of and Consists In

The united kingdom consists of Great Britian and Northern Ireland; if it consists in something, it has it as a basis.

"The beauty of the city consists in its ancient buildings.

2.4 Correspond With and Correspond To

You may be disgusted at an action with a person or action by a person.

Something, or action, you may correspond with the sales manager in Singapore because your job in London corresponds to his.

2.5 Possessed Of and Possessed With

If you are possessed of something, you own it: possessed of a sharp tongue:

but if you are possessed with or by something, you are controlled by it.

Possessed with sudden rage.

2.6 Susceptible To and Susceptible Of

A person could be very susceptible to flattery or disease, but a theory is susceptible of an interpretation.

2.7 Sympathy For and In Sympathy With

You may feel sympathy (compassion) for a person, but you would be in sympathy (agreement) with a point of view.

III. CLEAR PERFORMANCE

An affinity between/with (not to)/(for) to brood on/over something (not about) consequent on something (not to) to die of something (better than from) to forbid someone to do something (not from doing it). To prevent someone from doing something to prohibit someone from doing something identical to something (not with) oblivious of something (better that to) to prefer something to something else (not than) junior/senior to someone or something (not than).

And different from is generally preferred in Britian English to different to aand clearly preferable to different than, though sometimes this from allows for a more streamlined construction.

IV. COMPARED WITH AND COMPARED TO

Note : The traditional distinction between compare with and compared to is now widely neglected, though worth preserving. To compare to means to listen to ' to note similarities between dissimilar things.

'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

'She compared my hairstyle to shredded wheat'.

To compare to means to examine side by side with both for similarities and differences:

a) Compare Britian's trade record in recent years with Franc's;
b) Why are local trains so tatty compared with intercity trains?
c) Note curiously however, comparable to often serves both functions, and in
d) Comparison with almost always does.

V. BELT AND BRACES: TOO MANY OR TOO FEW PREPOSITIONS

5.1 Common Error: Using Too Many or Too Few Prepositions

> There are two extremes from which we have to more away from.

> She's the girl to whomI was speaking and you sent the letter to.

In these examples the speakers have started off with the formal preposition relative pronoun' constructions and then repeated the pronoun at the end, as if it were the informed construction.

In English, however, this 'belt' and 'braces' approach is not grammatical. What about this sentence now?

5.2 With Regard To: Avoiding Unnecessary Prepositions

?? with regard to to whom you were speaking .. is not a sensible option.

Neither really is? With regard to whom you were speaking to.. an altogether better solution is to reward in some way, for example, as for the person to whom you were speaking should have been more discreet.

VI. PREPOSITIONS AT THE END

Position – so some people behave that sentences should not end with prepositions. (Hewings, 2003; Cole, 2006).

Prepositions usually occur immediately in front of the noun, pronoun or other word that they relate to in Latin they The'rule' was probably introduced by the poet John Dryden with 17th century and encouraged by the Historian Edward Gibbon in the 18th. But as actually formulated by Bishop Lowth in the 18th century. The rule did no more than recommend avoiding the end position where possible. And it was not always possible. The following section give some guidelines that with help you through thie problem area.

7. Relative Clauses: The Girl I Sent It To

1. That's the man we sold it to.
2. What's that you're working at?

Sincklers for the preposition rule might turn those into 'That 's the man to whom we sold it and what's that at which you're looking?

That first 'corrected' version is grammatical, but very formal and using very formal grammar is a less than formal setting represents a lapse of appropriateness. If not a lapse of rammar.

The second corrected version is so awkward that it scarcely rates acceptance as a standard English setnece. Shifting the preposition from the end can be particularly clumsy or confusing when the preposition then becomes widely separated from the work it relates to which sentence in the following pair is better? That is, which of the two sentences is more comprehensible?

It's the kind of book that even after months of study one can reach only a very vague understanding . it's the kind of book of which even after months of study one can reach only a very vague understanding. And if the preposition is part of a fixed phrase or idiom, you simply cannot shift it to an earlier position with relative clause. You can say, "that's the kind of glass though which you cannot see. But you cannot say.

That's the kind of the through which you cannot see, you have no option but to say.

That's' the kind of lie which you cannot see through.

VII. QUESTIONS AND EXCLAMATIONS

Questions beginning with words – who, what, why and so on and ending with a preposition 'can' also often be reworded,. Again many questions of this kind are acceptable, through formal. (Hewings, 2003).

To whom are you referring, may I ask?

For whom was he looking?

Others, however, shound absur.

? about what is your book?

? on what does it depend?

It is more or less impossible to avoid end prepositions after exclamations containing wh-words.

For example.

?? What are embarrassing thing about which to talk?

?? Into what a fine ness you've got us?

VIII. OTHER STRUCTURES TO THINK ABOUT

In many other constructions too final prepositions are natural or even un-avoidable. (Hewings, 2003; Cole, 2006).

For instance, the passives of prepositional verbs.

We were well looked after.

The whole question needs looking into.

Consider also constructions with an adjectiv plus to infinitive

She's lovely to look at.

He's impossible to live with.

Or with an indefinite pronoun plus to infinitive.

That's something to look forward to.

I've got nobody to talk to'

'Is there anyone to write to'.

Only by wholesale re wording could such sentences reasonably avoid the end preposition.

Note that the end preposition is always equally clear, elegant, and acceptable. In formal relative clauses and some questions, in particular and earlier position may well be preferable.

'Do you know the girl on the deck of whose father's ship Alec stowed away?

Do you know the girl whose father's/ ship Alec sowed away on the deck of?

And longer prepositions such as during and thoughout, and multiword prepositions such as 'with awkward in the end position.

?? Which century did the renaissance take place during/throughout?

?That's the scandal he resigned because of.

IX. CONCLUSION

Grammar not a bore, better understanding given pleasure. You are free from rigid grip, making you the master of words rather than keeping you as their slave.

REFERENCES

[1] Simpson, J. (2014, August). "How to help learners of English to understand prepositions." British Council.

[2] Ragam, A. P. (2014, March 17). "The problems with using prepositions." The New Indian Express, Chennai.

[3] Cole, T. (2006). The Preposition Book. The University of Michigan Press.

[4] Fitikides, T. J. (2002). Common Mistakes in English. Longman.

[5] Hewings, M. (2003). Advanced Grammar in Use. Cambridge University Press.