



Determining the Status of Prepositions in the System of Complex English Prepositions

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Abstract: The article focuses on the status of prepositions in the system of complex prepositions in the English language, the criteria for distinguishing complex prepositions from other types of prepositional phrases, the stages of lexicalization and grammaticalization of prepositions, semantic development, and morphosyntactic changes in the structure of prepositions. Scientists' opinions about the complex preposition are reacted to and scientific conclusions are given. The status of prepositions expressed in complex prepositions is explained by means of examples taken from English literary works.

Key words: complex preposition, lexicalization, grammaticalization, syntactic connection, preposition+noun+preposition structure, syntactic unit, ideomatic phrase.

The main function of the preposition in the English language is structural, that is, it acts as a formal element participating in the formation of structures of varying complexity, such as a phrase, a sentence, a text. According to scientists, the preposition is considered as an expression of two types - grammatical and semantic tasks [1; p. 23].

In the first case, the preposition acts as an auxiliary word that connects two important words and at the same time shows the subordinate position of one of them in relation to the other. In the second case, "the preposition serves as an expression of the relations expressed by the speaker between objects and events of extralinguistic reality..."

When studying the system of prepositions in the English language, it is necessary to consider such linguistic problems as the lexical meaning of prepositions, the issue of adding a preposition to a verb, and determining the syntactic relations between the elements in a phrase. It can be seen that until now, the issue of determining the status of these prepositions has been given priority in the studies conducted on the study of the system of prepositions with a complex content in the English language. These studies are based on a synchronic approach to the language system, focusing on the development of criteria for distinguishing complex prepositions from other types of prepositional phrases. It is known that insufficient attention has been paid to the stages of lexicalization and grammaticalization, semantic development, and late morphosyntactic changes in the structure of prepositions in this group. In this study, it is planned to study the group of complex prepositions creating causal relationships such as owing to, due to, because of, thanks to, by reason of, formed on the basis of different word groups, at the intersection of synchronic and diachronic approaches. As the research is descriptive and empirical in nature, it is intended to involve qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis.

In the application of the qualitative approach, it is necessary to refer to the concepts and ideas formed within the framework of the theory of grammaticalization. Because, only in this direction, it

will be possible to understand the development of grammatical structures. The theory of grammaticalization provides an opportunity to explain the relationship between the situation of using language units and the formation of grammatical structures [3].

Based on the principle of free choice, linguists avoid treating complex prepositions as independent syntactic units. In their works, the structures of the preposition+noun+preposition model are interpreted as an idiomatic phrase [9; pp. 3 – 29]. Some of them use the concept of "scale of cohesiveness" [8] mentioned in the textbook *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* [8] not to determine the relationship of the members of the compound, but to abandon the concept of a complex preposition. For example, the compound *by dint of* is not an alternative to the "cohesion measure" analysis, it is highly stable, it is a compound that cannot be divided into separate parts [4].

According to A. Seppanen, he prefers to use a test consisting of the actions of placing an element in front of it, organizing, shortening, and adding an element to determine the syntactic properties of compounds in the structure of preposition+noun+preposition. We recall the examples given by the author:

(fronting):

1) Of which proposal do they seem to be in favor ?

(coordination):

2) Your answer has nothing in common with the questions or with the issue at hand.

(ellipsis):

3) Speaker A: In the light of what you've said, I agree to the changes; Speaker B: of what I have said! Don't put the onus on me.

(interpolation):

4) In view, we feel, of what has come to light, a decision on this matter should be proposed.

According to A. Seppanen's interpretation, in the first sentence, the preposition *of* together with the element which is placed in the front part of the sentence and the structure of which forms a component, but the combination in front of cannot be described as a syntactic unit.

In the second sentence, the structures with the issue at hand and with the questions are combined. The fact that only the preposition *with* is repeated here, and not the complex preposition in common with, indicates that there is a boundary between the constituents after the noun *common*. Similarly, the structure of *what I've said* in the third example should be considered as a separate component.

The inclusion of the *we feel* structure in the fourth sentence does not allow to interpret the compound in view of as a single component. Based on the above comments, the scientist believes that it is impossible to interpret complex prepositions in the status of a single unit [9; pp. 3 – 29].

It is recommended by scientists that the synchro-quantitative analysis of complex prepositions be based on the linguistic material in direct use [2; 5]. It is clear that the results of the analysis based on the data recorded in the corpus are distinguished by their objectivity. There is no doubt that the characterization and re-examination of samples collected in natural conditions is more efficient and more valid for drawing conclusions than artificially generated ones. In particular, relying on the information recorded in the corpus is useful in developing criteria for determining the meaning of linguistic units [6; 7].

Therefore, as a result of the analysis of prepositions with complex content in the English language, it can be seen that it is the main means of expressing the relationship between the objects of the surrounding reality in English. It is not only an expression of a syntactic function, but also has a certain lexical meaning.

The selection and expression of a preposition in speech does not depend on the meaning of the words expressed along with it, besides, it itself plays a dominant role in structures of the "preposition + noun + preposition" type. Despite the diversity of views and positions on the use of prepositions in

English, one thing cannot be denied - prepositions not only participate in the formation of language structures of a more complex lexical level, but also help to implement semantic relations within these structures.

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