



## COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PREPOSITIONS IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE

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### Annotation

This article discusses comparative study of English and Chinese prepositions. In addition, it gives information about specific features of prepositions in compared languages.

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It is known that Chinese and English belong to different language families. Therefore, to compare the prepositions of the two languages, we must first clarify the characteristics of the two languages. By placing the prepositions of the two languages in their respective language systems, we can better compare and draw scientific conclusions.

Modern Chinese and English are both analytical languages. The relationship between words in a sentence is not mainly through inflection but through word order and prepositions to reflect the relationship between observations [1,13]. However, the Chinese do not have morphological changes in the strict sense. In English, nouns and verbs have morphological changes, and adjectives and adverbs also have fixed suffix markers.

Talking about the difference in language, we must speak of the difference in the way of thinking. The method of thinking in Chinese is comprehensive and re-inductive, so the expression is also spiral:

1. First, propose the subject.
2. Repeat the discussion around the theme.
3. Finally, return to the article for emphasis.

But English is different. The thinking of English is analytical, so the expression is linear. First, the central meaning is expressed, and then it is expanded, which is a Deductive way. The connection method of Chinese is also different from that of English. Because Chinese is mainly based on conjunctive meanings, it is primarily



reduced when expressing intention, and it is enough to describe the purpose. Therefore, many of its connection methods are implicit. The function words as cohesive means can often be omitted in a sentence, such as prepositions, conjunctions, etc. Sometimes, even content words such as pronouns can be omitted so that both parties can understand to achieve ideographic effects. This is what Mr. Lv Shuxiang [2,246] said when he said, "Chinese does not engage in formalism." And it doesn't pay much attention to the form before and after. But English is different; the formal means of the connection in the sentence is necessary, so the explicit mark that expresses the relationship between words—function word, has a strong impact and strong logic of the expression. And prepositions in English sentences generally cannot be omitted.

Regarding the characteristics of Chinese grammar, Mr. Lv Shuxiang made a detailed explanation in "Eight Hundred Words of Modern Chinese" [6,74]:

1.Chinese grammar has no morphological changes, and its only morphological changes are mainly characterized by lack of universality. Therefore, grammatical analysis and the delimitation of parts of speech often diverge.

2.Function words are often omitted. Personal pronouns are often omitted, such as "Have you read it yet?" There is no pronoun in this sentence. Conjunctions are also often omitted, such as "The road is not easy to walk, and it has rained a few days recently." This sentence is a causal relationship, but the corresponding conjunction is not used. Prepositions are also often omitted, "He can write with his left hand." This sentence omits the preposition "use".

The sources of Chinese prepositions are pretty complicated; some are from ancient prepositions, some are from old verbs, some are modern, and some are Europeanized. Its function and usage are complex, some with verbs, some with conjunctions, and some with adjectives. The grammatical parts of prepositions in sentences are also different. It can be said that Chinese prepositions have been a controversial topic in academic circles since their inception. Influenced by western traditional grammar theory, even the names of Chinese prepositions have many expressions. Ma Jianzhong's Ma Shi Wen Tong called it "Jie Zi," an empty word. For the first time, it was called "preposition," which Zhang Shizhao pointed out in "Chinese Classics of Secondary Schools": "prepositions, so introduce nouns and pronouns to communicate with verbs, adjectives, and other words. The preposition is placed in the former and the latter with the noun of introduction only. Preposition before the former predicate and preposition after the latter predicate. He distinguished prepositions from postpositions and used the term "preposition" for the first time in Chinese history. In 1921, Liu Fu called it a "formal word" in the General Theory of Chinese Grammar.



These arguments are all based on classical Chinese. After the vernacular movement, language researchers turned their perspective to modern Chinese. In 1924, li jin xi pointed out in "New Chinese Grammar" that "prepositions are used to introduce nouns or pronouns to verbs or adjectives to express their time, status and reasons." He also divides prepositions into prepositions and postpositions and thinks that the prepositions of time and place, karma, and method in Chinese are "prepositions," The leading prepositions are "postpositions." Mr. Lv Shuxiang advocated using "relational words" in The Outline of Chinese Grammar in 1942. Mr. Wang Li advocated using "conjunctions" in Chinese Grammar Theory in 1943. Because most prepositions in modern Chinese are grammaticalized from made-up words, some scholars advocate calling them quasi-verbs, induced words (Gao Mingkai, 1948), and auxiliary verbs (Wang Li, 1958) (Lv Shuxiang, 1952). Prepositions are called "auxiliary verbs" or "quasi-verbs" mainly because The words changed from verbs to prepositions mainly occur in serial sentences and are similar to verbs in function. Mr. Zhao Yuanren said this in 1979' s Oral Chinese Grammar: "There are several transitive verbs which are often used in the first verb position of continuous verbs and can be called auxiliary verbs. A few of them only appear in this position, but not in other positions. That is an authentic preposition. " (page 330). Finally, in 1956, the Tentative Grammar System for Chinese Teaching made the appellation of "preposition" genuinely determined, and the preposition system was truly established. The Tentative Grammar pointed out the essential difference between prepositions and verbs, breaking the shackles of traditional western grammar theory on the definition of Chinese prepositions.

The part of speech of "preposition" has gone through more than half a century from scratch to establishing the preposition system. However, overseas scholars' appellation of Chinese prepositions is not uniform, and most scholars are influenced by C. J. Fillmore's "case-marking" theory and call it "case marker."

Compared with Chinese, English prepositions have a definite position in their grammatical system, and their function as "formal words" is recognized by the legal circle. Chinese prepositions are functional, while English prepositions are positional. English prepositions always appear in front of nouns and pronouns, so English prepositions are also called prepositions. The prefix "pre-" is the meaning of "pre." We often refer to English prepositions as prepositions for unifying terms and facilitating understanding and learning. However, different linguistic schools understand English prepositions differently due to different standpoints and observation angles. Because English prepositions are very verbal, the famous linguist M.A.K Halliday classified prepositions as spoken words (verbs) in An Introduction to Functional Grammar,





published in 1985, called minor verbs. Linguistic scholars believe that English prepositions are "functional words" or "construction words," whose function is usually to turn the object of prepositions into adjectives or adverbs. For its conceptual explanation, "David Crystal in the Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics, the preposition is a term used in the grammatical classification of words, referring to the closed set of ITEMS which precede noun phrases, and certain forms of the VERB, to form a single constituent of structure. In addition, the Longman dictionary of contemporary English interprets prepositions as a preposition is a word that is used before a noun, pronoun, or to show that word PS connection With another word.

English prepositions are formal words, and their function in sentences is to express the relationship between words. And the use of prepositions in Chinese and English is complicated. Some prepositions have the same usage and can be interchanged completely, but their forms are different. For example, with "Shout" and "Let," we can say "He told him to hurt" and "He let him hurt," and there is no difference at this time. Some prepositions, like "according to" and "according to," are semantically the same and can be used interchangeably in many cases. However, when the next word is a single word, use "press" instead of "follow," You can't replace "press" with "follow" in "finish on time" and "finish on time." For non-native speakers and master and often confuse them, making it challenging to master and use them. Chinese prepositions are mainly specialized in the influence of prepositions on word order and frame prepositions (also known as "frame prepositions"). In Chinese, prepositions can be followed by words, phrases, or clauses, and different forms of prepositions will also affect the word order of sentences. The constituent order of most sentences are "subject+predicate+object , " but when prepositions such as "把 , 被 " are used , the object of the sentence Will come before the predicate ; for example , " I cleaned up the house " means " I cleaned up the house . " . Sometimes, because of the differences in language spirit, their semantics may not be completely equivalent . Still, if the complement is added after them, you can only use the word " ba "; for example, " I cleaned up the house " can't be said as " I cleaned up the house." Moreover, for Chinese learners, the logical subjects of the complements of these sentences will be difficult to understand. For example, " Amin put him in the hospital. "And " the waiter stared at him with big eyes and couldn't say a word." In the two sentences, the first sentence, " those who entered the hospital, " is "Amin, " while the second sentence, " those who stared with big eyes " and " those who could not speak, " are "waiters." Chinese prepositions can also form fixed expressions of other words, such as "for me/for me", " inside/outside/on ", "by", "except (for)" or form framed prepositions. Chen Changlai called it "Preposition Frame" in " The Development Course and Voiding Mechanism







of Chinese Adverbs, " published in 2002 [7]. In this paper, we collectively call it a " prepositional frame." This concept belongs to the category of linguistic typology , which was first put forward by Greenberg , the founder of contemporary word order typology (Frame Prepositions in Chinese by Liu Danqing). Liu Danqing (2002 ) thinks that .The framed preposition " refers to a type consisting of prepositions and postpositions, which sandwich the dominant components of prepositions. "Its structure is mainly formed by prepositions followed by locative words, nouns, auxiliary words, and verbs. As for the framed preposition, the controversy lies in identifying the following terms. Liu Danqing (2002 ) thinks that the two parts are " preposition " and "postposition , " respectively . However, Chen believes that the latter part of the frame structure is independent, and the word nature is also separate. It may be more convenient for our teaching and understanding that we regard the past participle of the box preposition as a mandatory component. English prepositions are more complicated in their strong verbs, various meanings, flexible use, and Marginal prepositions compared with Chinese. English is very verbal, and one of the main functions of prepositions in pragmatics is to make expression vivid and expressive. In many cases, prepositions in English sentences will be escaped from Chinese verbs. For example, " travel by air " should be translated into " air travel, " and " he came into the classroom with a card in his hand " translated into " he walked into the classroom with 7 in his hand. A card - " You can take it for 100 yuan". Translated into " You can take it for one hundred dollars". Many such sentences need to translate prepositions in English sentence into verbs in Chinese. In English, many prepositions are polysemy. Take the most familiar preposition "in." In the New Oxford English-Chinese Dictionary, there are 9 preposition entries, which are:

Table 2.1

Number	Meaning of a word	Examples
1	(indicating position) inside; in, on the part	They live in France.
2	(indicating time) in the period, after, in the process.	In her twenties and thirties, she had had no difficulty getting jobs. I cannot see you now, come back in half an hour.
3	(indicating the direction) inward, facing the direction	I saw him go in the shop.
4	(indicating a state) in the middle of, in the case of	Martin was in his pyjamas. They were living in terrible poverty.
5	(Expression) Use, press, multiply, in form	They were speaking in Italian. They went up in the lift.
6	(indicating the reason) Because of, for	He went in fear of his life.



7	(indicating a field, scope) within	It is not in my power to do that.
8	(indicating the result) as	What did you give him in return?
9	(express purpose) for	They set off in search of the lost child.

According to 2, we can see that although they are all "in+ for a period of time", the meanings in sentences with different tenses are different. Of course, different tool books have different forms of expression. We are in the Collins English Grammar Series-Volume 1. There are 23 entries to / into preposition, each of which is very specific, and the parts of speech of the words before and after the preposition is all listed in detail. The complexity of English prepositions is mainly manifested in Marginal Prepositions. Marginal prepositions are also called marginal prepositions, and in some grammar books they are also called "participle prepositions". According to the famous linguist Randolph Quirk, "Marginal prepositions are composed of an English word, which is closely related to verbs and adjectives, and are mostly used as prepositions in more formal or ancient styles". Because the most marginal prepositions are shaped like participles of verbs, which are the result of the grammaticalization of notional words [8], and some of them are still in the process of change, linguists have different opinions on what marginal prepositions include. Structurally, there are "-ing" forms, such as "barring, including, regulating"; There are "-ed" forms, such as "given, granted"; There are also some special marginal prepositions, whose forms are just like verbs, such as "bar, save, plus" and so on. These marginal prepositions are completely similar to prepositions in many aspects and have the same syntactic features as ordinary prepositions: "

1. Can be used as a postmodifier of nouns or noun phrases;
2. Can be used as an adverbial in a sentence;
3. Can be used as a complement after intransitive verbs and adjectives;
4. Can't take that clause;
5. Can't be followed by the infinitive verb;

6. After that, the personal pronoun cannot be nominative. (Chen Congmei. On the grammaticalization of notional words and the dictionary expression of English marginal prepositions. But these marginal prepositions still have certain characteristics of verbs, adjectives and other parts of speech. Look at the following sentence: "He's remarkable considering his age. That must be worth a fortune. It was well written, bar a few trivial mistakes.

At the same time, marginal prepositions also include less, minus, plus, and times, etc., such as: What's five times six? He arrived minus a ticket. On the grammaticalization



of notional words and the dictionary expression of English marginal prepositions. There are some English words with the characteristics of the marginal prepositions listed above, and now some dictionaries still have no "identity". This will be mentioned later (see Table 3 for details).

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