

ALEŠ KLÉGR,
ENGLISH COMPLEX PREPOSITIONS
of the Type IN SPITE OF and
Analogous Sequences.
A STUDY & DICTIONARY

Charles University, Prague.
Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2001, 228 pp.

The present volume is the author's third book addressing English word classes from a contrastive point of view. Like both its predecessors, devoted respectively to English verbs and adjectives,¹ it is intended primarily as a reference book for those who deal with English professionally, as well as for advanced users of English and English scholars of the Czech language. Unlike the preceding volumes, however, it contains not only a dictionary, but also a theoretical study presenting the problems involved in an adequate description of complex prepositions, and proposing a plausible, theoretically well founded solution. The author sees the advantage of this combined approach in allowing him to include all instances of three-word sequences collected in his material. Hence apart from serving as a reference book, the present volume may give a stimulus to further research in providing both plentiful material and ground for specialists' response. For however carefully the complex prepositions included in the dictionary may have been selected, and however sound the theoretical basis, in the

case of particular instances complete agreement is hardly to be expected.

The study is based on over a thousand complex prepositions listed in the dictionary.² The classificatory term complex is used in the sense multi-word, in contrast to simple prepositions, which are single-word structures. Of the multi-word sequences the type treated in the present volume is the most productive structure preposition-noun-preposition (PNP), other structural types, such as *face to face*, *side by side*, and two-word structures, like *along with*, *but for*, *thanks to*, as well as sequences consisting of more than three words, e.g. *on the part of*, *through the good offices of*, being left to further research.

The author's interest in prepositions is focused on the lexical rather than the grammatical aspects of the basic problem of complex prepositions, presented by the delimitation of multi-word prepositions from loose and free combinations displaying similar structures, a goal ultimately amounting to segmentation of a continuum. Consequently, a multi-word sequence is not primarily approached according to its grammatical behaviour, considered with respect to both its components and the structure as a whole. Instead, with a view to identifying as large an amount of sequences with prepositional function as possible, the author largely relies on interchangeability with an unquestionable (standard, es-

tablished) preposition in a particular context. This criterion is supplemented by two others: collocational nature of the PNP sequence and function of the PNP sequence compatible with the presumably prepositional character of its PNP head. Within the hierarchy of these three criteria adopted for the selection of PNP sequences qualifying as complex prepositions, the first ranks highest. The collocational nature of a PNP sequence, though an important signal, does not in itself guarantee the prepositional character of the sequence (and conversely, a sequence capable of replacing a primary preposition need not be a collocation). It thus serves only as a subsidiary criterion. Nevertheless, some relatively frequent collocations have been included despite their weak prepositional capacity because no dictionary has so far listed them.

The syntactic criterion of compliance with a prepositional function of the PNP sequence rests on the occurrence of the PNP sequence in the typical adverbial function of adjunct or disjunct. On the other hand, sequences following a copula raised the question of whether they were not syntactic adjectives. Here the problem is of course the fact that many PNP sequences which are on the way to becoming prepositions display both these syntactic functions. In accordance with the primary goal, viz. collection of as many preposition-like PNP sequences as possible, these instances have been included, but the examples in the dictionary properly illustrate only uses compatible with prepositional functions, the adjectival use in complementation of a copula being avoided.

The main criterion, substitutability of the PNP sequence with an established preposition, testifies to the author's func-

tional approach, motivated by the conviction that irrespective of the grammatical status of the sequence (degree of lexicalization, habitualness, or a purely ad hoc nature) its very capacity to replace a true preposition makes it worth recording. The author is aware that with this approach his sample contains a certain percentage of sequences whose prepositional status is marginal and whose chances of ever becoming grammaticalized are minimal, but this is preferred to incompleteness.

Besides being concerned with the delimitation of prepositional PNP sequences, the theoretical part pays attention to the semantic aspect, which is elaborated both qualitatively and quantitatively. The identified semantic classes are then listed alphabetically in Appendix I. The final part of the theoretical study is devoted to the formal characteristics of the PNP sequences, again in regard to quantitative and qualitative aspects.

As follows from what has been said, the dictionary lists a great variety of PNP sequences from unquestionable complex prepositions to marginal instances (cf. *in comparison with/to* and *behind the closed doors of*). The problem of alphabetic ordering of multiple-word lemmas has been solved by ordering the entries according to the noun component of the sequence. The dictionary is thus arranged according to the head word. The entries are bilingual, Czech equivalents being provided not only to convey the meaning of each lemma, but also after all examples. Grammatical information is confined to the indication of article and number variability in the noun component of the sequence, e.g. *at a/the rate of*.

Besides the theoretical part and the dictionary proper, the volume contains two

appendices, I. Semantic Categories of the PNP Sequences, and II. Alphabetical List of the PNP Sequences, with an Index of Czech Equivalents attached at the end.

The two appendices are useful complements to the dictionary in permitting search from other aspects and/or for other needs. Appendix I enables the user to find complex prepositions according to the respective semantic categories (e.g. prepositions expressing agreement, respect, purpose, replacement, etc.), while Appendix II is ordered on a strictly alphabetical, letter-by-letter basis, thus allowing search according to the initial preposition. Reference to the dictionary is here facilitated by means of boldface, which singles out the head word and thus guides the user back to the respective dictionary entry. The Index of the Czech Equivalents brings together sequences of the same or similar meaning, and may thus serve as the Czech-English part of a bi-directional dictionary. As the author points out, however, reference to the initial sentential example is always necessary since the equivalents are translation equivalents deriving from the sentential illustrations, and hence not usable mechanically in translating Czech sentences. It would therefore have been useful to resort to a similar typographic device as in Appendix II to expedite the procedure.

In sum, the present volume is to be recommended not only as a most useful reference book for translators, advanced students of English, and in fact anyone who composes a piece of academic prose. It is also a notable contribution to the study of the process of grammaticalization and of the concept of gradience.

Libuše Dušková (Prague)

Notes

¹ A. Klégr, N. Hronková & Z. Hron, *Znáte anglická slovesa* (Do you know your English verbs)? Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, Prague 1991; A. Klégr & N. Hronková, *Znáte anglická přídavná jména* (Do you know your English adjectives)? Leda, Prague, 1994.

² The author's interest in complex prepositions goes back to previous studies, cf. A. Klégr, Preposition-Noun Combinability Patterns, *Prague Studies in English XXI, AUC – Philologica* 2, 1996, pp. 166–177; A. Klégr, English Complex Prepositions of the Prepositional Phrase Type, *Prague Studies in English XXII, AUC – Philologica* 5, 1997, Prague, 2000, pp. 51–78.

TRAVAUX DE LINGUISTIQUE 41. REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LINGUISTIQUE FRANÇAISE.

Bruxelles, Duculot 2000. 143 p.

Ce dernier numéro de la revue linguistique belge renommée, cette fois-ci polythématique, contient six articles consacrés à la linguistique française et une section de notes de lecture présentant un certain nombre de volumes qui ont été envoyés à la revue.

Catherine Schnedecker (Institut Universitaire de France et Université de Metz) traite la catégorie des ordinaux pronominaux. Les analyses antérieures des adjectifs ordinaux s'accordent sur le fait que les SN comprenant un adjectif ordinal expriment *l'ordre*. Il serait d'ailleurs plus exact de parler d'ordres puisque la nature de l'ordre varie selon le type de nom du SN (*l'or-*