

The Syntactic Functions of Prepositional Phrases in Sentences Found in the Short Story "The Open Window" by Saki

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Abstract

The present research is a kind of linguistic research. This paper aims to study the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences found in the short story "The Open Window" by Saki. The objectives are to identify the prepositional phrases in the short story "The Open Window", to analyze them according to the definitions of Heather Johnson (2013) and to find out which type is the most frequently used and which is the least. It was found that the frequency of prepositional phrases as verb phrase complement is the most and the frequency of prepositional phrases as disjunct adverbial is the least.

Keywords: Linguistic research, Syntactic functions, Prepositional phrases

Introduction

A sentence plays an important role in written language. In order to form a sentence, phrases and clauses are grouped together. A phrase which is a group of words is used to structure a clause. Therefore, a phrase is important to form a sentence. There are five types of phrases; noun phrase, verb phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase and prepositional phrase. Preposition is one of the parts of speech. It is widely used not only in spoken but also in written language.

According to Johnson (2013), a prepositional phrase that compounds with another word, phrase, or clause functions as a complement of a preposition. A prepositional phrase usually starts with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun. It is important for learners to understand form and function of prepositional phrases.

Background of the Research

Many researchers study the literary devices concerning the use of the various functions of prepositional phrases. The present research studied the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences found in the short story "The Open Window" written by Saki. This paper was based on the theory proposed by Johnson (2013).

Scope of the Research

This research was based on the short story "The Open Window" written by Saki. The data were analyzed according to the theory of Johnson (2013). The present research studied all syntactic functions of prepositional phrases suggested by Johnson (2013).

Aim and Objectives of the Research

The aim of the present research is to study the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences found in the short story "The Open Window" by Saki. Three objectives of this paper are-

1. to identify the functions of the prepositional phrases in the short story "The Open Window",
2. to analyze them according to the theory of Johnson (2013), and
3. to find out which type is the most frequently used and which is the least.

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Literature Review

In this section, the researchers present the definitions of preposition, the biography of the author and synopsis of the short story.

Definitions of Preposition

There are many theories concerned with preposition. According to Johnson (2013), preposition is defined by traditional grammar as words that link to the words, phrases and clauses and express spatial or temporal relations. In the most general terms, a preposition is the first word of a phrase that contains a noun or pronoun. Ehrlich and Murphy (1990) state that a preposition is a word that conveys a meaning of position, direction, time or other abstraction. It serves to relate its object to another element of the sentence. Prepositions indicate the position of people or things in relation to where other people or things are located. They can show relationship between objects in space (where one thing is in relation to another) and they can show relationships in time (when an event occurred in relation to another event). Therefore, prepositions have different functions and meanings in English sentences.

Biography of the Author "Saki"

Hector Hugh Munro, writing under the pen name of Saki, was born in Akyab, Burma, on December 18, 1870. His father was Inspector-General of the Burma Police. The youngest of three children, Hector spent most of his early childhood at Broadgate Villa, in Pilton Village near Barnstaple, North Devon.

In 1896, Saki left for London and began to write political satires for the Westminster Gazette. The satires were illustrated by Carruthers Gould and depicted public figures as characters in *Alice in Wonderland*; these essays were later collected and published as *The Westminster Alice*. Saki had earlier published a work called *The rise of the Russian Empire* which was his only work of serious non-fiction. Saki came to love the upheaval of the region, something that is apparent in his story *The Cupboard of the Yesterdays*.

Saki wrote for *The Morning Post*, *Bystander*, *Westminster Gazette* and *The Daily Express*. In 1910, *Reginald in Russia* was published. This was followed in 1912 by *The Chronicles of Clovis* and in 1913 by *When William Came*. By the Spring of 1914 Saki was writing a column called *Potted Parliament for Outlook* and in 1914 *Beasts and Super Beasts* was published. When the war was declared in late 1914, Hector rushed to enlist and was stationed with the 22nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers in Horsham, Sussex.

In September 1916, Saki was promoted to Lance-Sergeant. Saki suffered from Malaria in October and spent about a month at the battalion's hospital. When he heard of the impending attack on Beaumont-Hamel he returned to his Battalion in the weakened state his illness had left him. Hector Hugh Munro, Saki, was killed by a sniper on November 13, 1916. (<http://www.shvoong.com>)

Synopsis of the Short Story "The Open Window"

Framton Nuttel had gone to the countryside in order to cure his nerves. His sister, thinking that he, not knowing anyone there, would be depressed, making his nerve problem worse, gave him letters of introduction to all the people she knew there. Nuttel did not think much of such visits but still decided to visit a lady about whom he knew nothing except her name and address. The lady's niece, a girl of about fifteen years, gave him company till the lady came down. The girl named Vera on knowing that Mr. Nuttel did not know anything except her aunt's name and address decided to play a joke on him. She narrated to him how on that very day three years ago, her aunt met with a tragedy.

It was three years ago. On that day, Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her two brothers went to their days' shooting and never came back. In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe-shooting ground, they were engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog. Their bodies were never found. But her aunt always believes that they will come back some day along with a little brown spaniel that had gone along with them. She believes that they will come back the same way they went and so keeps the window open every day till it is quite dark. The niece then describes how they went out, the husband with his white waterproof coat over his arm and her youngest brother singing "Bertie why do you bound?" In quiet evenings like that day, even she gets a creepy feeling that they will walk in through that window. Just then, the aunt hurried to the room, apologizing for her lateness. She told Nuttel not to mind the open window since her husband and her brothers will come home that way from hunting. She then cheerfully talked about shooting and its different aspects. Framton found this very scary and tried to change the topic of discussion by talking of his illness. His hostess only heard him partially as she was constantly looking out of the open window. Then suddenly he saw her face lightened up and exclaimed that they had come. Mr. Nuttel looked at the niece who had a look of horror in her eyes. Mr. Nuttel turned to look out of the window. He saw three men walking towards the window with guns under their arms. One of them was also carrying a white coat. A tired brown spaniel was with them when they were near the house and one of them sang out, "Bertie, why do you bound?"

He thinks he is seeing ghosts, and runs away. Mrs. Sappleton can't understand why he has run away, and when her husband and brothers (who of course are not ghosts) come in, she tells them about the odd young man who has just left. The niece explains that Framton Nuttel ran away because of the spaniel, he is afraid of dogs since being hunted by a pack of pariah dogs in India. (The niece enjoys making up stories about people).
<http://www.enotes.com/topics/open-window#summary-summary-summary-the-story>

Theoretical Background

There are three syntactic functions of prepositional phrases quoted by Frank (1972). They are: (a) Norminal function, (b) Adjectival function and (c) Adverbial function.

Similarly, six syntactic functions of prepositional phrases are stated by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973). They are: (a) Adjunct, (b) Postmodifier, (c) Disjunct, (d) Conjunct, (e) Complementation as verb and (f) Complementation as adjective.

In addition, Johnson (2013) presents that there are six syntactic functions of prepositional phrases: (a) Noun phrase modifier, (b) Noun phrase complement, (c) Adjective phrase complement, (d) Verb phrase complement, (e) Adjunct adverbial and (f) Disjunct adverbial.

1. Prepositional Phrase as Noun Phrase Modifiers

The first primary grammatical function that prepositional phrases perform is that of the noun phrase modifier. A noun phrase modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that modifies or describes a noun including a noun phrase. For example, the following prepositional phrases in bold function as noun phrase modifiers: (1) the lady **of the home**, (2) the night **before Christmas** and (3) a gift **for the other**.

2. Prepositional Phrase as Noun Phrase Complements

The second primary grammatical function that prepositional phrases perform is that of the noun phrase complement. A noun phrase complement is a word, phrase, or clause that completes the meaning of a noun phrase. For example, the following prepositional phrases in

bold function as noun phrase complements: (1) passion **for reading**, (2) love **of the game**, (3) fear **of flying**.

3. Prepositional Phrase as Adjective Phrase Complements

The third primary grammatical function that prepositional phrases perform is that of the adjective phrase complement. An adjective phrase complement is a word, phrase, or clause that completes the meaning of an adjective phrase. For example, the following prepositional phrases in bold function as adjective phrase complements; (1) fond **of bananas**, (2) afraid **of falling down the stairs**, (3) aware **of the dire consequences**.

4. Prepositional Phrase as Verb Phrase Complements

The fourth primary grammatical function that prepositional phrases perform is that of the verb phrase complement. A verb phrase complement is a word, phrase, or clause that completes the meaning of a verb phrase. For example, the following prepositional phrases in bold function as verb phrase complements (1) rely **on my husband** (2) listen **to the music** (3) approve **of my plan**.

A verb with a verb phrase complement is often referred to as a prepositional verb. A prepositional verb is a common verb form in the English language that consists of a verb followed by a preposition.

5. Prepositional Phrase as Adjunct Adverbials

The fifth primary grammatical function that prepositional phrases perform is that of the adjunct adverbial. An adjunct adverbial is a word, phrase, or clause that modifies an entire clause by providing additional information about time, place, manner, condition, purpose, reason, result, and concession. For example, the following prepositional phrases in bold function as adjunct adverbials: (1) The children waited **in line**, (2) The couple is walking their dog **along the beach** and (3) She failed the test **because of her illness**.

6. Prepositional Phrase as Disjunct Adverbials

The sixth primary grammatical function that prepositional phrases perform is that of the disjunct adverbial. A disjunct adverbial provides additional information to frame an entire clause. For example, the following prepositional phrases in bold function as disjunct adverbials: (1) **In my opinion**, learning about grammar is fun, (2) **For the love of goodness**, the children need to stop whining and (3) **With all due respect**, you need to calm down.

The six primary functions of prepositional phrases in English are noun phrase modifiers, noun phrase complements, adjective phrase complements, verb phrase complements, adjunct adverbials and disjunct adverbials.

Research Methodology

The researchers studied the short story "The Open Window" investigating sentence by sentence to find out the prepositional phrases found in the story. Then, the prepositional phrases found in the story "The Open Window" were classified and analyzed.

This paper contains two tables. Table (1) shows the classification of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences found in the short story "The Open Window". Table (2) exhibits the frequency and percentage of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases found in sentences in the short story "The Open Window". In this paper, there is a figure to present the percentage of the syntactic functions of the prepositional phrases. After

classifying and collecting the data of prepositional phrases, the frequencies and percentages of them were converted into the figure.

The present research used the definitions suggested by the author, Johnson (2013). In order to classify the prepositional phrases, the researchers used the following coding system in which there are six types of prepositional phrases.

- NPM = Noun Phrase Modifier
- NPC = Noun Phrase Complement
- APC = Adjective Phrase Complement
- VPC = Verb Phrase Complement
- AA = Adjunct Adverbial
- DA = Disjunct Adverbial

Description of the Data

Description of the data consists of Data Collection, Data Analysis, and Data Interpretation.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data were analyzed and collected according to the definitions of the theory of Heather Johnson (2013): noun phrase modifier, noun phrases complement, adjective phrase complement, verb phrase complement, adjunct adverbial, and disjunct adverbial.

Table 1: Syntactic Function of Prepositional Phrases

Sr. No.	Sen. No.	Texts with Prepositional Phrases	Syntactic Function of Prepositional Phrases					
			NPM	NPC	APC	VPC	AA	DA
1	1	young lady of fifteen	✓					
2	1	in the meantime you must try					✓	
3	1	put up with me				✓		
4	2	the niece of the moment		✓				
5	2	without unduly discounting the aunt					✓	
6	3	These formal visits on a number of total strangers	✓					
7	3	would do much towards helping the nerve cure					✓	
8	4	leave for the country				✓		
9	4	bury yourself down there				✓		
10	4	speak to anybody				✓		
11	4	from moping					✓	
12	5	letters of introduction		✓				
13	5	give letters of introduction to all the people				✓		
14	6	Some of them		✓				
15	7	the lady to whom he was presenting one of the letters of introduction	✓					
16	7	one of the nice people		✓				
17	8	many of the people round here		✓				
18	10	was staying here at the rectory				✓		
19	10	letters of introduction		✓				

Sr. No.	Sen. No.	Texts with Prepositional Phrases	Syntactic Function of Prepositional Phrases					
			NPM	NPC	APC	VPC	AA	DA
20	10	gave me letters of introduction to some of the people here				✓		
21	11	in a tone of distinct regret					✓	
22	12	know . . . about my aunt				✓		
23	14	in the married or widowed state					✓	
24	15	something about the room	✓					
25	17	in this restful country spot					✓	
26	17	seemed out of place				✓		
27	18	on an October afternoon					✓	
28	18	pointing out a large French window that opened on to a lawn				✓		
29	19	for the time of the year					✓	
30	19	do with the tragedy				✓		
31	20	Out through that window					✓	
32	20	went off for their day's shooting				✓		
33	22	In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe-shooting ground					✓	
34	22	engulfed in a treacherous part of marsh				✓		
35	23	safe in other years			✓			
36	23	without warning					✓	
37	25	the dreadful part of it		✓				
38	27	was lost with them				✓		
39	27	walk in at that window				✓		
40	29	her husband with his white raincoat over his arm	✓					
41	29	got on her nerves				✓		
42	30	on still, quiet evenings like this					✓	
43	30	walk in through that window				✓		
44	31	broke off with a little shudder				✓		
45	32	a relief to Framton		✓				
46	32	hurried into the room				✓		
47	32	with a many of apologies for being late					✓	
48	35	from shooting					✓	
49	35	came in this way				✓		
50	36	out for snipe in the marshes					✓	
51	36	over my poor carpets					✓	
52	38	rattled on cheerfully about the shooting				✓		
53	38	the scarcity of birds		✓				
54	38	the prospects for duck in the winter	✓					
55	39	To Framton					✓	
56	40	turn the talk to a less horrible subject				✓		
57	40	a small part of her attention		✓				
58	40	to the open window					✓	
59	41	on this tragic anniversary					✓	
60	42	agree in ordering me complete rest				✓		
61	42	avoidance of mental excitement		✓				
62	42	hungry for every detail of one's illness			✓			
63	43	On the matter of diet					✓	
64	43	in agreement					✓	
65	44	in a voice					✓	
66	44	at the last moment					✓	

Sr. No.	Sen. No.	Texts with Prepositional Phrases	Syntactic Function of Prepositional Phrases					
			NPM	NPC	APC	VPC	AA	DA
67	45	brightened into alert attention				✓		
68	45	to what Framton was saying					✓	
69	47	in time for tea					✓	
70	47	muddy up to the eyes			✓			
71	48	turned towards the niece				✓		
72	48	with a look intended to convey sympathetic understanding					✓	
73	49	was staring out through the open window				✓		
74	49	with dazed horror in her eyes					✓	
75	50	In a cold shock of nameless fear					✓	
76	50	swung round in his seat				✓		
77	50	looked in the same direction				✓		
78	51	In the deepening twilight					✓	
79	51	walking across the lawn towards the window				✓		
80	51	under their arms					✓	
81	51	burdened with a white coat hung over his shoulders				✓		
82	52	kept close at their heels				✓		
83	53	sang out of the dusk					✓	
84	54	grabbed wildly at his stick and hat				✓		
85	54	in his hasty retreat					✓	
86	55	coming along the road				✓		
87	55	run into the hedge				✓		
88	55	with him					✓	
89	56	the bearer of the white raincoat		✓				
90	56	coming in through the window				✓		
91	57	rushed out as we came up				✓		
92	58	talked about his illnesses				✓		
93	58	rushed off without a word of good-bye or apology				✓		
94	60	a horror of dogs		✓				
95	61	hunted into a cemetery				✓		
96	61	somewhere on the banks of the Ganges	✓					
97	61	by a pack of wild dogs					✓	
98	61	in a newly dug grave				✓		
99	61	with the creatures snarling and grinning and foaming just above him					✓	
100	63	Romance at short notice	✓					
		Total	8	13	3	40	36	0

Data Interpretation

1. Interpretation of Noun Phrase Modifiers

(1) young lady of fifteen

The prepositional phrase 'of fifteen' is found in sentence No.1. It modifies the noun phrase 'young lady'. So it functions as a noun phrase modifier.

The author wants to convey the reader more information about 'young lady'. The information is that she was at the age of fifteen.

(2) her husband with his white raincoat over his arm

The prepositional phrase 'with his white raincoat over his arm' is found in sentence No.29. It modifies the noun phrase 'her husband'. Thus, it functions as a noun phrase modifier.

The prepositional phrase conveys the reader more information about the husband. This phrase describes the appearance of the husband more vividly.

(3) Romance at short notice

The prepositional phrase 'at short notice' is found in sentence No.63. It modifies the noun phrase 'Romance'. Thus, it functions as a noun phrase modifier.

The prepositional phrase shows how skillful the niece was in making up new stories.

2. Interpretation of Noun Phrase Complements**(1) letters of introduction**

The prepositional phrase 'of introduction' can be found in sentence No.5. It performs as a noun phrase complement because it perfects the meaning of the noun phrase 'letters'.

The author uses the prepositional phrase 'of introduction' to complete the meaning of the noun phrase 'letters'. He makes the meaning of the noun 'letters' clearer.

(2) a relief to Framton

The prepositional phrase 'to Framton' can be found in sentence No.32. It completes the meaning of the noun phrase 'a relief'. So, it performs as a noun phrase complement.

The author wants to complete the meaning of the noun 'a relief' by using the prepositional phrase 'to Framton'. He wants to inform the reader that the aunt coming into the room made Framton relieved from his feelings for the strange stories about the open window.

(3) the bearer of the white raincoat

The prepositional phrase 'of the white raincoat' can be found in sentence No.56. It completes the meaning of the noun phrase 'the bearer'. Therefore, it performs as a noun phrase complement.

This prepositional phrase expresses who Mr. Sappleton was. The man who bore the white coat was Mr. Sappleton.

3. Interpretation of Adjective Phrase Complements**(1) safe in other years**

The prepositional phrase 'in other years' can be found in sentence No.23. It completes the meaning of the adjective 'safe'. Therefore, it performs as an adjective phrase complement.

The author wants to emphasize the meaning of the adjective 'safe'. It means that in other years, the places Mr. Sappleton and his two brothers-in-law went shooting were safe.

(2) hungry for every detail of one's illness

The prepositional phrase 'for every detail of one's illness' can be found in sentence No.42. It completes the meaning of the adjective 'hungry'. Thus, it performs as an adjective phrase complement.

The author wants to give more information concerned with the adjective 'hungry'. It means that Mr. Framton thought that strangers wanted to know all about one's illness.

(3) muddy **up to the eyes**

The prepositional phrase 'up to the eyes' can be found in sentence No.47. It completes the meaning of the adjective 'muddy'. So, it performs as an adjective phrase complement.

The author wants to emphasize the meaning of the adjective 'muddy'. It means that the bodies of Mr. Sappleton and his brothers-in-law were covered with mud.

4. Interpretation of Verb Phrase Complements

(1) was staying here **at the rectory**

The prepositional phrase 'at the rectory' can be found in sentence No.10. It completes the meaning of the verb 'was staying.' Therefore, it performs as a verb phrase complement.

The author uses the prepositional phrase 'at the rectory' to complete the meaning of the verb 'was staying'. It means that Framton's sister and her husband stayed at the house which was built for the clergyman. That is Framton's brother-in-law was a clergyman.

(2) engulfed **in a treacherous part of marsh**

The prepositional phrase 'in a treacherous part of marsh' can be found in sentence No.22. It completes the meaning of the verb 'engulfed'. Thus, it performs as a verb phrase complement.

The author uses the prepositional phrase 'in a treacherous part of marsh' to complete the meaning of the verb 'engulfed'. The author wants to give the reader more information that the three shooting men were drowned in a marsh and their bodies were never found again.

(3) rushed **off without a word of good-bye or apology**

The prepositional phrase 'off without a word of good-bye or apology' can be found in sentence No. 58. It completes the meaning of the verb 'rushed'. Therefore, it performs as a verb phrase complement.

The author employs the prepositional phrase 'off without a word of good-bye or apology' to complete the meaning of the verb 'rushed'. The author uses this prepositional phrase to express how Framton ran out of the house when he saw the three men coming towards the house. He thought that they were spirits as he had been told by the niece that they were dead. Thus, he ran out of the house with fear and could not say a word of good-bye or apology to his hostess.

5. Interpretation of Adjunct Adverbials

(1) **In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe-shooting ground**

The prepositional phrase 'In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe-shooting ground' provides the extra information about the time in sentence No.22. Therefore, it functions as an adjunct adverbial.

The author wants to give the reader the information that the time the three shooting men were engulfed in the marsh was while they were crossing the moor to their snipe-shooting ground.

(2) **In the deepening twilight**

The prepositional phrase 'In the deepening twilight' is found in sentence No. 51. It functions as an adjunct adverbial since it supplies the extra information about the time.

By providing the additional information about the time, Saki uses the prepositional phrase 'In the deepening twilight' as an adjunct adverbial. He wants to convey the reader the

information concerning the time the three shooting men were walking across the lawn towards the window. He uses the right adverbial phrase that matches the situation.

(3) with dazed horror in her eyes

'with dazed horror in her eyes' is the prepositional phrase that supplies the additional information about the manner. So, it performs as an adjunct adverbial. It is found in sentence No.49.

The author wants to convey the extra information about the manner. The niece stared out through the open window in this manner because she saw the three shooting men walking towards the house whom she thought were dead.

Findings and Discussion

The present paper analyses the syntactic functions of the prepositional phrases in the sentences found in the short story "The Open Window" by Saki. The findings concerning the present research are presented in the following table. Four columns are tabulated. The first column is for the serial numbers. The syntactic functions of prepositional phrases are included in the second column. Then, the frequency and percentage of the prepositional phrases are put in the third and fourth columns respectively.

Table (2) The frequency and percentage of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences found in the short story "The Open Window"

Sr.No.	Syntactic Functions of Prepositional Phrases	Frequency	Percentage
1	Noun Phrase Modifier	8	8.0%
2	Noun Phrase Complement	13	13.0%
3	Adjective Phrase Complement	3	3.0%
4	Verb Phrase Complement	40	40.0%
5	Adjunct Adverbial	36	36.0%
6	Disjunct Adverbial	0	0
	Total	100	100%

After analyzing the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases found in the short story, the researchers found 100 prepositional phrases in the story "The Open Window" by Saki. It was found that the frequency of prepositional phrases as verb phrase complement is 40 times (40.0%). In this study, the author, Saki, used the function of prepositional phrases as verb phrase complement the most. The function of verb phrase complement makes the story more lively and vivid. The second mostly used function is the adjunct adverbial. The frequency of prepositional phrases as the adjunct adverbial is 36 times (36.0%). The function of adjunct adverbial is to provide the additional information about the time, place, manner, condition, purpose, reason, result and concession.

Saki used the verb phrase complement in different ways to reach the information he counted to give into the reader's mind vividly and clearly. In addition, 8 times (8.0%) of the frequency of prepositional phrase as noun phrase modifier were found in this research. Using the noun phrase modifier made the reader realize Saki's invaluable writing style and choice of words.

The researchers studied that the frequency of prepositional phrase as noun phrase complement is 13 times (13.0%). In order to complete the meaning of the nouns and noun

phrases, Saki uses the prepositional phrases as noun phrase complements in his short story. Therefore, he is a skillful and attractive writer for readers according to the use of his various kinds of nouns and noun phrases in the right places effectively.

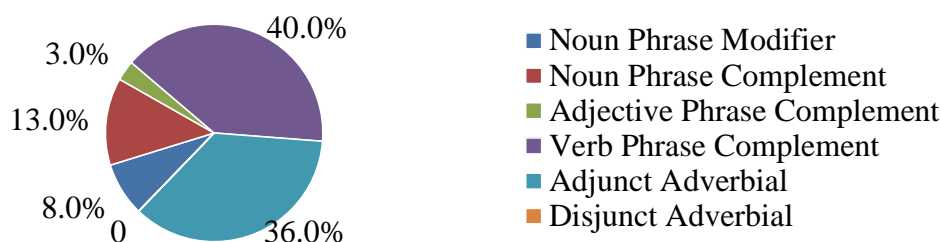


Figure (1) Percentage of Syntactic Function of Prepositional Phrases

The above figure shows the percentage of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in the short story "The Open Window". The present paper focuses on six types of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases. The researchers found mostly the frequency of prepositional phrases as verb phrase complement. However, the researchers found the least frequency of prepositional phrase as disjunct adverbial. The syntactic functions of prepositional phrases are tabulated from the most to the least frequently found ones.

As using the noun phrase modifier, the author modifies the nouns and noun phrases to be noticeable about their appearance and action. The author completes the meaning of the nouns and noun phrases by using noun phrase complements skillfully and cleverly. By using the adjective phrase complement, the author makes the readers know his writing style and choice of words. In addition, the author uses the frequency of prepositional phrase in order to frame an entire clause concerning the additional information. By using verb phrase complements, the author describes the actions and completes the meaning of the verbs and verb phrases. According to the use of adjunct adverbials in the story, the author achieves a special effect. Then, the author makes the readers know the additional information he wants to convey.

Conclusion

The paper aims to study the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences found in the short story "The Open Window" by Saki. This research tries to explore which type is the most frequently used and which is the least. Five types of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases are found in this story. There are altogether 100 prepositional phrases that function those five types respectively. Among them, the function of prepositional phrases as verb phrase complement is found 40 times (40.0%). However, the function of prepositional phrases as disjunct adverbial is found the least. The function of disjunct adverbial is 0 time (0%). Most of the sentences in English have prepositions in order to show a relationship between its object and some others in sentences. If the learner masters the use of prepositions, he will be proficient in English and he will have a good command of English. It is hoped that this research paper will be useful in learning English to some extent.

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Appendix

The Open Window

by Saki

"My aunt will be down presently, Mr. Nuttel," said a very self-possessed young lady of fifteen; "in the meantime you must try and put up with me."(1)

Framton Nuttel tried to say a few words which should flatter the niece of the moment without unduly discounting the aunt that was to come.(2) Privately he doubted more than ever whether these formal visits on a number of total strangers would do much towards helping the nerve cure which he was to undergo.(3)

"I know how it will be," his sister had said when he was preparing to leave for the country; "you will bury yourself down there and not speak to anybody, and your nerves will be worse than ever from moping.(4) I shall just give you letters of introduction to all the people I know there.(5) Some of them, as far as I can remember, were quite nice."(6)

Framton wondered whether Mrs. Sappleton, the lady to whom he was presenting one of the letters of introduction, was one of the nice people.(7)

"Do you know many of the people round here?" asked the niece, when she thought that they had been silent long enough.(8)

"Hardly soul," said Framton. (9) "My sister was staying here, at the rectory, you know, some four years ago, and she gave me letters of introduction to some of the people here."(10)

He said the last sentence in a tone of distinct regret.(11)

"Then you know practically nothing about my aunt?" continued the self-possessed young lady.(12)

"Only her name and address," admitted the visitor. (13)

He was wondering whether Mrs. Sappleton was in the married or widowed state.(14)
Something about the room made him believe the former.(15)

"Her great tragedy happened just three years ago," said the child; "that would be since your sister's time."(16)

"Her tragedy?" asked Framton; somehow in this restful country spot tragedies seemed out of place.(17)

"You may wonder why we keep that window wide open on an October afternoon," said the niece, pointing out a large French window that opened on to a lawn.(18)

"It is quite warm for the time of the year," said Framton; "but has that window got anything to do with the tragedy?"(19)

"Out through that window, three years ago to a day, her husband and her two young brothers went off for their day's shooting.(20) They never came back.(21) In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe shooting ground they were all three engulfed in a treacherous part of marsh.(22) It had been that dreadful wet summer, you know, and places that were safe in other years gave way suddenly without warning.(23) Their bodies were never recovered.(24) That was the dreadful part of it.(25) Here the child's voice lost its self-possessed note and hesitating falteringly human.(26) Poor aunt always thinks that they will come back some day, they and the little brown spaniel that was lost with them, and walk in at that window just as they used to do.(27) That is why the window is kept open every evening until it is quite dusk.(28)

Poor dear aunt, she has often told me how they went out, her husband with his white raincoat over his arm, and Ronnie, her youngest brother, singing 'Bertie, why do you bound?' as he always did to tease her, because she said it got on her nerves.(29) Do you know, sometimes on still, quiet evenings like this, I almost get a creepy feeling that they will all walk in through that window."(30)

She broke off with a little shudder.(31) It was a relief to Framton when the aunt hurried into the room with a many of apologies for being late.(32)

"I hope Vera has been amusing you?" she said.(33)

"She has been very interesting," said Framton.(34)

"I hope you don't mind the open window," said Mrs. Sappleton; "my husband and brothers will be home directly from shooting, and they always come in this way.(35) They've been out for snipe in the marshes to-day, so they'll make a fine mess over my poor carpets.(36) So like you men-folk, isn't it?"(37)

She rattled on cheerfully about the shooting and the scarcity of birds, and the prospects for duck in the winter.(38) To Framton it was all purely horrible.(39) He made a desperate effort to turn the talk on to a less horrible subject; but he was conscious that his hostess was giving him only a small part of her attention, and her eyes were constantly wandering past him to the open window and the lawn beyond.(40) It was certainly an unfortunate coincidence that he should have paid his visit on this tragic anniversary.(41)

"The doctors agree in ordering me complete rest, as well as avoidance of mental excitement, and violent physical exercise," announced Framton, who like many people, mistakenly believed that total strangers and chance acquaintances are hungry for every detail of

one's illness, their cause and cure.(42) "On the matter of diet they are not so much in agreement," he continued.(43)

"No?" said Mrs. Sappleton, in a voice which only replaced a yawn at the last moment.(44) Then she suddenly brightened into alert attention - but not to what Framton was saying.(45) "Here they are at last!" she cried.(46) "Just in time for tea, and don't they look as if they were muddy up to the eyes!"(47)

Framton shivered slightly and turned towards the niece with a look intended to convey sympathetic understanding. (48) The child was staring out through the open window with dazed horror in her eyes. (49) In a cold shock of nameless fear Framton swung round in his seat and looked in the same direction. (50)

In the deepening twilight three figures were walking across the lawn towards the window; they all carried guns under their arms, and one of them was burdened with a white coat hung over his shoulders. (51) A tired brown spaniel kept close at their heels.(52) Noiselessly they neared the house, and then a hoarse young voice sang out of the dusk: "I said, Bertie, why do you bound?"(53)

Framton grabbed wildly at his stick and hat; the hall-door, the gravel-drive, and the front gate were dimly-noted stages in his hasty retreat.(54) A cyclist coming along the road had to run into the hedge to avoid colliding with him.(55)

"Here we are, my dear," said the bearer of the white raincoat, coming in through the window; "Fairly muddy, but most of it's dry.(56) Who was that who rushed out as we came up?"(57)

"A most extraordinary man, Mr. Nuttel," said Mrs. Sappleton; "could only talk about his illnesses, and rushed off without a word of good-bye or apology when you arrived.(58) One would think he had seen a ghost."(59)

"I expect it was the spaniel," said the niece calmly; "he told me he had a horror of dogs.(60) He was once hunted into a cemetery on the banks of the Ganges by a pack of wild dogs, and had to spend the night in a newly dug grave with the creatures snarling and grinning and foaming just above him.(61) Enough to make anyone lose their nerve."(62)

Romance at short notice was her speciality.(63)