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# The Complexities of Learning Prepositions: Spanish to English

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THE COMPLEXITIES OF LEARNING PREPOSITIONS:  
SPANISH TO ENGLISH

by

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Approved by:

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## ABSTRACT

### THE COMPLEXITIES OF LEARNING PREPOSITIONS: SPANISH TO ENGLISH

Denise Jane Simon Chiavarini  
Old Dominion University, 1993  
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This study explores reasons for the improper use of English pronouns by Spanish speaking ESL students, as evidenced in the Free Writing Placement Tests given at The Adult Learning Center in Virginia Beach and Old Dominion University.

The database includes 84 examples of prepositional errors (Appendix B) that were translated into Spanish for comparison and analysis. Some errors can be attributed to first language interference (Chapter 2, Contrastive Analysis). Some can be attributed to interlanguage (Chapter 3, Error Analysis). Other chapters show additional complications such as variation in native speaker preposition use and the effects of some prepositional contexts. Although the study started with the goal of developing an effective way to teach prepositions, the discussion here shows that the problem is highly complex.

Included, also, is a study of current pedagogy with summaries and a grammar book bibliography which can be used as a source of materials for teaching or supplementing preposition lessons.

To my ESL students  
and  
my Spanish tutors

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And finally, I want to thank my family, Robert, Clint, and Katie, who allowed me to neglect them without making me feel "too" guilty, tolerated my many mood swings, and supported me throughout my entire graduate program.

## PREFACE

This thesis explores reasons for the improper use of English prepositions by Spanish speaking ESL (English as a Second Language) student. It is aimed primarily at ESL teachers who have experienced the frustrations of and difficulties faced by ESL students trying to find an English preposition "system." I had hoped to come up with some "magic formula" or "revolutionary pedagogy" that would make learning prepositions easier and even fun! However, what I discovered was the grim reality that there is no "easy" way to learn prepositions and thus the title, The Complexities of Learning Prepositions: Spanish to English.

Although I have used Spanish as the basis for comparison, it is only what I discovered through contrastive analysis (Chapter 2) that is directly applicable to Spanish speakers. I also (Chapter 3) discuss the types of errors made when students are creating their own individual language system by continually reevaluating what they know about English and their native language. The structure of their system is similar to, yet different from, both. Larry Selinker (1972, 211) refers to this transitional state of language learning as interlanguage. It has been found that many students produce similar errors during this state, no matter what their native

language is. Therefore, this chapter is applicable to all ESL students.

Chapter 4, on native speaker use of prepositions, and Appendix A are included for teacher to better understand preposition use and how prepositions are currently being taught. The summaries presented in Appendix A can be used along with the Grammar Book Bibliography (pages 61-63) as sources for materials which can be used for teaching prepositions or for additional practice exercises.

What I have tried to present here is an overview of why prepositions pose such problems for ESL learners. Although my initial dream of a "revolutionary pedagogy" has been lost in my "confrontation with reality," I believe that if teachers and students understand the complexities of prepositions, it will make trying to learn prepositions a little less frustrating.



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CHAPTER 1  
INTRODUCTION

One of the most difficult things for students of second languages to learn is the correct use of prepositions. As a student of Spanish and a teacher of English as a Second Language, I have observed that many errors concerning the use of prepositions are caused by trying to translate first language prepositions into second language equivalents. I decided to explore the misuse of English prepositions found in free writing samples of Spanish speaking ESL students to determine if there were any consistencies that might help develop more effective ways to teach the uses of prepositions to ESL students.

Eighty-four sentences containing eighty-six errors were collected at the Writing Center at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia and the Adult Learning Center in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Examination of these sentences revealed that three categories of errors existed: (1) unnecessary prepositions were added, (2) necessary prepositions were omitted, and (3) unacceptable prepositions<sup>1</sup> were used in place of accept-

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<sup>1</sup>Whether a preposition is acceptable or not depends on a native speaker's dialect, which will be discussed in Chapter Four. In category 3, the prepositions used were different from those most commonly used by most native speakers.

able prepositions.

The initial approach was to analyze each of these categories using contrastive analysis to determine the amount of first language interference. To do this, the sentences were rewritten: the syntax was corrected, unnecessary prepositions were omitted, necessary prepositions were added, and unacceptable prepositions were changed. A bilingual Spanish/English speaker was then asked to translate the corrected English sentences into correct Spanish sentences. To avoid possible bias, the translator was not given the sentences with the students' errors.

This process produced a few unexpected findings, which caused a reconsideration of some of the errors. The first discovery was that poorly written sentences can have more than one interpretation, and it is not uncommon for a researcher who is looking for one type of error to ignore other possibilities. After the translations were made, it became apparent that some sentences could have been corrected differently. In sentences (1) and (2) a correction of the student error can be seen as a misuse of a preposition or a verb omission.

- (1) \*I like to go to church and praises to God.<sup>2</sup>(F14)<sup>3</sup>  
 I like to go to church and praise \_ God.  
 I like to go to church and sing praises to God.

---

<sup>2</sup>All sentences marked by an asterisk \* are student sentences before corrections.

<sup>3</sup>The first sentence in each set will be followed by a reference to Appendix F, which indexes all the places each sentence appears throughout the text.

- (2) \*...and also the father given advices (to keep them in good health). (F23)  
 Advice is also given to the father...  
 ...and also the father is given advice...

In (2), the word order in the original sentence is passive. It is obvious that this was ignored in favor of a corrected sentence with active word order which required a preposition.

Sentence (3) also has a change in word order and the oversimplification of the sentence eliminated both of the prepositions.

- (3) \*God, give me the wisdom to understand to the teacher in everything she says. (F13)  
 God give me the wisdom to understand everything the teacher says.  
 God give me the wisdom to understand the teacher in everything she says.

If the order had been maintained, only the first preposition would have been eliminated. When the sentence was corrected in this manner and was translated again, it indicated that first language interference probably caused it. This was not the case with the simplified sentence.

Changing the word order of another sentence changed its translation as well. In (4), the first sentence is the student's original sentence. The next is a correction of the sentence with a change of word order, followed by its Spanish translation.

- (4) \*We arrived to the United States, in December 1978, at New York Airport. (F74)  
 We arrived at New York Airport, in the United States, in December 1978.  
 Nosotros llegamos al aeropuerto de Nueva York, en los Estados Unidos, en diciembre de 1978.

Notice that the Spanish preposition corresponds to the

English preposition. When the sentence is corrected without changing the word order and translated into Spanish, the preposition corresponds to the student's error.

We arrive in the United States, in December 1978, at New York Airport.

Llegamos a los Estados Unidos, en diciembre de 1978, al aeropuerto de Nueva York.

In Spanish, if the United States follows llegamos the preposition a (at or to) must be used. If it comes elsewhere in the sentence en (in) can be used. Therefore, what looked like an interlanguage error in the first sentence, seemed like a first language interference error in the revised sentence.

Another insight was that the difference in the syntactic structures of the two languages sometimes made translations difficult and confusing. This was particularly true when less formal English was used and prepositions were put at the end of sentences. For example, the corrected sentence, The factor that I had a problem with at O.D.U...., was more easily translated when it was written, The factor with which I had a problem at O.D.U.....

Vocabulary was also something that needed to be considered. In two instances, the translator included two Spanish sentences for the one in English. These sentences emphasized that different words can be used to express the same idea. In both cases, one of the sentences had a preposition and the other did not. It was decided that there might be other sentences in which this might occur and a second bilingual speaker was asked to translate the eighty-four sentences. Those translations were then compared with

the first translations and both were taken into consideration when contrastive analysis was carried out.

Contrastive analysis showed that forty-four of the eighty-six errors in preposition use were potentially caused by interference from Spanish. Nine of the added English prepositions had equivalents in the Spanish sentences and nine of the omitted ones did not. The twenty-five unacceptable prepositions were, as expected, direct translations of the Spanish prepositions.

Since only a little over half of the errors involved first language interference, the next step was to analyze the sentences again using error analysis. Explainable interlanguage errors found in this process accounted for most of the other errors.

Considering the characteristics of prepositions it is easy to see why so many interlanguage errors concerning prepositions might be made. In most cases, prepositions are small words that are rarely stressed; for this reason, they can change phonologically in rapid speech and "get lost" or "go unnoticed" by an inexperienced listener. Also, they are not crucial to the understanding of most sentences. This seems logical since content words (mainly nouns and verbs) are the most important in getting a message across. Therefore, students trying to convey a message tend to use content words and leave out "unimportant" words like prepositions. This fact probably accounts for the majority of the interlanguage omission errors.

Another reason for difficulty in learning prepositions is that they are often dependent on the context in which they are used. An example of this is the sentence I will begin BY myself. (Capitals will be used for prepositions to be considered in underlined sentences.) Without knowing the context in which the sentence appears, it is correct as it stands. However, if it appears after the sentence I am going to tell you about my family, the preposition of the original sentence must be changed so the sentence reads I will begin WITH myself.

Prepositions can have more than one "meaning" and looking them up in a dictionary may not always help the student understand them. For the example above, students looking up with and by in The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1976) would find twenty-six entries for with and thirteen for by. To further confuse the students, the two prepositions are listed as synonyms.

To compound learning difficulties, in some cases prepositions have no exact equivalents in the two languages: into does not exist in Spanish and for is used in English when translating both por and para in Spanish. In addition, although prepositions are really not the "same" in any two languages, those which are assumed to be equivalent can be used differently in each language: English uses married TO while Spanish uses married WITH. There are also instances when several prepositions can be used in the same situation without changing the meaning of the sentence: He jumped ON

(UPON) (ONTO) the mule.

The most difficult thing about learning prepositions, however, may be that prepositions are often used differently by native speakers; what is considered correct usage by one may not be by another. To ascertain the differences in the use of English prepositions, the unacceptable prepositions were removed from the students' sentences and ninety-eight native speakers were asked to list the prepositions they would use in the blanks. The results indicated an often arbitrary use of prepositions, which definitely contributes to why they are so difficult to learn.



## CHAPTER 2

### CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

Contrastive analysis assumes that by comparing the student's native language and culture with the language and culture to be learned that "we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty" (Lado 1957, preface). Contrastive analysis interprets errors by second language learners based on interference from the first language. It proposes that students use their knowledge of the structures and meanings of their first language to express themselves in the second language. In doing so, students encounter certain levels of difficulty in learning different elements of the language. "Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult." (Lado 1957, 2)

There have been attempts to rank the learning difficulty of grammatical elements and thereby create an objective "tool" for making predictions and creating pedagogy. The best known (Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin 1965) consists of 16 levels of difficulty. H. Douglas Brown (1987), however, discusses a six-category grammatical hierarchy of difficulty which is concise and useful for explaining some of the errors found in

the data in this study. This hierarchy was proposed by Clifford Prator in an unpublished classroom lecture and the examples refer to English speakers learning Spanish. However, by switching the examples in levels 1 and 5, and those in 2 and 4, it is applicable to Spanish speakers learning English.

#### **Level 0- Transfer**

No differences or contrast is present between the two languages. The learner can simply transfer (positively) a sound, structure, or lexical item from the native language to the target language. Such transfer is posited to be of no difficulty, hence the label of "level zero." Examples can be found in ... English and Spanish ... words (*mortal, inteligente, arte, americanos*).

#### **Level 1- Coalescence**

Two items in the native language become coalesced into essentially one item in the target language. This requires that learners overlook a distinction they have grown accustomed to. For example, English third person possessives require gender distinction (*his/her*), and in Spanish they do not (*su*)....

#### **Level 2- Underdifferentiation**

An item in the native language is absent in the target language. The learner must avoid that item. English learners of Spanish must "forget," as it were, such items as English *do* as a tense carrier, indefinite determiners (*other, certain*), possessive forms of *wh-* words (*whose*), or the use of *some* with mass nouns....

#### **Level 3- Reinterpretation**

An item that exists in the native language is given a new shape or distribution. Though it is difficult to argue that Level 3 is distinct from any of the other levels, Prator (1967) claimed that in some cases items in the target language are perceived as reinterpreted native language items ... for example ... in English we use a determiner (*He's a philosopher*), in Spanish the determiner is optional (*El es (un) filósofo*); learners of Spanish must reinterpret their English system of determiners.

#### **Level 4- Overdifferentiation**

A new item entirely, bearing little if any similarity to the native language item, must be

learned. For example, in learning Spanish the native English speaker must learn ... Spanish grammatical gender inherent in nouns.

#### Level 5- Split

One item in the native language becomes two or more in the target language, requiring the learner to make a new distinction. The split is the counterpart of coalescence. Typical of such items in learning Spanish are the learning of the distinction between *ser* and *estar* (to be) and between *tú* and *usted* (you), or even learning the difference between the Spanish indicative and subjunctive moods where in English the indicative alone is appropriate. (Brown 1987, 156)

This system will be used to identify and explain some of the errors made by the students, rather than to make predictions about what errors will be made by students in the future. My intention in identifying errors in this manner is that the reader become aware of some of the errors that may be made by Spanish-speaking ESL students as they are learning.

As mentioned in the introduction, the contrastive analysis of each category of errors revealed that forty-four of the eighty-six errors could be explained by interference of the first language. In the added unnecessary prepositions category, two of the nine errors attributable to interference involved the Spanish "personal a," which is used when the direct object of the verb is a definite person (or persons). This is an example of a level 2-underdifferentiation error. The a does not have an English equivalent and therefore should be "overlooked" and not be translated. It is apparent, from sentences (1), (2), and (3) below, however, that the students did translate it and included it in their sentences.

- (1) She is calling the fire department. (F2)  
 \*She is calling at the fire department.  
 Ella está llamando a los bomberos.
- (2) My mother helps my father. (F5)  
 \*My mother helps to my father.  
 Mi mama ayuda a mi papa.
- (3) God, give me the wisdom to understand the teacher in everything she says. (F13)  
 \*God, give me the wisdom to understand to the teacher in everything she says.  
 Dios, me da sabiduria para entender a la profesora en todo lo que dice.

In sentence (1) the translation of los bomberos is the firemen rather than the fire department. Although there is a translation for fire department (servicio de bomberos) it is more common for the Spanish-speaker to use los bomberos and therefore the personal a gets included in the translation.

Sentences (4) and (5) involve the indirect object a (to), which, due to the flexible word order of Spanish (Contreras 1976), cannot be omitted in Spanish as it can be in English.

- (4) They are paying the waiter. (F3)  
 \*They are paying to the waiter.  
 Ellos le están pagando al mesero.
- (5) That doesn't give anybody the right to break the law. (F20)  
 \*That don't give to anybody the right to break the law.  
 Eso no le da el derecho a nadie de infringir la ley.

The errors in sentences (6) and (7) can be explained by the fact that many Spanish verbs must be followed by a preposition when they are used with an infinitive:

- (6) I was afraid I had lost my baggage. (F10)  
 \*I was afraid about lost my baggage.  
 Tengo miedo de haber perdido mis maletas.
- (7) I am going shopping. (F11)  
 \*I am going to the shopping.  
 Yo voy a comprar.

In both sentences, the infinitive form of the verb is used where the present participle form of the verb can be used in English.

In English, the present participle can function as a noun: it can be the subject or direct object of a sentence, or the object of a preposition. In Spanish, the present participle can never function as a noun. The only Spanish verb form that can do so is the infinitive. (Bretz, Dvorak, and Kirschner 1987, 343)

Therefore, when translating from Spanish to English the student must decide whether to use the infinitive or the present participle.

In (6), the word-for-word translation would be I had fear about (Tenía miedo de) to have/having lost (haber perdido) my baggage (mis maletas). The student chose the simple past tense for lost instead of the past perfect. If the past perfect had been chosen then the student would have had a choice of had lost or having lost. If having lost had been chosen then a preposition (of) would have had to precede it. This sentence then would have been included under UNACCEPTABLE PREPOSITIONS.

In (7), literally translated I am going (Yo voy) to (a) shopping/to shop (comprar), the student correctly chose the gerund (the present participle operating as a noun) but then included the translation of the Spanish preposition, unnecessary in English.

A comparison of English and Spanish syntax in the following sentence makes it apparent why the student used in when writing sentence (8) in English:

- (8) I broke my leg last January. (F22)  
 \*I broke my leg in last January.  
 Yo me fracturé la pierna en el enero del año pasado.

Here is an example of level 3-reinterpretation error.

In English, when talking about months of the year in is used if there is no modifier: I broke my leg IN January. However, if last or next is used the preposition is omitted: I broke my leg LAST January. In Spanish, both sentences contain en. The former sentence would be written, Me fracturé la pierna EN el enero. In the latter sentence, the expression last January (literally translated el enero pasado) is possible but not commonly used in Spanish. Instead it is expressed EN el enero del año pasado (literally in the January of the year past). Therefore, the latter sentence is written Yo me fracturé la pierna en el enero del año pasado with the en still present in the sentence. However, in writing the English sentence the student must reinterpret the form and accordingly omit the preposition which occurs in the Spanish sentence.

Sentence (9) is an example of a level 1-coalescence error. The student has used a word-for-word translation of the two-word Spanish preposition, cerca de (\*near of), instead of the one-word English equivalent, near.

- (9) I would like to live near the beach. (F16)  
 \*I like to live near of the beach.  
 Yo quisiera vivir cerca de la playa.

The reverse of this (a level 5-split error) is seen in six of the eight sentences in which prepositions were omitted. In these sentences the separate preposition needed in English is included in the Spanish verb:

escuchar means to listen to

- (10) On Saturdays, I can wash my car and listen to music.  
(F29)

\*On Saturdays, I can wash my car and listen / music.  
Los sábados yo puedo lavar mi carro y escuchar  
música.

- (11) He is listening to a program of rock music. (F31)

\*He is listening / a program of rock music.  
El está escuchando un programa de música rock.

pagar means to pay for

- (12) People of the middle class are able to pay for  
nursing homes. (F30)

\*People of the middle class are able to pay / nursing  
homes.

Las personas de la clase media son capaces de pagar  
asilos para ancianos.

cuidar means to take care of

- (13) She is tired of taking care of us. (F33)

\*She is tired of taking care / us.  
Ella está cansada de cuidarnos.

- (14) The gardener takes care of the plants. (F37)

\*The gardener take care / the plants.  
El jardinero cuida las plantas.

examinar means examine or look into

- (15) If you look into this problem (you will see  
that....) (F38)

\*If you look / this problem....  
Si tú examinas este problema....

This last example brings up another interesting aspect in  
the use of prepositions and the question of phrasal verbs.

A. P. Cowie and R. Mackin refer to phrasal verbs as idioms  
which they define as "...a combination of two or more words  
which function as a unit of meaning." (1975, viii-ix); they  
have a list of criteria as to how to determine if verbs and  
prepositions or particles are idiomatic or literal. Robert  
Lado (1957, 77) tells us that many languages, Spanish being  
one, do not permit these lexical forms made up of patterns of  
separate words.

In the example above, English uses the expression look into. There is no such expression in Spanish, so examinar (examine), considerar (consider) or investigar (investigate)<sup>4</sup> must be used. All of these verbs can be used in English as well and, as in Spanish, none requires a preposition. This substitution of a single word for the verb and preposition is one of the criteria used by Cowie and Mackin (1979) to determine if a phrase is idiomatic. R. Politzer points out that look into and other look-plus-preposition verbs such as look for and look at, are difficult for Spanish speakers to master and that this fact "...appears to be associated with the marking of a semantic control between two verbs by prepositions which are also utilized for various other purposes within the English system." (1978, 245) Here we begin to see some of the complex aspects of prepositions and their uses in English.

It is interesting to note that these aspects and uses not only pose problems for ESL students but for native speakers as well. Politizer found that English speakers of kindergarten age have more difficulty learning look-plus-preposition verbs than Spanish speakers of the same age have learning those verbs' one word Spanish equivalents. (1978, 245)

Sentence (16) contains another example of a phrasal verb or idiom. However, in this case, there is no single English

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<sup>4</sup>These three Spanish words and their similar English translations are called cognates. From this point on, these types of words will not be translated since their English equivalents are obvious.



verb which is equivalent to the Spanish word trabajar which means only to work. Nevertheless, the Spanish sentence does not require a preposition as the English sentence does, therefore the student has omitted it in English.

- (16) They have to watch for errors in whatever they are working on. (F24)  
 \*They have to watch for errors in whatever their working /.  
 Ellos tienen que tener cuidado de no cometer errores en cualquier cosa que estén trabajando /.

Like the verbs above, the Spanish third person indirect object pronoun le includes the preposition and therefore, means to you. No separate preposition is needed in Spanish sentence (17) and the student omits it in the English sentence as well.

- (17) A model is a person who demonstrates something to you. (F25)  
 \*A model is the one who demonstrate / you anything.  
 Un persona modelo es alguien que te demuestra algo.

The last sentence in the omitted preposition category involves a Spanish verb which is equivalent to what is sometimes called a REVERSE PSYCHOLOGICAL VERB in English. (Burt and Kiparsky, 1972) These verbs are used with passive constructions because the subject becomes the indirect object. The Spanish equivalent for the English sentence I like reading is Me gusta leer literally, Reading pleases me, which can be used in English as well, but it is rare. In sentence (18), the translators show a similar situation in Spanish. I am very interested in obtaining... is most commonly translated Me interesa mucho obtener... (It interests me much to obtain...) which is used in the second translation. The first, which is

a word for word translation of the English, is acceptable but rare.

- (18) I am very interested in obtaining a good reference.  
 (F26)  
 \*I am very interested / to obtain a good reference.  
 Estoy muy interesado en obtener una buena referencia.  
 Me interesa mucho / obtener una buena recomendación.

In all the examples cited above, the interference from Spanish is apparent and logical. Therefore, it is quite easy to explain these differences to the students so they are aware of them and can apply this knowledge to correct preposition use under similar circumstances. The third category, using an "incorrect" preposition, is not so easy to deal with. It is difficult to determine where to place these errors in Prator's levels of difficulty because they seem to be a combination of 3-reinterpretation, 4-overdifferentiation, and 5-split.

Stockwell, Bowen and Martin state that problems arise "because the semantic ranges of corresponding items (in each language) are not congruent. It is a complex problem of distribution, and no appeal to logic can solve it." They illustrate this with nine Spanish sentences using the preposition en with corresponding English translations each of which has a different preposition. They also show ten Spanish equivalents for English sentences using the preposition by. They go on to note that

The relationships expressed by prepositions seem to be clustered in bundles, with similar bundles across language boundaries the exception rather than the rule. To aggravate the situation, since the meanings are usually abstract relationships, a student relies heavily on translation to learn how to use prepositions. Nowhere is the student's

desire to find a one-for-one correspondence between native and target languages more thoroughly frustrated. (1965, 208-209)

This is readily seen in the following sentences which show direct translation from the Spanish preposition to an incorrect one in English.

a = to

- (19) I got married in 1977 and I went to live in a small city in the northwest of Spain. (F67)  
 \*I got married at 1977 and I went to live to small city in the northwest of Spain.  
 Yo me casé en 1977 y me fuí a vivir a una ciudad pequeña en el Nor-Oeste de España.
- (20) The World Series baseball game went into overtime yesterday. (F69)  
 \*The World Series baseball game went to overtime yesterday.  
 El partido de la serie mundial de baseball se fué a tiempo extra ayer.
- (21) They shouldn't continue hanging onto thoughts associated with the "good old days." (F82)  
 \*They shouldn't continue hanging to thoughts associated with the "good old days."  
 Ellos no deberían de continuar ateniéndose a pensamientos asociados con "aquellos buenos tiempos."
- (22) We arrived in the United States, in December 1978, at New York Airport. (F74)  
 \*We arrived to the United States, in December 1978, at New York Airport.  
 Llegamos a los Estados Unidos, en diciembre de 1978, al aeropuerto de Nueva York.

por = for

- (23) My parents are worried about me. (F58)  
 \*My parents are worried for me.  
 Mis padres están preocupados por mi.

a = at

- (24) When I first arrived in this country.... (F64)  
 \*When I first arrived at this country.....  
 Cuando yo llegué por primera vez a este país....

con = with

- (25) I like this country because the people are great to me. (F76)  
 \*I like this country because the people are great with me.  
 A mí me gusta este país porque las personas son muy buenas conmiigo.
- (26) She got married to my cousin two years ago. (F84)  
 \*She got married with my cousin two years ago.  
 Ella se casó con mi primo hace dos años.

In (27), although para is most often translated as for in English, we usually put To Jane on an envelope where the Spanish would put Para Jane.

- (27) She made a cake for me. (F52)  
 \*She made a cake to me.  
 Ella hizo un pastel para mi.

Sentence (28) contains the Spanish preposition de which can mean of, from, or about and all three are fairly frequent in English translation. In this case the student chose from when of would have been more appropriate.

- (28) The teacher should not deprive the disabled student of that right. (F81)  
 \*The teacher should not deprive the disabled student from that right.  
 El profesor no debería de privar al estudiante inválido de ese derecho.

The preposition which seems to give students the most trouble, however, is en. As noted above, it has many translations in English, most frequently in or on. Lado tells us that, under ordinary circumstances, a Spanish speaker will not make a meaning distinction between in and on as in the English in the table and on the table. If they do make a distinction under special circumstances

then it will not be only an in:on contrast but a table versus drawer contrast as well. Spanish

speakers will say en el cajón 'in the drawer' and sobre la mesa 'on the table'. The problem is not simply attaching a familiar meaning to a new form but also grasping a new meaning distinction, a different way of classifying reality. (Lado 1957:84)

Stockwell, Bowen and Martin (1965) say that not only do Spanish speakers have to learn that on implies physical contact and in implies being enclosed or encompassed, but they must learn other criteria as well. From the following sentences it is obvious that students have many problems in deciding which one should be used. In the majority of the cases in is chosen over on; however, (36), (37), and (38) are three examples of the reverse. Sentences (39), (40), and (41) are examples of en being equivalent to both in and into in English since into does not exist in Spanish. The last sentences, (42), (43), and (44) are examples of other English equivalents for en.

- (29) The students are concentrating on their education.  
(F44)  
\*The students are concentrating in their education.  
Los estudiantes si están concentrando en su educación.
- (30) I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything on a silver platter. (F47)  
\*I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything in a silver platter.  
Estoy seguro de que nadie le va dar nada a alguien en un platillo de plata.
- (31) I like to get presents, especially on my birthday.  
(F51)  
\*I like to get presents, especial in my birthday.  
Me gusta recibir regalos, especialmente en mi cumpleaños.

- (32) When people put their index finger on their face....  
(F57)  
\*When people put their index finger in their face....  
Cuando las personas ponen el dedo índice en su cara....
- (33) I am going to compare it based on the old people of Costa Rica and of the United States.  
(F65)  
\*I am going to compare it based in the old people of Costa Rica and of the United States.  
Yo voy a compararlo en base a las personas mayores de Costa Rica y de los Estados Unidos.
- (34) Every night I watch news and sports on TV.  
(F73)  
\*Every night I watch news and sports in TV.  
Todas las noches miro las noticias y deportes en la televisión.
- (35) When she dropped milk on the table....  
(F79)  
\*When she dropped milk in the table....  
Cuando ella dejó caer leche en la mesa....
- (36) We don't have to worry about an embargo or a cutoff in the supply of oil. (F50)  
\*We don't have to worry about an embargo or a cutoff on the supply of oil.  
No nos tenemos que preocupar de un embargo ó una interrupción en el abastecimiento de combustible.
- (37) I got a job in New York City twelve days after we arrived. (F75)  
\*I got a job on New York City twelve days after we arrived.  
Yo obtuve un trabajo en Nueva York doce días después de que llegamos.
- (38) He is in the seventh grade. (F80)  
\*He is on the seventh grade.  
El está en el séptimo grado.
- (39) We must take all factors into consideration. (F45)  
\*We must take all factors in consideration.  
Debemos tomar en consideración todos los factores.
- (40) Taking their backgrounds into consideration.... (F61)  
\*Taking their backgrounds in consideration....  
Tomando en consideración sus antecedentes....

- (41) ... and begin to put their energies into achieving positive goals. (F42)  
 \*... and begin to put their energies in achieving positive goals.  
 ... y comenzar a invertir su energia en realizar metas positivos.
- (42) I am always thinking about her. (F53)  
 \*I am always thinking in her.  
 Siempre estoy pensando en ella.
- (43) I lived at Fort Story for one year. (F54)  
 \*I lived in Fort Story for one year.  
 Yo vivi en Fort Story por un año.
- (44) They help me with everything. (F59)  
 \*They help me in everything.  
 Ellos me ayudan en todo.

This comparison of English sentences written by students and Spanish translations shows contrastive analysis premise of first language interference to be a definite factor. However, this is true of little more than half of the errors collected. It is obvious that there are other reasons for the errors. Upshur says that there is

a logical inconsistency in the contrastive analysis hypothesis. As the student begins to learn the new language, his linguistic habit structure changes, and it is this altered habit structure which will determine the amount and locus of negative transfer in subsequent learning. After any small increment of learning, the student is no longer the 'pure native speaker' assumed by the contrastive analysis of the native and target languages. All of what he has learned will have facilitation or interference effects upon what has not yet been taught. (1962, 126)

It is necessary, therefore, to look at the remaining errors in light of these changed "linguistic habit structures" and their effects. This is done through error analysis, the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3  
ERROR ANALYSIS

Error analysis, unlike contrastive analysis, looks for all the possible sources of an error and does not assume that interference from the native language is the only problem. As was seen in the preceding chapter, only a portion of the errors made by ESL students showed direct interference from Spanish. Brown (1987) also notes that students do not make all the errors that contrastive analysis says they will and that, regardless of their native language, students tend to make similar errors when learning the same target language.

At one time it was thought that the errors made by students learning a foreign language were undesirable and the proponents of contrastive analysis hoped to eliminate them before they ever entered the students' speech. Advocates of error analysis believe that errors are a part of the learning process and can indicate what students have learned.

One important thing needs to be taken into consideration when analyzing errors in the remaining sentences. Brown (1987), S. P. Corder (1967) and others distinguish between an error and a mistake. A mistake is that which is made by native speakers under certain conditions, such as fatigue or emotional situations, which is recognizable and correctable by



the speaker. In other words, speakers are both knowledgeable and competent but for various reasons, they fail to use the language correctly.

An error, on the other hand, "is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner [of the target language]." (Brown 1987, 170) Corder (1967) believes that these errors are very similar to those made by children when learning their native language. They involve hypotheses about the language which the learner is testing and proving or disproving.

Taylor (1975) notes that "the principal motivation behind the learning strategies which the learner brings to language acquisition is the desire to reduce his learning burden." (87) One way to do this is by transferring native language knowledge to the target language and another is to use what has been learned about the target language and apply it to what is unknown.

This application of the known to the unknown is referred to as OVERGENERALIZATION; "it results in a simplification of the syntactic system" (Taylor 1975, 86) in which the errors display a level of competence and are systematic. Mistakes, on the other hand, will be unsystematic. Corder concludes that "the problem of determining what is a learner's mistake and what a learner's error is one of some difficulty and involves a much more sophisticated study and analysis of errors than is usually accorded them." (1967, 167)

Given the fact that the data for this study was collected randomly, from students of all different levels and ages, and there was really no control over the sentences and prepositions used, the analysis done on the remaining sentences lacks that sophistication and is, at best, a lot of guess work.

Overgeneralization of expressions which the learner may have used in other contexts can be seen as being responsible for errors in some of the sentences which have not been explained by contrastive analysis. In the following sentences, the expressions, used in correct syntax in the first two examples, have been overgeneralized and are errors in the students' sentences.

- (1) I'm hungry. Let's call for a pizza.  
The chairman will now call for the vote.  
\*...she doesn't know how to call for here. (F1)
- (2) We'll stay here and wait while he watches for the bus.  
She watches for cars while she is crossing the street.  
\*The security guard watches for the property. (F4)
- (3) She has traveled all over the world.  
The toys were scattered all over the place.  
\*She is the best in all over the world. (F6)
- (4) He received an increase in salary.  
The population increased in size last year.  
\*The population increased in a 20%. (F9)
- (5) It was a nice change of pace.  
In London, I watched the changing of the guards.  
\*I am constantly changing of channels. (F19)
- (6) We couldn't drive because of the snow storm.  
We were late because of you.  
\*because of liberty is the most important. (F21)

- (7) She started saying something about Tom but was interrupted.  
Alice, I want you to start saying the alphabet and when I tell you to stop, Sam will continue.  
\*I should start / saying (that I am the oldest of three children.) (F35)
- (8) My son will be starting kindergarten in the fall.  
Starting kindergarten can be a traumatic experience.  
\*Starting / kindergarten (we will have all the classes come to the cafeteria by grade level.) (F40)
- (9) Please look over your papers before you hand them in.  
I want to look over my notes before the test.  
\*The U.S. should look over the rest of the world and learn about regulated health care. (F83)
- (10) There were still no women doctors in the U.S. by 1845.  
The highway will be finished by 1995.  
\*In the U.S., there was no woman doctor by 1846. (F71)
- (11) "Should I pick you up at two o'clock?" "Sure! I have a lot to do but I should be ready by that time."  
"Once they showed up, things seemed to improve."  
"That's true, but by that time a lot of people had gone home."  
\*It was not unusual to see people in wigs because by that time people wore wigs a lot. (F55)
- (12) "What will you do if she doesn't arrive on time?"  
"I will begin by myself."  
"I want to do this project by myself."  
\*I am going to tell you about my family. I will begin by myself. (F60)

This last sentence is just a little bit different from those which precede it. The preposition in the sentence with the error is not determined by the sentence itself, but by the sentence which precedes it. Written alone it would be impossible to decide if the preposition is correct or not. Thus, it is easy to explain the student's error. The first sentence was either not taken into consideration or the student did not know that it could have an effect on which preposition should be used in the second sentence.

In the case of (13), the choice of the preposition depends on the words in the same sentence. Which preposition is used can be determined by copying (from, off, off of, etc.) or the student (of). However, in looking at the error it appears that the student may have chosen the preposition to go with answer, as in What is the ANSWER TO the question?

- (13) ... when a student is copying the answer to the student beside him/her and the teacher sees him/her. (F78)

Overgeneralization, again, can help to explain sentence (14). The synonyms for shun include shy away from, keep away from, and turn away from. It is possible that the student knew some of these synonyms and felt that away should be used with shun as well.

- (14) \*A foreign student can be shunned away by the other students. (F17)

Sentence (15) makes it evident that the student knows something about English prepositions and how they work. If the literal sense of hand is used in the sentence, the preposition in actually conforms better than the preposition on to the criteria for the use of on and in. The student has chosen the logical preposition for an irregular idiomatic usage.

- (15) \*... but in the other hand.... (F68)

Perhaps the student who wrote number (16) was confusing to investigate with investigations which is used with in as in investigations in science.

- (16) \*They should start to investigate in hiring teachers who know first aid. (F18)

As noted in the introduction, (17), below, had to be reworded before the translator could come up with a comparable Spanish sentence. After looking at his sentence I decided that the student's sentence was not a first language interference error because the word-for-word translation of the Spanish sentence does not come close to the student's English sentence. However, in looking at the sentence it seems reasonable that the student became confused as to whether the problem was with the factor or with ODU. This particular sentence was taken from an exit exam and under such a stressful situation it is more likely that this is a mistake rather than an error.

(17) \*The factor that I had a problem with / O.D.U. was...  
(F36)

The following sentences have very little to offer in the way of clues as to why the students may have made a preposition error. In all of the sentences, there is an equivalent preposition in Spanish which the student did not use. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that the students were neither thinking in nor translating from Spanish. The characteristics of prepositions discussed in the introduction and the learning problems they present are probably responsible for all of them. In (18-21), the preposition was omitted totally, whereas in (22-26), a different preposition was used.

(18) After the Spanish Civil War and due to the critical situation existing in the country .... (F28)  
\*After the Spanish Civil War and due / the critical situation existing in the country....  
Después de la guerra civil en España y debido a la situación crítica que existía en el país

- (19) The supermarket is a stone's throw from my house. (F32)  
 \*The supermarket is a stone's throw / my house.  
 El supermercado está a un paso de mi casa.
- (20) I need to apologize for my behavior. (F34)  
 \*I need to apologize / my behavior.  
 Yo necesito pedir disculpas por mi conducta.
- (21) The children will experiment with those two subjects. (F39)  
 \*The children will experiment / those two subjects.  
 Los niños experimentarán con esas dos materias.
- (22) Is the student puzzled or confident about what is being taught? (F46)  
 \*Is the student puzzled or confident on what is being taught?  
 Está el estudiante confundido a seguro de lo que se está enseñando?
- (23) The use of solar systems can replace gasoline and reduce pollution by cars. (F48)  
 \*The use of solar systems can replace gasoline and reduce pollution on cars.  
 EL uso de sistemas solares puede reemplazar la gasolina y reducir la contaminación causada por los carros.
- (24) I got married in 1977 and I went to live in small city in the northwest of Spain. (F67)  
 \*I got married at 1977 and I went to live to small city in the northwest of Spain.  
 Yo me casé en 1977 y me fuí a vivir a una ciudad pequeña en el Nor-Oeste de España.
- (25) All the children bring candy to school to share with the other children. (F72)  
 \*All the children bring candy to school to share to the other children.  
 Todos los niños traen dulce a la escuela para compartir con los otros niños.
- (26) Water combined with oil can cause problems. (F62)  
 \*Water combined to oil can cause problems.  
 Aciete combinado con agua es una mala combinación

Sentence (27) might be explained using contrastive analysis since adonde is literally to where. The student may have realized this but did not know where to position the to. This, however seems unlikely since a literal translation of

the sentence would more likely have been, I had to go to where the company sent me.

- (27) I had to go where my company sent me. (F8)  
 \*I had to go where my company sent to me.  
 Yo tengo que ir adonde mi compañía me mande.

In like manner (28) and (29) might appear to be interference errors since the Spanish sentence contains the two-word preposition cerca de and the students used near to in the English sentence. However, to is not one of the translations listed for de. One possible explanation is that this error is a combination of first and second language knowledge. Since Spanish uses a two-word preposition the students may have thought that the English preposition should be a two-word preposition also. If they were familiar with next to they might have thought that near would operate the same way as next.<sup>5</sup>

- (28) I envy them because they are near my parents and I am not. (F7)  
 \*I envy them because they are near to my parents and I am not.  
 Yo los envidio porque ellos están cerca de mis padres y yo no.
- (29) Grandfather has a house near the beach. (F12)  
 \*Grandfather has a house near to the beach.  
 Mi abuelo tiene una casa cerca de la playa.

In both sentences (30) and (31) the student has not chosen the preposition from Spanish (por = by or for) but from English. As was seen above in seems to be chosen over on in most cases.

- (30) They are not ready to decide on their own. (F43)

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<sup>5</sup>Another possibility is that the student may have heard it used by a native speaker whose dialect allows near to.

\*They are not ready to decide in their own.  
Ellos no están listos para decidir por su propia  
cuenta.

- (31) Also, it is a vice on which the smokers spend a large amount of money each year. (F66)  
\*Also, it is a vice in which the smokers spend a large amount of money each year.  
Además, es un vicio por el cual las personas que fuman gastan una gran cantidad de dinero cada año.

The last two sentences have no logical explanations, but then again languages are not really logical and it could be that the students just made mistakes or did not know which prepositions, if any, were acceptable and therefore just chose any one.

- (32) ...because all of us laughed at my jokes. (F77)  
\*...because all of us laughed with my jokes.  
...porque todos nos reímos de mis bromas.
- (33) He retires this year. (F15)  
\*He gives the retirement on this year.  
El se retira este año.

At times, it may seem to native speakers that other native speakers make these same kinds of arbitrary choices since preposition use can vary from one native speaker to the next. An awareness that differences do exist prompted research into what kinds of preposition choices native speakers would make if they were asked to complete some of the students' sentences. The results of this research will be discussed in chapter 4.



CHAPTER 4  
NATIVE SPEAKER USE OF PREPOSITIONS

When collecting the free writing samples of ESL students, I noticed that I disagreed with the graders. Corrections I would have made were untouched and others acceptable to me that had been marked in red. Tran-Thi-Chau quotes Strevens as saying, "The identification of errors is essentially subjective. It is possible for two educated native speakers to differ in a surprisingly large proportion of cases, as to whether items are acceptable or unacceptable, and hence as to whether they should be counted as errors." (Tran-Thi-Chau 1975, 121) Nowhere does this seem as true as in the use of prepositions.

In order to determine how different the use of prepositions is by native speakers, a query was created by removing the "unacceptable" prepositions from the student's forty-four sentences. The queries were then given to eighteen native speakers in Norfolk, Virginia who were asked to fill in the blanks with an appropriate preposition. If more than one preposition was applicable they could list as many as they wished. They were also asked to list any places that they had lived, for five or more years, that might have influenced their choices.

The query was then put on LINGUIST, a computer network which reaches people all over the world. Only native speakers were asked to respond and eighty people, living in a variety of places in the United States and foreign countries, filled out the query. Despite the large number of responses and the variety of places people had lived, there did not seem to be any obvious connection between regions of the country and choices of prepositions. This is not to say, however, that with another group of sentences, or a different group of people, a correlation might not be drawn. Only further research will be able to prove this.

All but one or two of the speakers who responded to the query were college educated and the majority of them had a strong background in English studies. Some of the people who completed the sentences offered comments about the sentences and their choices. Many of them commented about the grammatical aspects of some of the sentences. Since I wanted to keep the sentences as much like the original ones as possible I tried not to change them too much when corrections were needed to make them intelligible. (It has already been seen how changing a sentence can make a difference in preposition use.) However, from some of the comments, it was obvious that even after the minor adjustments, people felt sentences (1) and (2) were still unintelligible or at least incorrect English.

- (1) I am going to compare it based \_\_\_\_\_ the old people  
of Costa Rica and the United States. (F65)
- |           |             |             |           |                  |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|------------------|
| <u>on</u> | <u>upon</u> | <u>with</u> | <u>to</u> | <u>no answer</u> |
| 93        | 11          | 1           | 1         | 1                |

## Comments:

"ungrammatical"

"[Sentence isn't very idiomatic English.]"

"very hard to interpret: how can you compare one thing?  
But 'based on' is very likely."

"on (if I'm parsing rest of sentence correctly)"

"this sentence is anomalous"

"compare with the old people base it on the old people"

"on? (still not an acceptable sentence--too dependent a  
clause)"

"Looks ungrammatical but based on would be normal"

"This sentence is odd in any case since 'compare' sounds  
better with a plural object or a 'to' PP and this  
sentence has neither"

"This sentence is weird enough to be unnatural for me.  
But I always use 'on' after 'based' in this type of  
construction."

"[compare what with what? based on...???"

"I don't like this sentence. I need more context."

(2) They shouldn't continue hanging \_\_\_\_\_ thoughts  
associated with the 'good old days'. (F82)

<u>onto</u>	<u>on to</u>	<u>on</u>	<u>over</u>	<u>to</u>	<u>about</u>
63	10	10	1	1	1
<u>through</u>	<u>for</u>	<u>out</u>	<u>around</u>	<u>no answer</u>	
1	2	10	1	1	

## Comments:

"Nothing really correct - wouldn't use that verb"

"[Unintelligible -- what's it supposed to mean?] "

"don't understand"

"?????? idiom unknown"

"I'm not sure what this sentence is supposed to mean."

"odd sentence"

"can't parse well enough to add preposition"

"I can't make this well-formed with a mere preposition"

"onto (I guess)"

"for (assuming this is about capital punishment, but what else? A very strange sentence. Oh, perhaps ON TO? - but not ONTO!)"

"particle 'on' plus prep 'to'"

"I can't understand this sentence since I don't use 'hanging' in any way I can interpret here. I do use 'hang around' and 'hang out'."

"Hanging around doesn't take an object. I don't know what else you could use with this verb."

Many people were uncomfortable with (1), but all except one were willing to put a preposition in the blank. In (2), however, ten people were unwilling; the most frequently chosen preposition was onto and the most unusual was for, which changed the meaning of the sentence from "continuing to think something" to "capital punishment for thinking something!"

A sentence which elicited numerous comments dealt with a place name, Fort Story, which happens to be an army base in Virginia Beach. Since the data was collected in Virginia Beach and the first queries were done by people in the immediate area, it never occurred to me that this would cause difficulties when the query was done by people unfamiliar with the area. The prepositions people chose for (3) were very dependent on just what Fort Story was and they let that fact be known.

(3) I lived \_\_\_\_\_ Fort Story for one year. (F54)  
at    in    near    by    on    behind    around    beside  
 92    13    6    6    5    1    1    1

## Comments:

"choice depends on if Fort Story is a town = in, really a fort = at"

"Choice depends if Fort Story is a town or building 'in' if military base 'at'"

"'on' if military base"

"depends on local usage or the particular place name"

"choice depended on if Fort Story is a city (in) military base (at)"

"(city or building)"

"in = town on = island at = apartment complex"

"real world knowledge necessary"

"in = town on = base"

"at = city in = actual fort"

"depends on if it is an actual fort = at or just a city which used to be a fort = in"

"(I am assuming Fort Story is a town. If it isn't I might use another preposition.)"

"AT if it is a military base and not a town."

"in/near inside vs outside city limits; Inside if its actually a military fort or some building."

"at if it's a real fort, not just a name"

"Note: depends on what Fort Story is."

"in - assuming this is a town or city"

"'in' if Fort Story is a town of something of that nature; 'at' if it's the name of a building."

"(context and knowing whether we're discussing a place/building would help)"

Other sentences frequently commented on were (4), (5), and (6), all of which had two verbs that people felt needed their own prepositions.

- (4) Is the student puzzled or confident \_\_\_\_\_ what is being taught? (F46)
- |              |              |           |           |                  |             |                   |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| <u>about</u> | <u>with</u>  | <u>of</u> | <u>at</u> | <u>in</u>        | <u>over</u> | <u>concerning</u> |
| 87           | 10           | 5         | 2         | 2                | 1           | 2                 |
|              | <u>as to</u> | <u>on</u> |           | <u>no answer</u> |             |                   |
|              | 1            | 1         |           | 3                |             |                   |

Comments:

"not a good sentence"

"puzzled at - confident about"

"chose about but prefer puzzled by and confident in"

"[NOTE: this isn't a good example because of the conjunction - it's 'puzzled about,' but you can say 'confident about' OR 'confident over.']"

"with 'puzzled' I would use 'by,' with 'confident' I would use 'about.' I never know which preposition to choose with a complex N.P. What do most people say about this? I think I would have to say "ABOUT."

"puzzled by / confident in"

"Note: puzzled and confident take different prepositions"

- (5) The use of solar systems can replace gasoline and reduce pollution \_\_\_\_\_ cars. (F48)
- |             |           |           |           |               |                  |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|------------------|
| <u>from</u> | <u>by</u> | <u>in</u> | <u>of</u> | <u>due to</u> | <u>no answer</u> |
| 75          | 24        | 20        | 2         | 1             | 1                |

Comments:

"Don't like the way stated prefer "pollution 'caused by' cars"

"gasoline in pollution from"

"[SAME PROBLEM!!! (as 6) 'Replace gasoline \_\_\_\_\_ cars' doesn't even really work - 'in'? 'for'? and then 'reduce pollution' could be 'from' or 'in,' although the latter isn't great.]"

"(this one is tricky because the sentence is uninterpretable! 'INTO' would be no less reasonable - or 'INSIDE' for that matter....)"

"though the use of the term 'solar systems' is very odd here."

"better to say: car pollution?"



- (8) I am going to tell you about my family. I will begin  
 myself. (F60)  
with  
 98
- (9) ...but \_\_\_\_\_ the other hand.... (F68)  
on  
 98
- (10) All the children bring candy to school to share \_\_\_\_\_  
 the other children. (F72) with  
 98
- (11) Every night I watch news and sports \_\_\_\_\_ TV. (F73)  
on  
 98
- (12) We arrived at New York Airport, \_\_\_\_\_ the  
 United States, in December 1978. (F74)  
 b) in X  
 98 1
- (13) He is \_\_\_\_\_ the seventh grade. (F80)  
in  
 98
- (14) The students are concentrating \_\_\_\_\_ their  
 education. (F44)  
on in spite of upon  
 98 1 1
- (15) We must take all factors \_\_\_\_\_ consideration. (F45)  
into under  
 98 2
- (16) Water combined \_\_\_\_\_ oil can cause problems. (F62)  
with into(archaic) no answer  
 97 1 1
- (17) I got married a 1977 and I went to live b a  
 small city in the northwest of Spain. (F67)  
 a) in during around after about before  
 98 1 1 1 1 1  
 b) in near  
 98 6
- (18) I got a job \_\_\_\_\_ New York City twelve days after we  
 arrived. (F75)  
in near from for  
 98 1 1 1
- (19) ... because all of us laughed \_\_\_\_\_ my jokes. (F77)  
at with over  
 98 1 1



The sentences which elicited the widest variety of responses were those in which the choice of prepositions relied on the proximity of two objects. Without knowing the context of the sentences it is impossible to pinpoint the location of each object and therefore many different prepositions will work. Sentence (20) has a total of seventeen choices while (21) has fifteen.

(20) My parents lived \_\_\_\_\_ me in Puerto Rico but then they moved to New York. (F41)

<u>with</u>	<u>next to</u>	<u>near</u>	<u>by</u>	<u>beside</u>	<u>across from</u>
86	9	8	3	3	3
<u>next door to</u>	<u>opposite</u>	<u>behind</u>	<u>around</u>	<u>above</u>	<u>under</u>
2	2	1	1	1	1
<u>without</u>	<u>for</u>	<u>before</u>	<u>instead of</u>	<u>as</u>	<u>off</u>
1	1	1	1	1	1
<u>close to</u>	<u>no answer</u>				
1	1				

(21) When she dropped milk \_\_\_\_\_ the table.... (F79)

<u>on</u>	<u>under</u>	<u>from</u>	<u>beside</u>	<u>off</u>	<u>onto</u>
96	6	4	3	6	15
<u>off of</u>	<u>by</u>	<u>off from</u>	<u>from off</u>	<u>at</u>	<u>next to</u>
4	1	1	1	1	2
<u>all over</u>	<u>unto</u>	<u>beneath</u>			
1	1	1			

The student's original sentence for (20) was: My parents lived BESIDE me in Puerto Rico..., which I considered an error; in my idiolect, beside is used for people but usually not for houses. The interesting thing about this sentence, however, is that, due to the lack of context, the first eighteen people who completed the query had no way of knowing that the desired preposition was supposed to show a relationship between two houses: the writer's and the parents'. Therefore, seventeen used with, which showed a relationship between the people. The sentence was revised to read My parents lived in the house \_\_\_\_\_ me in Puerto Rico...

It was hoped that the preposition would then show the relationship between the houses. Despite the change, this did not happen. As can be seen from the numbers above, those who responded still wanted to emphasize the relationship between the people. Only too late, it was decided that the sentence should have read: My parents lived in the house \_\_\_\_\_ mine (or my house) in Puerto Rico... in order to elicit the desired responses.

Once again this sentence shows how important context can be in determining which preposition is used in a sentence. Since many exercises and tests used for prepositions are fill-in-the-blanks, this factor is important to consider when creating the sentences. Either single sentences should be strictly limited so only one preposition is appropriate or if more than one could be used more context should be provided.

The lack of context in the query was the single most disturbing thing to the people completing it. Even though there were no "right" answers and they were permitted to list as many prepositions as they wanted, many people refused to choose any preposition for sentences which they felt lacked sufficient context. However, out-of-context interpretation was part of the objective of the query. It not only provided an opportunity to consider the different interpretations of the same sentence created by the use of various prepositions but it also made it possible to see which prepositions could be interchanged without really changing the meaning of the sentence. This ability to use different prepositions without

changing the meaning of sentences exists not only in English but in Spanish as well.

The flexibility of preposition use in Spanish is illustrated by comparing two translations of the same sentence, done by different people, with the corrected English sentence and the students' sentence. Twenty-one sentences show eleven different variations of preposition use: see Appendix D. In categories (I-VII), either the first or second translation has the same preposition as the student error, while the other translation has no preposition, the same preposition as the correct English preposition, or a preposition that is different from the other three. Category (XI) has a different preposition in every sentence. In the remaining three categories, (VIII) shows that the preposition of one translation is the same as the correct English preposition while the other two prepositions are different; (IX) has different prepositions in the correct English sentence, the student sentence, and the first translation, while the second translation has no preposition; and in (X) the preposition of one translation is the same as the correct English preposition, the student error is different and the other translation does not have a preposition. In some cases, where the preposition use differs in the two translations, a similar difference can be shown in English with the same change in words.

- (22) Yo voy a compararlo en base a las personas mayores...  
 (F65)  
 I am going to compare it based on the old people...

Voy a hacer una comparación entre los ancianos...  
I am going to make a comparison between the old people...

- (23) La combinación de agua y aceite puede causar problemas. (F62)  
The combination of water and oil can cause problems.

Aciete combinado con agua is una mala combinación.  
Oil combined with water is a bad combination.

- (24) Además, es un vicio por el cual las personas que fuman gastan una gran cantidad de dinero cada año. (F66)  
Also, it is a vice on which the smokers spend a large amount of money each year.

También es un vicio que le cuesta mucho todos los años a los fumadores.  
Also, it is a vice that costs smokers a lot every year.

- (25) Ella hizo un pastel para mí. (F52)  
She made a cake for me.

Ella me hizo un pastel.  
She made me a cake.

The Spanish sentences in (25) use two different pronouns. The pronoun following the preposition in the first, mí, is an OBJECT OF PREPOSITION pronoun; me, in the second, is an indirect object pronoun. Since the indirect object pronoun form is different from other pronoun forms in Spanish, it implies a meaning of 'to' or 'for', so a preposition is not needed.

In English, whether or not a preposition precedes an indirect pronoun does not depend on the form of the pronoun but on its position in the sentence. In English, the indirect object pronoun can follow the direct object, in which case it is preceded by a preposition; it can also be located between the verb and the direct object and in this position the

preposition is deleted. In Spanish, indirect object pronouns always precede the verb and never follow prepositions. Therefore, except for the position of the pronouns, the last two sentences are closely comparable but not identical in their constructions.

In all other instances where a preposition does not appear in the Spanish sentence there is a literal English translation, also without a preposition. This then brings up a point about translations which should be mentioned. How a person perceives the English sentence has a lot to do with how the translation will be done. In looking at the two translations of all the sentences, (Appendix B) it can be seen that the first translations tend to be fairly literal translations of the English. The second translations, on the other hand, tend to convey the same idea but not always with the same words. There is more of a tendency for this to happen when the translator is equally comfortable in both languages and has done a lot of translations between the languages. In this case, the second translator is a Spanish teacher, who has spent most of her life speaking both languages. The other translator is a native Spanish speaker who has only been fluent in English since his senior year in high school.

One other thing that needs to be mentioned is the occurrence of mistakes (not errors). Those who know Spanish well may find some mistakes in the translations. Any time words are put into print mistakes can be made. This is as

true in Spanish as it is in English.

Regarding the topic of English mistakes, one of the sentences which was on the query for native speakers raised a question of whether one of the prepositions listed was truly used or a mistake. This is a sentence which has already been discussed in connection with the positions of its three prepositional phrases. Below is the sentence with the preposition choices and number of responses for each.

(26) We arrived at the New York Airport, in the United States, \_\_\_\_\_ December 1978. (F74)  
 c. on     in     X     during  
       57     42     1     1

Notice that there was almost an equal number of responses for each preposition. Now look at the following sentence.

(27) I got married \_\_\_\_\_ 1977 and I went to live in a small city in the northwest of Spain. (F67)  
 a) in   during   around   after   about   before  
       98     1            1            1            1            1

Notice that every person responded with the same preposition in (27). The only difference between the preposition choices in these two sentences is that the first one has December after the preposition and before the year. For (26), should it be concluded that either in or on is acceptable? The two comments that were made about the preposition choice for (26) were:

"--note that 'on Dec. 8, 1978' is possible, but not 'on Dec. 1978'"

"but ON Dec. 1, 1978" [written by someone who chose in]

These two people pointed out that there is a criteria for the use of in and on and that in this particular case in had to be chosen. Is this true? According to three different

sources (Bing 1989, Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1983, and Frank 1993) in is used for months and years and on is used for dates and days of the week. Why then, did so many people choose on?

The initial correction of the sentence was done to follow the usual time-place order used with a series of prepositional phrases in English. It has already been seen what effect this had on the Spanish prepositions used. In English, the effect it had on the choice of prepositions was due to the situation that was presented to the reader. Native speakers of English do not usually read every word that is written on a page. From context, they anticipate and surmise what will be written and thereby enable themselves to read faster. Many times they supply words that are not there because they know they should be there. This is why it is so hard to proofread something and continue to find errors after several drafts.

In (26), there is a month and a year and the number of the date is not really important to the understanding of the sentence, so even if it were there the reader probably wouldn't pay any attention to it anyway. Therefore, it is easy to imagine it there and use on. There is also the pattern of the three prepositions to be considered. Somehow if there are three prepositions and the first two are different, it seems like the third one should be different also. In this sentence the first preposition is at, the second is in, so it is logical that the third is not in again, but on.

Therefore, it is probably safe to say that native speakers not only choose prepositions based on what they know about them but also what they assume about the context of the sentence. It is apparent from the number of choices in the few sentences above and all of them listed in Appendix D, native speakers do use prepositions differently under many circumstances.

This helps to illustrate why the following sentences, originally collected as preposition errors, were later considered not to contain errors:

- (28) If we are to succeed at this research.... (F49)
- (29) I don't believe in abortion as the solution for the problem. (F63)
- (30) I was working in an unemployment agency. (F56)
- (31) Later I am going to an activity for my church. (F70)
- (32) My parents lived beside me in Puerto Rico but then they moved to New York. (F41)
- (33) On March 10, 1992, after more than 27 years / living in Puerto Rico, I moved to New York. (F27)



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS

The information in the preceding chapters makes it easy to agree with Héctor De Cavilla, Mil who wrote, "Prepositions in any language are notorious for the ease with which they are often confused, abused, misused and even unnoticed not only by foreigners but by native speakers..."(1993, 1)

It has been seen that errors in preposition use by ESL students are not only due to interference from the native language and overgeneralizations of learned structures in the second language, but can also be attributed to the complexities of the prepositions themselves. In everyday native speaker conversations, if preposition use is observed closely, it becomes clear that "misuses" occur and that they often go unnoticed because the focus is on the overall meaning of the sentence.

Even when prepositions are being used correctly, they can be left out or interchanged without changing the meaning of the sentence. And yet, as Cavilla, Mil points out,

if unobtrusive and unspectacular in themselves their versatility in giving expression to the subtleties of our thought processes is a delicate grammatical role, that no one sensitive to precision in style may ignore or underestimate. ...more often than not it is the modest, invisible preposition that provides the pivot on which the mysterious facets of speech turn, particularly when

we use idiomatic expressions rooted in its vernacular origins. (1993, 1)

So it is not particularly surprising that students learning a second language face frustration and difficulties in learning preposition systems which seem to defy logic. But what, if anything, can be done to help these students? The first step towards easing the frustrations may be understanding the complexities of prepositions and knowing that they, along with first language interference, and interlanguage systems, can cause errors. Even though prepositions will continue to be difficult to learn and errors will persist, students will realize that all learners face these problems and they are not alone.

George Takahaski (1961) believes that the prepositions at, to, on, and in, "are logically connected and their functions and meanings are comprehensible from the psychophysiological experiences of man in space" (1961, 217). Although his analysis of these prepositions is logical and convincing and could be very helpful in teaching ESL students, until similar analyses are done on all the rest, prepositions will continue to be "not only invisible and chameleonic but as slippery as the proverbial eel and only when wrongly used [will their absences be] apparent and missed" (Cavilla, Mil 1993, 1).

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APPENDIX A  
CURRENT PEDAGOGY

When I began to review grammar textbooks for preposition lessons I was amazed that some books did not even list prepositions in the index. Others had lessons only because they concerned prepositions followed by gerunds and the emphasis was really on gerunds and not prepositions. The more I looked, the more I discovered that in most cases prepositions are not really taught as a separate grammatical topic but as part of the whole which the student is expected to learn by listening and reading.

All of the textbooks I reviewed were intermediate level or higher. Of the seventeen books reviewed, only four of them actually defined a preposition. These, plus four others, also explained that a preposition combined with a noun or pronoun (the object of the preposition) is called a prepositional phrase. Many of the books treated prepositions from the locative (place) and temporal (time) aspects, some listed verbs and adjectives which take specific prepositions, and a few featured prepositions in adjective clauses. Even though prepositions continue to be a problem for even advanced learners, most of these intermediate books used the terms preposition and prepositional phrase as though they needed

little or no explanation. One book even had students doing exercises that involved identifying prepositions and prepositional phrases as early as page 5 but did not define prepositions until page 203. (Byrd and Benson, 1992) Summary 1 (page 59) shows the indexed prepositional topics and the books in which they are found.

Regardless of what the books were trying to teach, the majority were teaching it in pretty much the same way. Most of them introduced the concept, gave a few examples and then asked the students to practice by doing various exercises. The most widely used exercise was fill-in-the-blank. Many asked the students to use prepositional phrases in sentences and/or to answer questions. Patterned drills were popular in the older books (Bruder, 1974 and Lorenze, 1976) but Knepler (1990) also used them along with many other exercises. Summary 2 (page 60) shows the different types of exercises found in the reviewed books and which books used which exercises. It can be seen that Knepler's Grammar With A Purpose: A Contextualized Approach (1990) and Holshuh's 2: The Function of English Grammar (1991) provide the most variety in the exercises they use. Between the two of them, it would be possible to have a sample of almost all the different types of exercises listed on the summary. Knepler, however, covers the aspects of prepositions much more thoroughly than Holshuh.

Along with the textbooks, I also reviewed three English grammar reference books: Janet Bing's GrammarGuide (1989), Marcella Frank's Modern English: A Practical Reference Guide

(1993), and Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum's A Concise Grammar of Contemporary English (1973). The purpose for this was to determine how prepositions were addressed by them and whether they would be suitable for ESL students who might have questions about prepositions that were not covered in their grammar textbooks. This seemed especially appropriate after seeing the lack of specific instruction on prepositions in textbooks.

Quirk and Greenbaum's book is more suitable for teachers than for ESL students. It is written in a more technical manner and would be a useful reference for someone with knowledge of linguistic terminology.

Of the other two books, Frank's book is more comprehensive than Bing's. Not only does Frank cover almost all of the material in Bing's book but she also deals with the syntactical positions and functions of prepositions. In addition, her lists of adjectives and verbs which require specific prepositions are more extensive than Bing's. However, Bing's presentation is preferable. Frank's lists are organized alphabetically by the prepositions which then have the verbs or adjectives listed alphabetically under them. Bing's lists are organized alphabetically by the adjectives or verbs and they are followed by all the prepositions that can be used for each, plus the type of object (somebody, something or some place) that each preposition can take.

Another difference between these books is that Frank discusses and lists phrasal verbs in her preposition section,

whereas Bing, viewing the second word as a particle lists them in the verb section. For this reason, they can be found in the index under either prepositions or verbs in Frank's book, while in Bing's book, they are indexed only under verbs. This could be viewed as an advantage of the Frank book because a student who is unaware of the linguistic difference between prepositions and particles may not be able to find phrasal verbs as easily in Bing's book as they can in Frank's. In general, however, the majority of information in Bing's book is more accessible and I would recommend it to ESL students in preference to Frank's.

Other books reviewed which may be helpful in supplementing a required text and should be mentioned are Grammar Practice Activities by Penny Ur, English Grammar for Students of Spanish by Emily Spinelli, Preposition Practice by L.L. Keane and Working With English Prepositions by Diane Hall.

Grammar Practice Activities is filled with grammar practice ideas that can be used to enhance and reinforce any grammar forms the students are learning. It also has suggestions on how to make conventional textbook exercises more interesting, plus Ur's helpful views on grammar teaching techniques.

The Spinelli book, English Grammar for Students of Spanish, defines prepositions and how their use in English differs from their use in Spanish. Since this information would be just as useful for Spanish-speakers learning English as it is for English-speakers learning Spanish, this book



could be helpful to an ESL student.

Preposition Practice is an intermediate-level workbook which includes exercises dealing with prepositions of time, place, and direction, plus those occurring with verbs, adjectives, and in common phrases. Each section has a paragraph or chart which shows the correct usage of the prepositions in that lesson, followed by several exercises, usually fill-in-the-blank or completing sentences. It has an answer key in the back so it could be used for self study as well as a supplement in the classroom.

Diane Hall's Working with English Prepositions is also an intermediate-level book which she refers to as a reference/practice book that "treats prepositions as expressions of concept, not as purely grammatical forms." (1986, 4) She groups the prepositions according to concepts such as movement, position, time, etc. There are a variety of exercises which include, not only the traditional filling-in-the-blank and completing the sentence but crossword puzzles, creating questions for a given answer, and completing conversations as well as. This book also includes an answer key and can be used in the same way as Preposition Practice.

In reviewing textbooks, I realized that one of the reasons why students of a second language may have so much trouble learning prepositions is that little space and time is devoted to them in most grammar textbooks. The prepositions that receive the most coverage are the locative and temporal prepositions which are the easiest to teach and learn. The

other usages of prepositions are introduced and practiced briefly and in many instances the student are told to memorize them. There are so many occurrences of prepositions in English that for an ESL student this probably seems like an overwhelming, if not impossible, job. Perhaps the summaries in this appendix and its bibliography will act as a source of available materials that teachers can use with students to help make that job seem a little more manageable.

SUMMARY 1GRAMMAR TEXTBOOKS: WHAT THEY TEACH

<u>Definition</u> <u>Prepositions</u>	<u>O b j e c t s o f</u>
Byrd and Benson (1992)	Azar (1989, 1992)
Holshuh 1&2 (1991, 1991)	Praninskas (1975)
Knepler (1990)	

<u>Prepositional Phrases</u> <u>as Modifiers</u>	<u>Prepositional Phrases</u> <u>as Adverbs</u>
Holshuh 1&2 (1991, 1991)	Byrd and Benson (1992)
Knepler (1990)	Holshuh 2 (1991)
Sheeler (1978)	

Punctuation of Inverted Prepositional Phrases

Martin, et al. (1977)

Prepositions of Time and Place

Bruder (1974)	Knepler (1990)*
Byrd and Benson (1992)	Lorenz (1976)
Dart (1982)	Schmidt and Simon (1988)

Preposition + Gerund

Azar (1992)	Martin, et al. (1977)
Byrd and Benson (1992)	Sheeler (1978)
Fingado and Jerome (1991)	Werner (1993)
Knepler (1990)	Werner and Nelson (1990)

Prepositions in Adjective Clauses

Azar (1992)	Holshuh 2 (1991)
Byrd and Benson (1992)	Werner (1993)
Dixon (1972)	

Lists of Adjectives & Verbs with the Prepositions They Require

Azar (1989, 1992)	Knepler (1990)
Holshuh 1 (1991)	Sheeler (1978)

Two-word or Phrasal Verbs

Azar (1989, 1992)	Lorenz (1976)
Dart (1982)	Praninskas (1975)
Knepler (1990)	

\*Knepler also covers prepositions of agent, instrument, manner, movement, and purpose.

SUMMARY 2GRAMMAR TEXTBOOKS: TYPES OF PREPOSITION EXERCISESFill in the Blanks

Azar (1989, 1992)	Knepler (1990)
Byrd and Benson (1992)	Martin et al. (1977)
Dart (1982)	Schmidt and Simon (1988)
Dixon (1972)	Werner (1993)
Holshuh 1 (1991)	Werner and Nelson (1990)

Answer Questions and/or Use in Sentences

Azar (1992)	Praninskas (1975)
Knepler (1990)	Schmidt and Simon (1988)
Lorenz (1976)	Sheeler (1978)
Martin et al. (1977)	

Pattern Drills

Bruder (1974)  
Knepler (1990)  
Lorenz (1976)

Open-ended sentences

Holshuh 2 (1991)  
Knepler (1990)  
Werner (1993)

Identify

Byrd and Benson (1992)  
Holshuh 2 (1991)

Change Infinitive to Prep.+ Gerund

Holshuh 2 (1991)  
Werner and Nelson (1990)

Multiple Choice

Knepler (1990)

Correct Errors

Holshuh 2 (1991)

Combine Sentences - Adj. Clauses

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Draw and Describe Pictures

Schmidt and Simon (1988)

No Practice Exercises

Fingado and Jerome (1991)

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## APPENDIX B

## SENTENCES

This appendix contains all the sentences used in the analyses. They are not referenced to Appendix F because the order of the sentences in both appendices is the same and they can be easily accessed by following the formula at the bottom of this page.

The sentences are organized in three sections according to categories of incorrect preposition use:

- (A) sentences with an unneeded preposition
- (B) sentences with an omitted preposition
- (C) sentences with an unacceptable preposition

In each category, each group of sentences is labeled with the appropriate letter and a number. The four sentences of each group are always in the same order:

The correct English sentence  
 The student's sentence  
 The first translator's Spanish sentence  
 The second translator's Spanish sentence

Some groups have more than four sentences. Sentences (A13) and (C34) have a second "corrected" English sentence and its translation. Also, four groups have an additional Spanish translation done by the third translator. In most cases, his sentences matched one of the original translations. However, three, (B2), (C6), and (C26), implied possible first language interference and one, (C1), supported the fact that more than one Spanish preposition can be used to convey the same idea.

In most of the Spanish sentences, the words and their order are close enough to the English sentence that a reader unfamiliar with Spanish will still be able to "translate" them. However, if the Spanish sentence differs enough that a reader might have trouble, translations have been provided.

Category A sentence numbers are the same as F1-22. For B and C, adding 22 to the B sentence number and 40 to the C sentence number will give the corresponding sentence in F.

A1-22 = F1-22  
 (22+) B1-18 = F23-40  
 (40+) C1-44 = F41-84



## CATEGORY A

## SENTENCES WITH ADDED PREPOSITION ERRORS

- A1. (My mother lives in Puerto Rico.)  
I always call her because she doesn't know how to call here.  
\*I always call her because she doesn't know how to call for here.  
Siempre la llamo porque ella no sabe como llamar aquí.  
Siempre la llamo porque ella no sabe [cómo] llamar acá.
- A2. She is calling the fire department.  
\*She is calling at the fire department.  
Ella está llamando a los bomberos.  
Está llamando a los bomberos (el cuerpo de bomberos).  
(SHE IS CALLING THE FIREMEN (THE FIRE DEPARTMENT).)
- A3. They are paying the waiter.  
\*They are paying to the waiter.  
Ellos le están pagando al mesero.  
Están pagando al mesero.
- A4. The security guard watches the property.  
\*The security guard watch for the property.  
El vigilante cuide la propiedad.  
El guardia vigila la propiedad.
- A5. My mother helps my father.  
\*My mother helps to my father.  
Mi mama ayuda a mi papa.  
Mi madre ayuda a mi padre.
- A6. She is the best in all the world.  
\*She is the best in all over the world.  
Ella es la mejor en todo el mundo.  
Es la mejor del mundo.
- A7. I envy them because they are near my parents and I am not.  
\*I envy them because they are near to my parents and I am not.  
Yo los envidio porque ellos están cerca de mis padres y yo no.  
Los envidio porque están cerca de mis padres y yo no.

- A8. I had to go where my company sent me.  
 \*I had to go where my company sent to me.  
 Yo tengo que ir adonde mi compañía me mande.  
 Tuve que irme adónde me mandó mi compañía.
- A9. The population has increased 20%.  
 \*The population increased in a 20%.  
 La población ha crecido 20%  
 La población ha aumentado el veinte por ciento.
- A10. I was afraid I had lost my baggage.  
 \*I was afraid about lost my baggage.  
 Tengo miedo de haber perdido mis maletas.  
 Temía haber perdido el equipaje.
- A11. I am going shopping.  
 \*I am going to the shopping.  
 Yo voy a comprar.  
 Me voy de compras.
- A12. Grandfather has a house near the beach.  
 \*Grandfather has a house near to the beach.  
 Mi abuelo tiene una casa cerca de la playa.  
 Abuelo tiene un casa cerca de la playa.
- A13. God, give me the wisdom to understand everything the teacher says.  
 \*God, give me the wisdom to understand to the teacher in everything she said.  
 Dios me da sabiduría para entender todo lo que el profesor dice.  
 Dios, concédeme la sabiduría para comprender todo lo que dice la maestra.
- God, give me the wisdom to understand the teacher in everything she says.  
 Dios, déme la sabiduría para entender a la profesora en todo la que dice.
- A14. I like to go to church and praise God.  
 \*I like to go to the church and praises to God.  
 A mí me gusta ir a la iglesia y resarle a Dios.  
 Me gusta asistir a la iglesia y loar a Dios.
- A15. He retires this year.  
 \*He gives the retirement on this year.  
 El se retira este año.  
 Se jubila este año.
- A16. I would like to live near the beach.  
 \*I like to live near of the beach.  
 Yo quisiera vivir cerca de la playa.  
 Me gustaría vivir cerca de la playa.

- A17. A foreign student can be shunned by other students.  
 \*A foreign student can be shunned away by the other students.  
 Un estudiante extranjero puede ser evitado por otros estudiantes.  
 Los otros estudiantes pueden no hacer caso de una estudiante extranjero. (THE OTHER STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO NOT PAY ATTENTION TO THE FOREIGN STUDENT.)
- A18. They should start to investigate hiring teacher who know first aid.  
 \*They should start to investigate in hiring teachers who know first aid.  
 Ellos deberian comenzer a investigar el contratar profesores con conocimientos en pie menos auxilios.  
 (WITH SKILL IN FIRST AID.)  
 Deben intentar emplear a maestros que sepan administrar primeros auxilios. (THAT KNOW HOW TO ADMINISTER FIRST AID)
- A19. I am constantly changing channels.  
 \*I am constantly changing of channels.  
 Yo constantemente estoy cambiando canales.  
 Estoy constantemente cambiado canales.
- A20. That doesn't give anybody the right to break the law.  
 \*That don't give to anybody the right to break the law.  
 Eso no le da el derecho a nadie de infringir la ley.  
 Eso no le da a nadie el derecho de romper la ley.
- A21. (We should cherish liberty above all our rights) because liberty is the most important.  
 \*...because of liberty is the most improtant.  
 ...porque libertad es lo mas importante.  
 ...porque es el más importante.
- A22. I broke my leg last January.  
 \*I broke my leg in last January.  
 Yo me fracturé la pierna en el enero del año pasado.  
 Me rompí la pierna el enero pasado.

## CATEGORY B

## SENTENCES WITH OMITTED PREPOSITION ERRORS

- B1. Advice is also given to the father (so he can help take care of the baby.)  
 \*...and also the father given advices to keep them in good health.  
 Al padre también se le da consejo  
 Se le aconsejo al padre.
- B2. They have to watch for errors in whatever they are working on.  
 \*They have to watch for errors in whatever their working /.  
 Ellos tienen que tener cuidado de no cometer errores en cualquier cosa que estén trabajando.  
 (THEY HAVE TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO COMMIT ERRORS IN WHICHEVER THING THEY ARE WORKING ON.)  
 Tienen que estar atentos a los errores en cualquier trabajo que estén haciendo.  
 (THEY HAVE TO PAY ATTENTION TO ERRORS IN WHICHEVER WORK THEY ARE DOING.)  
 Tienen que estar alertos a los errores en cual quier cosa en que trabajen.  
 (THEY HAVE TO BE ALERT TO ERRORS IN WHICHEVER THING ON WHICH THEY ARE WORKING.)
- B3. A model is a person who demonstrates something to you.  
 \*A model is the one who demonstrate / you anything.  
 Un modelo es una persona que le demuestra algo.  
 Una persona modelo es alguien que te demuestra algo.
- B4. I am very interested in obtaining a good reference.  
 \*I am very interested / to obtain a good reference.  
 Estoy muy interesado en obtener una buena referencia.  
 Me interesa mucho / obtener una buena recomendación.
- B5. On March 10, 1992, after more than 27 years of living in Puerto Rico, I moved to the New York.  
 \*On March 10, 1992, after more than 27 years / living in Puerto Rico, I moved to New York.  
 El 10 de marzo de 1992, después de vivir más de 27 años en Puerto Rico, me fuí a vivir a Nueva York.  
 El 10 de marzo de 1992, después de vivir en Puerto Rico más de 27 años, me mudé a Nueva York.

- B6. After the Spanish Civil War and due to the critical situation existing in the country (my family decided to leave Spain).  
 \*After the Spanish Civil War and due / the critical situation existing in the country....  
 Después de la guerra civil en España y debido a la situación crítica que existía en el país....  
 Después de la Guerra Civil española y debido a la situación crítica en que se encontraba el país....
- B7. On Saturdays, I can wash my car and listen to music.  
 \*On Saturdays, I can wash my car and listen / music.  
 Los sábados yo puedo lavar mi carro y escuchar / música.  
 Los sábados, puedo lavar mi coche y escuchar / música.
- B8. People of the middle class are able to pay for nursing homes.  
 \*People of the middle class are able to pay / nursing homes.  
 Las personas de la clase media son capaces de pagar / asilos para acianos.  
 La gente de la clase media puede pagar / los hospicios para ancianos
- B9. He is listening to a program of rock music.  
 \*He is listening / a program of rock music.  
 El está escuchando / un programa de música rock.  
 Está escuchando / un programa de música de "rock."
- B10. The supermarket is a stone's throw from my house.  
 \*The supermarket is a stone's throw / my house.  
 El supermercado está a un paso de mi casa.  
 El supermercado está a dos pasos de mi casa.
- B11. She is tired of taking care of us.  
 \*She is tired of taking care / us.  
 Ella está cansada de cuidarnos.  
 Ella está cansada de cuidarnos.
- B12. I need to apologize for my behavior.  
 \*I need to apologize / my behavior.  
 Yo necesito pedir disculpas por mi conducta.  
 Debo disculparme por mi comportamiento.
- B13. I should start by saying (that I am the oldest of three children.)  
 \*I should start / saying (that I am the oldest of three children.)  
 Yo debería empezar por decir....  
 Debo empezar por decir....

- B14. The factor that I had a problem with at O.D.U. was....  
 \*The factor that I had a problem with / O.D.U. was....  
 La razón por la que yo tuve un problema en O.D.U. fué....  
 (THE REASON THAT I HAD A PROBLEM AT O.D.U. WAS....)  
 Mi problema en O.D.U. fue.... (MY PROBLEM AT O.D.U. WAS....)
- B15. The gardener takes care of the plants.  
 \*The gardener take care / the plants.  
 El jardinero cuida / las plantas.  
 El jardinero cuida / las plantas.
- B16. If you look into this problem (you will see that....)  
 \*If you look / this problem....  
 Si tú examinas / este problema....  
 Si considerarás / este problem....
- B17. The children will experiment with those two subjects.  
 \*The children will experiment / those two subjects.  
 Los niños experimentarán con esas dos materias.  
 Los niños harán experimentos con esos dos sujetos.
- B18. Starting with kindergarten (we will have all the classes  
 come to the cafeteria by grade level.)  
 \*Starting / kindergarden....  
 Empezando con kinder....  
 Empezando con el jardin de infantes....

## CATEGORY C

## SENTENCES WITH "UNACCEPTABLE" PREPOSITION ERRORS

- C1. My parents lived next to me in Puerto Rico but then they moved to New York.  
 \*My parents lived beside me in Puerto Rico but then they moved to New York.  
 Mis padres vivían cerca de mí en Puerto Rico, pero luego ellos se mudaron a Nueva York.  
 Mis padres vivieron junto a mí en Puerto Rico pero luego se mudé a Nueva York.  
 Mis padres vivían al lado mío pero luego se mudaron a Nueva York.
- C2. ...and begin to put their energies into achieving positive goals.  
 \*...and begin to put their energies in achieving positive goals.  
 ...y empiezan a poner sus energías para alcanzar objetivos positivos.  
 ...y comenzar a invertir su energía en realizar metas positivas.
- C3. They are not ready to decide on their own.  
 \*They are not ready to decide in their own.  
 Ellos no están listos para decidir por su propia cuenta.  
 No están dispuestos a decidir por su cuenta.
- C4. The students are concentrating on their education.  
 \*The students are concentrating in their education.  
 Los estudiantes se están concentrando en su educación.  
 Los estudiantes se concentran en su educación.
- C5. We must take all factors into consideration.  
 \*We must take all factors in consideration.  
 Nosotros debemos considerar todos los hechos.  
 Debemos tomar en consideración todos los factores.
- C6. Is the student puzzled or confident about what is being taught?  
 \*Is the student puzzled or confident on what is being taught?  
 Está el estudiante confundido a seguro de lo que se está enseñando?  
 Está el estudiante confuso o seguro de lo que se le enseña?

Está confundido el estudiante o tiene confianza en lo que enseña. (IS THE STUDENT CONFUSED OR DOES S/HE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT?)

- C7. I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything on a silver platter.  
 \*I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything in a silver platter.  
 Estoy seguro de que nadie le va dar nada a alguien en un platillo de plata.  
 Estoy seguro de que nadie le va a regalar nada a nadie.  
 (I AM SURE THAT NOBODY IS GOING TO GIVE ANYTHING TO ANYBODY.)
- C8. The use of solar systems can replace gasoline and reduce pollution by cars.  
 \*The use of solar systems can replace gasoline and reduce pollution on cars.  
 El uso de sistemas solares puede reemplazar la gasolina y reducir la contaminación causada por los carros.  
 El uso de los sistemas de energía solar puede suplantar la gasolina y reducir la contaminación causada por los coches.
- C9. If we are to succeed in this research....  
 \*If we are to succeed at this research....  
 Si vamos a tener éxito en esta investigación....  
 Si hemos de tener éxito en estas investigaciones....
- C10. We don't have to worry about an embargo or a cutoff in the supply of oil.  
 \*We don't have to worry about an embargo or a cutoff on the supply of oil.  
 No nos tenemos que preocupar de un embargo ó una interrupción en el abastecimiento de combustible.  
 No tenemos que preocuparnos de un embargo o de un corte en el aprovisionamiento de petróleo.
- C11. I like to get presents, especially on my birthday.  
 \*I like to get presents, especial in my birthday.  
 Me gusta recibir regalos, especialmente en mi cumpleaños.  
 Me gusta recibir regalos, especialmente en mi cumpleaños.
- C12. She made a cake for me.  
 \*She made a cake to me.  
 Ella hizo un pastel para mi.  
 Ella me hizo un pastel.
- C13. I am always thinking about her.  
 \*I am always thinking in her.  
 Siempre estoy pensando en ella.  
 Siempre pienso en ella.



- C14. I lived at Fort Story for one year.  
 \*I lived in Fort Story for one year.  
 Yo vivi en Fort Story por un año.  
 Viví un año en Fort Story.
- C15. It was not unusual to see people in wigs because at that time people wore wigs a lot.  
 \*It was not unusual to see people in wigs because by that time people wore wigs a lot.  
 No era unusual mirar personas con pelucas porque en ese entonces las personas solían usarlas.  
 No era raro ver gente en peluca porque en esos tiempos la gente llevaba peluca mucho.
- C16. I was working for an unemployment agency.  
 \*I was working in an unemployment agency.  
 Yo estaba trabajando para una agencia de desempleo.  
 Trabajaba para una agencia de desempleo.
- C17. When people put their index finger on their face....  
 \*When people put their index finger in their face....  
 Cuando las personas ponen el dedo índice en su cara....  
 Cuando la gente se pone el dedo índice en la cara....
- C18. My parents are worried about me.  
 \*My parents are worried for me.  
 Mis padres están preocupados por mí.  
 Mis padres es preocupan por mí.
- C19. They help me with everything.  
 \*They help me in everything.  
 Ellos me ayudan en todo.  
 Me ayudan con todo.
- C20. I am going to tell you about my family. I will begin with myself.  
 \*I am going to tell you about my family. I will begin by myself.  
 Yo voy a contarte acerca de mi familia. Empezaré conmigo mismo.  
 Te voy a contar de mi familia. Empezaré conmigo misma.
- C21. Taking their backgrounds into consideration....  
 \*Taking their backgrounds in consideration....  
 Considerando su educación....  
 Tomando en consideración sus antecedentes.
- C22. Water combined with oil can cause problems.  
 \*Water combined to oil can cause problems.  
 La combinación de agua y aceite puede causar problemas.  
 (THE COMBINATION OF WATER AND OIL CAN CAUSE PROBLEMS.)  
 Aciete combinado con agua es una mala combinación.  
 (OIL COMBINED WITH WATER IS A BAD COMBINATION.)

- C23. I don't believe in abortion as the solution to the problem.  
 \*I don't believe in abortion as the solution for the problem.  
 Yo no creo que el aborto sea la solución del problema.  
 No creo que el aborto sea la solución al problema.
- C24. When I first arrived in this country....  
 \*When I first arrived at this country....  
 Cuando yo llegué por primera vez a este país....  
 Cuando primero llegué a este país....
- C25. I am going to compare it based on the old people of Costa Rica and of the United States.  
 \*I am going to compare it based in the old people of Costa Rica and of the United States.  
 Yo voy a compararlo en base a las personas mayores de Costa Rica y de los Estados Unidos.  
 Voy a hacer una comparación entre los ancianos de Costa Rica y los Estados Unidos. (I'M GOING TO MAKE A COMPARISON BETWEEN ...)
- C26. Also, it is a vice on which the smokers spend a large amount of money each year.  
 \*Also, it is a vice in which the smokers spend a large amount of money each year.  
 Además, es un vicio por el cual las personas que fuman gastan una gran cantidad de dinero cada año.  
 (FURTHERMORE, IT IS A VICE FOR WHICH PEOPLE WHO SMOKE...)  
 También es un vicio que le cuesta mucho todos los años a los fumadores. (...THAT COSTS SMOKERS A LOT EVERY YEAR)  
 También es un vicio en que los fumadores gastan una gran cantidad de dinero todos los años.
- C27. I got married in 1977 and I went to live in small city in the northwest of Spain.  
 \*I got married at 1977 and I went to live to small city in the northwest of Spain.  
 Yo me casé en 1977 y me fui a vivir a una ciudad pequeña en el Nor-Oeste de España.  
 Me casé en 1977 y me fui a vivir en una ciudad pequeña del noroeste de España.
- C28. ...but on the other hand....  
 \*...but in the other hand....  
 ...pero por otro lado....  
 ...pero por otro lado....

- C29. The World Series baseball game went into overtime yesterday.  
 \*The World Series baseball game went to overtime yesterday.  
 El partido de la serie mundial de baseball se fué a tiempo extra ayer.  
 El partido de beisbol de la Serie Mundial excedió el límite de tiempo ayer. (EXCEEDED THE TIME LIMIT)
- C30. Later I am going to an activity at my church.  
 \*Later I am going to an activity for my church.  
 Más tarde voy a ir a una actividad de la Iglesia.  
 Más tarde voy a una actividad en mi iglesia.
- C31. In the U.S., there was no woman doctor until 1846.  
 \*In the U.S., there was no woman doctor by 1846.  
 En los Estados unidos, no hubo una doctor hasta 1846.  
 En los Estados Unidos, no hubo doctoras hasta 1846.
- C32. All the children bring candy to school to share with the other children.  
 \*All the children bring candy to school to share to the other children.  
 Todos los niños traen dulce a la escuela para compartir con los otros niños.  
 Todos los niños traen dulces a la escuela para compartir con los otros niños.
- C33. Every night I watch news and sports on TV.  
 \*Every night I watch news and sports in TV.  
 Todas las noches miro las noticias y deportes en la televisión.  
 Todas las noches miro las noticias y los deportes en la televisión.
- C34. We arrived at New York Airport, in the United States, in December 1978.  
 \*We arrived at New York Airport, to the United States, in December 1978.  
 Nosotros llegamos al aeropuerto de Nueva York, en los Estados unidos, en diciembre de 1978.
- We arrived in the United States at the New York Airport in December, 1978. (original prepositional phrase order)  
 \*We arrived to the United States, at New York Airport in December 1978.  
 Llegamos a los Estados Unidos, al aeropuerto de Nueva York, en diciembre de 1978.

- C35. I got a job in New York City twelve days after we arrived.  
 \*I got a job on New York City twelve days after we arrived.  
 Yo obtuve un trabajo en Nueva York doce días después de que llegamos.  
 Conseguí un trabajo en Nueva York doce días después de llegar.
- C36. I like this country because the people are great to me.  
 \*I like this country because the people are great with me.  
 A mi me gusta este país porque las personas son muy buenas conmigo.  
 Me gusta este país porque la gente me trataba estupendamente. (TREAT ME STUPENDOUSLY)
- C37. ...because all of us laughed at my jokes.  
 \*...because all of us laughed with my jokes.  
 ...porque todos nos reímos de mis bromas.  
 ...porque todos nos reímos de mi chistes.
- C38. ...when a student is copying the answer from the student next to him\her and the teacher sees him\her.  
 \*...when a student is copying the answer to the student beside him\her and the teacher sees him\her.  
 ...cuando un estudiante está copiando la respuesta de otro estudiante sentado junto a él/ella y el profesor lo mira.  
 ...cuando un estudiante copia la repuesta del estudiante que está a su lado y el maestro lo ve.
- C39. When she dropped milk on the table....  
 \*When she dropped milk in the table....  
 Cuando ella dejó caer leche en la mesa....  
 Cuando derramó leche sobre la mesa....
- C40. He is in the seventh grade.  
 \*He is on the seventh grade.  
 El está en el séptimo grado.  
 Está en el séptimo grado.
- C41. The teacher should not deprive the disabled student of that right.  
 \*The teacher should not deprive the disabled student from that right.  
 El profesor no debería de privar al estudiante inválido de ese derecho.  
 El maestro no debe privar de ese derecho al estudiante incapacitado.

- C42. They shouldn't continue hanging unto thoughts associated with the "good old days."  
\*They shouldn't continue hanging to thoughts associated with the "good old days."  
Ellos no deberían de continuar ateniéndose a pensamientos asociados con "aquellos buenos tiempos." (CONTINUE RELYING ON THOUGHTS ASSOCIATED WITH)  
No deben seguir pensando de la forma asociada con los viejos tiempos. (THINKING ABOUT THE METHOD ASSOCIATED WITH)
- C43. The U.S. should look at the rest of the world and learn about regulated health care.  
\*The U.S. should look over the rest of the world and learn about regulated health care.  
Los Estados unidos debería de observar al resto del mundo y aprender acerca de Salud Social.  
Los Estados Unidos debe considerar el resto del mundo....
- C44. She got married to my cousin two years ago.  
\*She got married with my cousin two years ago.  
Ella se casó con mi primo hace dos años.  
Ella se casó con mi primo hace dos años.

## Appendix C

NATIVE SPEAKER QUERY:  
THE QUERY TO LINGUIST

Date: Tue, 13 Jul 93 14:43:40 EDT  
 From: Denni Chiavarini <DJC100G@ODUVM>  
 Subject: Query: Use of English Prepositions by Native Speakers  
 To: linguist@tamvml

In the process of doing research for my master's thesis on prepositions, I have discovered that their usage varies from region to region of the United States, I am trying to gather information about these variations from native speakers in different parts of the country. I am looking for people who are willing to complete the attached set of sentences taken from free writing samples of ESL students. My purpose is to find out which prepositions native speakers would use in place of the "errors" made by these students.

If you would like to help, please complete the sentences with the prepositions that you would use. If there is more than one possibility please feel free to list any or all of them. Also, if there are sentences that you feel do not need a preposition in the blank just put an X. At the end you will find a place to list any state(s) of the United States (any province(s) of Canada, or any other English-speaking country) where you have lived that may have influenced your choices. Knowing your age and occupation will also be helpful.

I will really appreciate all responses but will only be able to use those sent before August 1. I will share my findings with everyone during the week of August 22.

Please supply and appropriate preposition:

1. My parents lived in the house \_\_\_\_\_ me in Puerto Rico.
2. ...and begin to put their energies \_\_\_\_\_ achieving positive goals.
3. They are not ready to decide \_\_\_\_\_ their own.
4. The students are concentrating \_\_\_\_\_ their education.
5. We must take all factors \_\_\_\_\_ consideration.
6. Is the student puzzled or confident \_\_\_\_\_ what is being taught?
7. I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything \_\_\_\_\_ a silver platter.
8. The use of solar systems can replace gasoline and reduce pollution \_\_\_\_\_ cars.

9. If we are to succeed \_\_\_\_\_ this research....
10. We don't have to worry about an embargo or a cutoff \_\_\_\_\_ the supply of oil.
11. I like to get presents, especially \_\_\_\_\_ my birthday.
12. She made a cake \_\_\_\_\_ me.
13. I am always thinking \_\_\_\_\_ her.
14. I lived \_\_\_\_\_ Fort Story for one year.
15. It was not unusual to see people in wigs because \_\_\_\_\_ hat time people wore wigs a lot.
16. I was working \_\_\_\_\_ an unemployment agency.
17. When people put their index finger \_\_\_\_\_ their face....
18. My parents are worried \_\_\_\_\_ me.
19. They help me \_\_\_\_\_ everything.
20. I am going to tell you about my family. I will begin \_\_\_\_\_ myself.
21. Taking their backgrounds \_\_\_\_\_ consideration....
22. Water combined \_\_\_\_\_ oil can cause problems.
23. I don't believe in abortion as the solution \_\_\_\_\_ the problem.
24. When I first arrived \_\_\_\_\_ this country....
25. I am going to compare it based \_\_\_\_\_ the old people of Costa Rica and the United States.
26. Also, it is a vice \_\_\_\_\_ which smokers spend a large amount of money each year.
27. I got married \_\_\_\_\_ 1977 and I went to live \_\_\_\_\_ a small city in the northwest of Spain.
28. ...but \_\_\_\_\_ the other hand....
29. The World Series baseball game went \_\_\_\_\_ overtime yesterday.
30. Later, I am going to an activity \_\_\_\_\_ my church.
31. In the U.S., there were no women doctors \_\_\_\_\_ 1846.
32. All the children bring candy to school to share \_\_\_\_\_ the other children.
33. Every night I watch news and sports \_\_\_\_\_ TV.
34. We arrived \_\_\_\_\_ New York Airport, \_\_\_\_\_ the United States, \_\_\_\_\_ December 1978.
35. I got a job \_\_\_\_\_ New York City twelve days after we arrived.
36. I like this country because the people are great \_\_\_\_\_ me.
37. ....because all of us laughed \_\_\_\_\_ my jokes.
38. ...when a student is copying the answer \_\_\_\_\_ the student next to him and the teacher sees him.
39. When she dropped milk \_\_\_\_\_ the table....
40. He is \_\_\_\_\_ the seventh grade.
41. The teacher should not deprive the disabled student \_\_\_\_\_ that right.
42. They shouldn't continue hanging \_\_\_\_\_ thoughts associated with the "good old days."
43. The U.S. should look \_\_\_\_\_ the rest of the world and learn about regulated health care.

List any state(s) of the United States which you have lived in for five years or longer:

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NATIVE SPEAKER QUERY:  
RESULTS AND COMMENTS

1. My parents lived \_\_\_\_\_ me in Puerto Rico but then they moved to New York.

<u>with</u>	<u>next to</u>	<u>near</u>	<u>by</u>	<u>beside</u>	<u>across from</u>	<u>next door to</u>
86	9	8	3	3	3	2
<u>opposite</u>	<u>behind</u>	<u>around</u>	<u>above</u>	<u>under</u>	<u>without</u>	<u>for</u>
2	2	1	1	1	1	1
<u>before</u>	<u>instead of</u>	<u>as</u>	<u>off</u>	<u>no answer</u>		
1	1	1	1	1		

"Various possibilities depending on relative position."

2. ....and begin to put their energies \_\_\_\_\_ achieving positive goals.

<u>into</u>	<u>in</u>	<u>towards</u>	<u>toward</u>
87	3	8	8

"towards (I don't like this, but have heard it.)"

"into emphasizes the energy/activity involved; towards emphasizes the motion toward the goal, in writing I would put toward but in speech I use towards."

3. They are not ready to decide \_\_\_\_\_ their own.

<u>on</u>	<u>no answer</u>
97	1

"(almost anything could work with sufficiently convoluted context, but even 'for' is pretty difficult.)"

4. The students are concentrating \_\_\_\_\_ their education.

<u>on</u>	<u>in spite of</u>	<u>upon</u>
98	1	1

5. We must take all factors \_\_\_\_\_ consideration.

<u>into</u>	<u>under</u>	<u>in</u>
97	2	1

"under (business jargon)"

6. Is the student puzzled or confident \_\_\_\_\_ what is being taught?

<u>about</u>	<u>with</u>	<u>of</u>	<u>at</u>	<u>in</u>	<u>over</u>	<u>concerning</u>
87	10	5	2	2	1	1
<u>as to</u>	<u>on</u>	<u>no answer</u>				
1	1	3				

"not a good sentence"

"puzzled at - confident about"

"chose about but prefer puzzled by and confident in"

"[NOTE: this isn't a good example because of the



conjunction - it's 'puzzled about,' but you can say 'confident about' OR 'confident over.']"  
 "with 'puzzled' I would use "by," with "confident" I would use "about." I never know which preposition to choose with a complex N.P. What so most people say about this? I think I would have to say "ABOUT."  
 "puzzled by / confident in"  
 "Note: puzzled and confident take different prepositions"

7. I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything \_\_\_\_\_ a silver platter.
- |           |            |               |            |             |             |                  |
|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| <u>on</u> | <u>for</u> | <u>except</u> | <u>but</u> | <u>like</u> | <u>with</u> | <u>no answer</u> |
| 91        | 2          | 2             | 1          | 2           | 1           | 1                |

"for with meaning change"  
 "depends on meaning but ON"  
 "I would have said "but" after "anything," but "on a silver platter" is an idiom, and this sentence doesn't make sense with "but." I just want "but" because of the negatives built up by "no one" and "anything" - - but this is stylistic."

8. The use of solar systems can replace gasoline and reduce pollution \_\_\_\_\_ cars.
- |             |           |           |           |               |                  |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|------------------|
| <u>from</u> | <u>by</u> | <u>in</u> | <u>of</u> | <u>due to</u> | <u>no answer</u> |
| 75          | 24        | 20        | 2         | 1             | 1                |

"Don't like the way stated prefer 'pollution caused by cars'"  
 "gasoline in pollution from"  
 "[SAME PROBLEM!!! 'Replace gasoline \_\_\_ cars' doesn't even really work - 'in'? 'for'? and then 'reduce pollution' could be 'from' or 'in,' although the latter isn't great.]"  
 "(this one is tricky because the sentence is uninterpretable! 'INTO' would be no less reasonable - or 'INSIDE' for that matter....)"  
 "though the use of the term 'solar systems' is very odd here."  
 "better to say: car pollution?"

9. If we are to succeed \_\_\_\_\_ this research.....
- |           |             |           |                |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| <u>in</u> | <u>with</u> | <u>at</u> | <u>through</u> |
| 84        | 50          | 5         | 1              |

"not a good sentence"

10. We don't have to worry about an embargo or a cutoff \_\_\_\_\_ the supply of oil.
- |           |           |           |           |            |             |             |                  |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| <u>of</u> | <u>in</u> | <u>to</u> | <u>on</u> | <u>for</u> | <u>from</u> | <u>with</u> | <u>no answer</u> |
| 73        | 21        | 4         | 4         | 2          | 4           | 3           | 4                |

"embargo on cut off in"  
 "[SAME PROBLEM!!! 'embargo' requires 'of,' but 'cut off' requires 'in']"  
 "embargo of or on cut off of"  
 "'OF' is less acceptable, the others not acceptable to me but the beginning of the sentence is sufficiently awkward that I would accept almost anything - - at that point I was only looking for meaning."  
 "I'm uncomfortable with 'the supply of oil' I would prefer 'the oil supply.' 'in' also came to mind but I feel it is ungrammatical"  
 "impossible construction; prefer "an embargo on the oil supply being cut off"  
 "I can't do (this) in my idiolect the way it's set out: I would prefer an embargo ON/ a cut off IN the supply of oil - tho the latter I doubt I'd use anyway. I couldn't co-ordinate the two because they require different prepositions."  
 "[embargo] on [cut off] of"

11. I like to get presents, especially \_\_\_\_\_ my birthday.  
           on                  for          near          after  
           93                  34          1                  1

"on (nuance of meaning)"  
 "for/on different senses for the two"

12. She made a cake \_\_\_\_\_ me.  
           for          with          without          of          no answer  
           97          20          1                  1                  1

"with (different meaning and less acceptable"  
 "for/with gift vs team project"  
 "context would help. One of my friends suggested 'on' but I'm not convinced."

13. I am always thinking \_\_\_\_\_ her.  
           of                  about          for                  on  
           81                  68                  4                  1

"thinking of = either thinking about or being considerate of"  
 "for (different meaning)"  
 "about/of style shift: conversational vs 'poetic' or emotional"  
 "about could be positive or negative, of implies positive thoughts, a more personal involvement."  
 "(context?)"

14. I lived \_\_\_\_\_ Fort Story for one year.  
           at  in  near  by  on  behind  around  beside  
           92  13  6      6      5      1      1      1

"choice depends on if Fort Story is a town = in, really a

fort = at"  
 "Choice depends if Fort Story is a town or building 'in'  
 if military base 'at'"  
 "'on' if military base"  
 "depends on local usage or the particular place name"  
 "choice depended on if Fort Story is a city (in) military  
 base (at)"  
 "(city or building)"  
 "in = town on = island at = apartment complex"  
 "real world knowledge necessary"  
 "in = town on = base"  
 "at = city in = actual fort"  
 "depends on if it is an actual fort = at or just a city  
 which used to be a fort = in"  
 "(I am assuming Fort Story is a town. If it isn't I might  
 use another preposition.)"  
 "AT if it is a military base and not a town."  
 "in/near inside vs outside city limits; Inside if its  
 actually a military fort or some building."  
 "at if it's a real fort, not just a name"  
 "Note: depends on what Fort Story is."  
 "in - assuming this is a town or city"  
 "'in' if Fort Story is a town of something of that nature;  
 'at' if it's the name of a building."  
 "(context and knowing whether we're discussing a  
 place/building would help)"

15. It was not unusual to see people in wigs because \_\_\_\_\_  
 that time people wore wigs a lot.
- |           |               |           |              |               |                   |
|-----------|---------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <u>at</u> | <u>during</u> | <u>in</u> | <u>about</u> | <u>around</u> | <u>throughout</u> |
| 92        | 20            | 10        | 2            | 1             | 1                 |

"I would not use a preposition I would use during"  
 "[ 'in' might also be possible if you were talking about a  
 time period. Giving sentences out of context makes  
 answering difficult. ]"  
 "in (different meaning - - but the tense system is pretty  
 convoluted by the time you care about this. In refers to  
 a time period, at to a point. I wouldn't expect someone  
 to make this distinction until after he or she has  
 stopped using 'because' or 'a lot' in this situation."  
 "for/in/at (free variation? Beats me."  
 "at\during (roughly the difference between perfective and  
 imperfective aspect)"  
 "at that time - - reference to a point in time. here, in  
 that time, reference to a period of time."

16. I was working \_\_\_\_\_ an unemployment agency.
- |            |           |           |             |                |             |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| <u>for</u> | <u>at</u> | <u>in</u> | <u>with</u> | <u>through</u> | <u>near</u> |
| 76         | 69        | 39        | 17          | 2              | 1           |

" 'with' has different meaning"  
 "at if intention is that speaker is employed at the  
 business for on behalf of the agency"

"with = client when trying to place"  
 "with (sounds affected, like the speaker is embarrassed about it.)"  
 "In? What's this mean anyway?"  
 "`for' preferable if the employment agency is conceived of primarily as a corporate entity, 'at' if it's conceived of as a place of occupation."  
 "for seems more temporary than at in this context -- at would be used if you were a manager or a counselor at the agency, for if you were a client."

17. When people put their index finger \_\_\_\_\_ their face.....

<u>on</u>	<u>to</u>	<u>in</u>	<u>above</u>	<u>up to</u>	<u>below</u>	<u>in front of</u>
59	42	14	3	5	1	5
<u>against</u>	<u>next to</u>	<u>onto</u>	<u>toward</u>	<u>near</u>	<u>under</u>	
2	2	2	1	1	1	
<u>beside</u>	<u>no answer</u>					
1	3					

"depends on what you mean"  
 "on (length of finger) to = tip"  
 "towards (works with 'point' not 'put')"  
 "in = theirs have different referents; on = theirs have the same referent"  
 "IN if the two occurrences of 'their' have different referents"  
 "Depends on what the intended meaning is, and the example gives insufficient context to determine. Almost any locative preposition will do."  
 "What preposition I put here will depend very much on what spatial meaning is intended."

18. My parents are worried \_\_\_\_\_ me.

<u>about</u>	<u>for</u>	<u>over</u>	<u>by</u>	<u>X</u>
98	15	2	2	1

"this parallels number 13: worried about could be negative (they think I'm going to make a mess of things), worried for suggests a more personal concern (that other people might take advantage of me, e.g.) Here and in number 13, about could be used with an inanimate object; thinking about/worrying about the budget deficit. Thinking of an inanimate object = conceptualizing it, a different register. I don't believe you can be worried for an inanimate object."

19. They help me \_\_\_\_\_ everything.

<u>with</u>	<u>on</u>	<u>in</u>	<u>at</u>	<u>for</u>	<u>despite</u>	<u>in spite of</u>
97	3	5	2	1	1	1

"do (not a preposition of course)"  
 "As if it were a specific task"

20. I am going to tell you about my family. I will begin  
with myself.

with  
98

21. Taking their backgrounds \_\_\_\_\_ consideration....

into            for            under            in  
97                    1                    4                    1

"under (business jargon)"

22. Water combined \_\_\_\_\_ oil can cause problems.

with            into(archaic)            no answer  
97                    1                                    1

23. I don't believe in abortion as the solution \_\_\_\_\_  
the problem.

to                    for                    of  
96                    13                    2

"[I object to this sentence! I'm pro-choice]"

24. When I first arrived \_\_\_\_\_ this country.....

in                    at  
98                    1

"at (nuance = in implies staying; at implies landmark attained"

25. I am going to compare it based \_\_\_\_\_ the old people of  
Costa Rica and the United States.

on                    upon                    with                    to                    no answer  
93                    11                    1                    1                    1

"ungrammatical"

"[Sentence isn't very idiomatic English.]"

"very hard to interpret: how can you compare one thing?  
But 'based on' is very likely."

"on (if I'm parsing rest of sentence correctly)"

"this sentence is anomalous"

"compare with the old people base it on the old people"

"on? (still not an acceptable sentence--too dependent a  
clause"

"Looks ungrammatical but based on would be normal"

"This sentence is odd in any case since 'compare' sounds  
better with a plural object or a 'to' PP and this  
sentence has neither"

"This sentence is weird enough to be unnatural for me.  
But I always use 'on' after 'based' in this type of  
construction."

"[compare what with what? based on...???"

"I don't like this sentence. I need more context."

26. Also, it is a vice \_\_\_\_\_ which smokers spend a large amount of money each year.
- |           |            |           |             |                |             |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| <u>on</u> | <u>for</u> | <u>in</u> | <u>upon</u> | <u>through</u> | <u>with</u> |
| 87        | 13         | 7         | 3           | 1              | 2           |

"not great phrasing"

"This whole thing is awkward I would say because of"

"on (but I would put it after money, usually)"

27. I got married a 1977 and I went to live b a small city in the northwest of Spain.

a) <u>in</u>	<u>during</u>	<u>around</u>	<u>after</u>	<u>about</u>	<u>before</u>	b) <u>in</u>	<u>near</u>
98	1	1	1	1	1	80	6

28. ...but \_\_\_\_\_ the other hand....

on  
98

29. The World Series baseball game went \_\_\_\_\_ overtime yesterday.

<u>into</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>to</u>	<u>no answer</u>
85	7	2	1

"baseball = extra innings football = overtime"

"[Baseball doesn't go into overtime, it goes into extra innings!]"

"(extra innings not OT, don't need prep with extra innings)"

"extra innings (NOT overtime)"

"except baseball has no overtime, only extra innings"

"not accurate; rather: INTO EXTRA INNINGS"

30. Later, I am going to an activity \_\_\_\_\_ my church.

<u>at</u>	<u>with</u>	<u>for</u>	<u>of</u>	<u>in</u>	<u>through</u>	<u>no answer</u>
93	10	7	4	7	1	1

"(activity OF, but actually 'event AT' is highly preferred - I doubt the church per se engages in any activities of the kind one might attend.)"

"at/with on the church grounds vs with the congregation"

"'with' if the meaning is that the parish/congregation is going to the activity as a group, 'at' if the meaning is that the activity is taking place at the physical location of the church building."

"I can't 'go to an activity.' I can go to an event, or go to DO an activity."

"['at' if in the church building. if elsewhere I would say 'with']"

" at = building 'with' (social group)"

31. In the U.S., there were no women doctors \_\_\_\_\_ 1846.  
until      in      before      after      during      as of      by  
36            71            33            3            2            1            1  
around      till  
1                    1

"[needs context]"

" in = at time of 'before' is also possible"

"before (emphasis is different)"

"by (with slightly different implications)"

"in/until Discourse theme: conditions in 1846 vs date of first woman doctor"

"depending on the precise meaning intended with the reference to the year"

32. All the children bring candy to school to share \_\_\_\_\_  
the other children.  
with  
98

33. Every night I watch news and sports \_\_\_\_\_ TV.  
on  
98

34. We arrived a New York Airport, b the United States, c December 1978.

a) at in at the in the b) in X c) on in X during  
94    8            3            1            98    1            57    42    1            1

- a. "[you can't just say "we arrived at NY Airport" - needs an article]"

"at the"

"except there's no 'NY Airport,' there's JFK, LaGuardia and Newark which are all airports in NY"

"I have to add 'a' before 'New York Airport,' because there are 3 airports in the NYC area, none of which are called 'NY Airport.' If they named the actual airport, it also changes the preposition in the next clause, i.e. We arrived at JFK, the United States, in Dec. (OF) 1978 the 'of' is in parenthesis because it is optional."

"c. -- note that 'on Dec. 8, 1978' is possible, but not 'on dec. 1978'"

"but ON Dec. 1, 1978"

35. I got a job \_\_\_\_\_ New York City twelve days after we arrived.  
in            near            from            for  
98            1            1            1

36. I like this country because the people are great \_\_\_\_\_ me.  
to            with            for            towards  
96            3            3            1

"kind of an odd sentence"

"(Not sure about great. For and towards might be possible with other adjs, but don't mean the same)"

"or FOR different sense; even WITH if the speaker is a child)"

37. ....because all of us laughed \_\_\_\_\_ my jokes.  
           at                  with                  over  
           98                  1                  1

"or OVER if the jokes were bad!"

38. ...when a student is copying the answer \_\_\_\_\_ the student next to him and the teacher sees him.  
       from          of          off          off of          for          with          no answer  
       82          28          9          3          3          1          1

"[So all students are male?]"

"The choice of preposition changes the meaning of the sentence. If the student whose paper is being copied is an active participant, and/or aware of the copying, I would use from here. If the student is unaware of the copying, I would say of."

"off/from/of (Style shift? 'OFF' seems colloquial, 'OF' stilted)"

39. When she dropped milk \_\_\_\_\_ the table.....  
       on          under          from          beside          off          onto          off of          by  
       98          6          4          3          6          15          4          1  
       off from          from off          at          next to          all over          unto          beneath  
           1          1          1          2          1          1          1

"would say "spilled" instead of 'dropped'"

"There isn't enough context here to tell what the sentence is meant to say. About the only meaning I can come up with easily is that she dropped a carton of milk on the table. The sentence 'She dropped the milk off the table' is all right, but it implies that she is on top of the table herself. In both cases, the milk must be in a container."

"dropped milk?"

"I can't really say this, though. /she can spill it on the table, but dropping implies not spilling (i.e. putting the carton down quickly), in which case it would be 'the milk.'"

"on, off, of (with disparate meanings)"

"'spilt' is preferred to dropped"

"Note: 'Dropped milk' is odd, "Spilled milk IS BETTER"

"on/off (table as ending point vs beginning point of the trajectory)"

"('dropped'?)"



40. He is \_\_\_\_\_ the seventh grade.  
in  
98
41. The teacher should not deprive the disabled student  
\_\_\_\_\_ that right.  
of            from            X            up?  
94                4                2                1
42. They shouldn't continue hanging \_\_\_\_\_ thoughts  
associated with the "good old days."  
onto on to on over to about through for out NA  
63        10        10        1        1        1        1        1        2        10

"Nothing really correct - wouldn't use that verb"  
"[Unintelligible -- what's it supposed to mean?]"  
"don't understand"  
"?????? idiom unknown"  
"I'm not sure what this sentence is suppose to mean."  
"odd sentence"  
"can't parse well enough to add preposition"  
"I can't make this well-formed with a mere preposition"  
"onto (I guess)"  
"for (assuming this is about capital punishment, but what  
else? A very strange sentence. Oh, perhaps ON TO? - but  
not ONTO!)"  
"particle `on' plus prep `to'"  
"I can't understand this sentence since I don't use  
`hanging' in any way I can interpret here. I do use  
`hang around' and `hang out.'"  
"Hanging around doesn't take an object. I don't know what  
else you could use with this verb."

43. The U.S. should look \_\_\_\_\_ the rest of the world and  
learn about regulated health care.  
at                to                around            toward            after            like  
84                41                1                2                2                1

"to = as a model to imitate    at = comparison"  
"at/to (register difference -- should probably be to --  
to, not to -- and)"  
"to/at free variation?"  
"`to' can be used, but with a different meaning, one  
slightly less plausible in this pragmatic context."  
"`to look to' = `to depend on'  
"`look to' would suggest some action by the rest of the  
world on our behalf."

44. She got married \_\_\_\_\_ him last year.<sup>6</sup>  

<u>to</u>	<u>with</u>	<u>NA</u>
76	3	2

"I would say got married last year or married him last year."

"not idiomatic; rather 'She MARRIED HIM last year.' 'She GOT MARRIED LAST YEAR.' (but not 'to' anybody in particular... Why that should be, I dunno!)"

"Note: I would simply use the verb --> she married him"

"This (to) is sort of ok; I would never say/write it, though. I'd use: 44a. She married him last year. OR

44b. They got married last year."

#### GENERAL COMMENTS:

"Also, I'm sure you're aware that in cases where more than one preposition is grammatical, there may be a difference in meaning depending on which is used. (sometimes these differences are very subtle; eg your 13)"

"Dear Mr./Ms. Chiavarini:

I thought I'd be helpful and complete your preposition survey for you, but while doing it I got extremely frustrated by some problems it has. I've marked several comments on individual items, but here are some general comments: (1) if you're trying to find out what preposition a complement to some word (say, a noun) should have, DON'T give conjoined nouns!! They might take two different prepositions! (As in fact some of your examples do.)

(2) In some cases, it's hard to tell what's appropriate without any context. This points up the well-known problems of using example sentences in isolation...

(3) If you're trying to get linguistic judgements, you should avoid controversial statements (like the one about abortion). Why piss people off?

(4) Many studies have shown that the so-called "generic 'he'" is not interpreted generically very often. So if you're talking about students in general 'he' implies that all students (or maybe the only ones that count? are male. There are several strategies for avoiding this, the most common being to use the third person plural.

Sorry to be so critical, but the survey took a lot of time, and all the problems made me very frustrated with it."

---

<sup>6</sup> This sentence did not appear on the first 18 queries which accounts for the discrepancy in the numbers of responses.

"From the looks of it most of your students ar Spanish speaking. At least they make a lot of errors in these contexts."

"What did you do at/on/in/over/during the weekend?  
I want to protest X/against/about/over/at their actions. (and a slightly different range with protest as a noun)  
He met X/with President Clinton last month (Not parallel to had a meeting with)  
they appealed X/against/about/? the decision  
Trudgill & Hannah mention a few of these in International English (Edward Arnold). I would guess that most varieties have a few odd ones, e.g. NZE I am a fan of/for Split Enz.  
I'll look forward to your summary."

"NB: In some but not all of the places where different prepositions can be used, producing different meanings, I have listed more than one of the possibilities. In many cases, but not all, different meanings result from different choices of preposition."

"Here are my responses to your queries. Some of the responses have more than one alternate because there are more than one possible meaning for the phrase. Others have more than one because the meaning allowed more than one. I did not distinguish between these."

"Although I offered prepositions for the sentences you provided I would hesitate to say they are examples of how I use these preposition; I would construct for written or spoken communication. This may be helpful from a syntactic perspective, but I wonder about how useful it is pragmatically?"

## APPENDIX D

## COMPARING FIRST AND SECOND TRANSLATIONS

Each set of sentences below is a comparison of the corrected English sentence, the student's sentence, and both translations, which were done from the corrected English sentence. The purpose is to show the differences in the translations and how they can effect preposition use.

## Key to abbreviations:

= : same as  
 first: first Spanish translation  
 second: second Spanish translation  
 no prep: no preposition is used in the sentence  
 Different prep: A preposition which is different from the English preposition and the student error is used

## Key to preposition markings:

English      Student Error      DIFFERENT I      DIFFERENT II

CATEGORIES:

## I. first = error / second = no prep

1. She made a cake for me. (F52)  
 \*She made a cake to me.  
 Ella hizo un pastel para mi.  
 Ella me hizo un pastel.
2. I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything on  
 a silver platter. (F47)  
 \*I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything in  
 a silver platter.  
 Estoy seguro de que nadie le va dar nada a alguien en  
 un platillo de plata.  
 Estoy seguro de que nadie le va a regalar nada a  
 nadie.

3. The World Series baseball game went into overtime yesterday. (F69)  
 \*The World Series baseball game went to overtime yesterday.  
 El partido de la serie mundial de baseball se fué a tiempo extra ayer.  
 El partido de beisbol de la Serie Mundial excedió el límite de tiempo ayer.
4. I like this country because the people are great to me. (F76)  
 \*I like this country because the people are great with me.  
 A mi me gusta este país porque las personas son muy buenas con conmigo.  
 Me gusta este país porque la gente me trataba estupendamente.

II. first = error / second = different prep

5. I am going shopping. (F11)  
 \*I am going to the shopping.  
 Yo voy a comprar.  
 Me voy DE compras.
6. I am going to compare it based on the old people of Costa Rica and of the United States. (F65)  
 \*I am going to compare it based in the old people of Costa Rica and of the United States.  
 Yo voy a compararlo en base a las personas mayores de Costa Rica y de los Estados Unidos.  
 Voy a hacer una comparación ENTRE los ancianos de Costa Rica y los Estados Unidos.
7. They shouldn't continue hanging onto thoughts associated with the "good old days." (F82)  
 \*They shouldn't continue hanging to thoughts associated with the "good old days."  
 Ellos no deberían de continuar ateniéndose a pensamientos asociados con "aquellos buenos tiempos."  
 No deben seguir pensando DE la forma asociada con los viejos tiempos.
8. When she dropped milk on the table.... (F79)  
 \*When she dropped milk in the table....  
 Cuando ella dejó caer leche en la mesa....  
 Cuando derramó leche SOBRE la mesa....

III. first = error / second = Eng. = no prep

9. I was afraid I had lost my baggage. (F10)  
 \*I was afraid about lost my baggage.  
 Tengo miedo de haber perdido mis maletas.  
 Temía haber perdido el equipaje.

IV. first = error / second = Eng. prep

10. I got married in 1977 and I went to live in small city in the northwest of Spain. (F67)  
 \*I got married at 1977 and I went to live to small city in the northwest of Spain.  
 Yo me casé en 1977 y me fuí a vivir a una ciudad pequeña en el Nor-Oeste de España.  
 Me casé en 1977 y me fui a vivir en una ciudad pequeña del noroeste de España.
11. They help me with everything. (F59)  
 \*They help me in everything.  
 Ellos me ayudan en todo.  
 Me ayudan con todo.

V. first = Eng. prep / second = error

12. I am very interested in obtaining a good reference. (F26)  
 \*I am very interested to obtain a good reference.  
 Estoy muy interesado en obtener una buena referencia.  
 Me interesa mucho obtener una buena recomendación.

VI. first = diff. prep / second = error

13. My parents lived next to me in Puerto Rico but then they moved to New York. (F41)  
 \*My parents lived beside me in Puerto Rico but then they moved to New York.  
 Mis padres vivían CERCA DE mí en Puerto Rico, pero luego ellos se mudaron a Nueva York.  
 Mis padres vivieron junto a mí en Puerto Rico pero luego se mudé a Nueva York.

14. ...and begin to put their energies into achieving positive goals. (F42)  
 \*...and begin to put their energies in achieving positive goals.  
 ...y empiezan a poner sus energías PARA alcanzar objetivos positivos.  
 ...y comenzar a invertir su energía en realizar metas positivas.

VII. first = no prep / second = error

15. We must take all factors into consideration. (F45)  
 \*We must take all factors in consideration.  
 Nosotros debemos considerar todos los hechos.  
 Debemos tomar en consideración todos los factores.
16. Taking their backgrounds into consideration.... (F61)  
 \*Taking their backgrounds in consideration....  
 Considerando su educación....  
 Tomando en consideración sus antecedentes.

VIII. first = different prep / second = Eng. prep

17. I don't believe in abortion as the solution to the problem. (F63)  
 \*I don't believe in abortion as the solution for the problem.  
 Yo no creo que el aborto sea la solución DEL problema.  
 No creo que el aborto sea la solución al problema.
18. Water combined with oil can cause problems. (F62)  
 \*Water combined to oil can cause problems.  
 La combinación DE agua y aceite puede causar problemas.  
 Aciete combinado con agua is una mala combinación.

IX. first = diff. prep / second = no prep.

19. Also, it is a vice on which the smokers spend a large amount of money each year. (F66)  
 \*Also, it is a vice in which the smokers spend a large amount of money each year.  
 Además, es un vicio por el cual las personas que fuman gastan una gran cantidad de dinero cada año.  
 También es un vicio que le cuesta mucho todos los años a los fumadores.

X. first = Eng. prep / second = no prep

20. The U.S. should look at the rest of the world and learn about regulated health care. (F83)  
\*The U.S. should look over the rest of the world and learn about regulated health care.  
Los Estados unidos debería de observar al resto del mundo y aprender acerca de Salud Social.  
Los Estados Unidos debe considerar el resto del mundo.

XI. four different preps

21. Later I am going to an activity at my church. (70)  
\*Later I am going to an activity for my church.  
Más tarde voy a ir a una actividad DE la Iglesia.  
Más tarde voy a una actividad EN mi iglesia.



## APPENDIX E

## SPANISH PREPOSITIONS AND THEIR TRANSLATIONS

The prepositions used in the Spanish translations are listed below and followed by their translations as given in The New World Spanish-English and English-Spanish Dictionary (1991). As noted in Chapter 2 (p. 17) it is possible for a preposition to have many translations. This is particularly true of common prepositions.

**a** 1, to; toward. 2, at; in; on; upon. 3, by; near  
4, of; for. 5, with. 6, against; next to.  
7, according to.

**cerca de** near; about

**con** 1, with. 2, in spite of. 3, *fol. by inf.* by.

**de** 1, (derivation) of; from; by. 2, (possession) of; from; by. 3, (cause) from; because of.  
4, (character; material) of; made of; with.  
5, (time; measurement) of. 6, (agency) by.  
7, (subject) about; concerning. 8, (comparison) than. 9, (origin) from; of.

**después de** after

**en** 1, in; into. 2, at. 3, on; upon.

**entre** among; between.

**hasta** until; as far as; up to.

**junto a** next to; beside.

**(al) lado** alongside; next door.

**para** 1, for. 2, toward. 3, to. 4, in order to.

**por** 1, by; by way of; through. 2, throughout, the extent of; over. 3, by; by means or agency of.  
4, in expressions of time in. 5, for; because of. 6, for the sake of; on behalf of. 7, to; in order to. 8, for; in quest of. 9, by; multiplied by; times. 10, denoting price or cost for. 11, per; a; each. 12, for; as. 13, for; instead of; in place of.

**sobre** *prep. & adv. over; above. --prep. 1, on; upon; on top of. 2, about; concerning. 3, after; following.*

APPENDIX F  
SENTENCE INDEX

All sentences collected for this thesis are listed below and are followed by at least two sets of letters and/or numbers which refer to all the places the sentence appears in the thesis. A number before the colon refers to the chapter where the sentence can be found and the number after it refers to the number of the sentence in that chapter: (3:1) is read as Chapter 3, sentence 1. A letter before the colon refers to an appendix followed by the number of the sentence in that appendix; (B:A1) means Appendix B, Category A, sentence 1. All sentences which are found in Appendix B, Category C also appear in Appendix C with identical sentence numbers, therefore, Appendix C sentences are not included here.

1. (My mother lives in Puerto Rico.) I always call her because she doesn't know how to call here. (3:1, B:A1)
2. She is calling the fire department. (2:1, B:A2)
3. They are paying the waiter. (2:4, B:A3)
4. The security guard watches the property. (3:2, B:A4)
5. My mother helps my father. (2:2, B:A5)
6. She is the best in all the world. (3:3, B:A6)
7. I envy them because they are near my parents and I am not. (3:28, B:A7)
8. I had to go where my company sent me. (3:27, B:A8)
9. The population has increased 20%. (3:4, B:A9)
10. I was afraid I had lost my baggage. (2:6, B:A10, D:9)
11. I am going shopping. (2:7, B:A11, D:5)
12. Grandfather has a house near the beach. (3:29, B:A12)
13. "God, give me the wisdom to understand everything the teacher says. (1:3, 2:3, B:A13)
14. I like to go to church and praise God. (1:1, B:A14)

15. He retires this year. (3:33, B:A15, D:22)
16. I would like to live near the beach. (2:9, B:A16)
17. A foreign student can be shunned by other students.  
(3:14, B:A17)
18. They should start to investigate hiring teacher who know  
first aid. (3:16, B:A18, D:23)
19. I am constantly changing channels. (3:5, B:A19)
20. That doesn't give anybody the right to break the law.  
(2:5, B:A20)
21. We should cherish liberty above all our rights because  
liberty is the most important. (3:6, B:A21)
22. I broke my leg last January. (2:8, B:A22)
23. Advice is also given to the father (so he can help take  
care of the baby.) (1:2, B:B1)
24. They have to watch for errors in whatever they are  
working on. (2:16, B:B2)
25. A model is a person who demonstrates something to you.  
(2:17, B:B3)
26. I am very interested in obtaining a good reference.  
(2:18, B:B4, D:12)
27. On March 10, 1992, after more than 27 years of living in  
Puerto Rico, I moved to the New York. (4:33, B:B5)
28. After the Spanish Civil War and due to the critical  
situation existing in the country (my family decided to  
leave Spain). (3:18, B:B6)
29. On Saturdays, I can wash my car and listen to music.  
(2:10, B:B7)
30. People of the middle class are able to pay for nursing  
homes. (2:12, B:B8)
31. He is listening to a program of rock music. (2:11, B:B9)
32. The supermarket is a stone's throw from my house.  
(3:19, B:B10)
33. She is tired of taking care of us. (2:13, B:B11)
34. I need to apologize for my behavior. (3:20, B:B12)

35. I should start by saying (that I am the oldest of three children.) (3:7, B:B13)
36. The factor that I had a problem with at O.D.U. was.... (3:17, B:B14)
37. The gardener takes care of the plants. (2:14, B:B15)
38. If you look into this problem (you will see that...) (2:15, B:B16)
39. The children will experiment with those two subjects. (3:21, B:B17)
40. Starting with kindergarten (we will have all the classes come to the cafeteria by grade level.) (3:8, B:B18)
41. My parents lived next to me in Puerto Rico but then they moved to New York. (4:32, 4:20, 4:32, B:C1 D:13)
42. ...and begin to put their energies into achieving positive goals. (2:41, B:C2, D:14)
43. They are not ready to decide on their own. (3:30, 4:7, B:C3)
44. The students are concentrating on their education. (2:29, 4:14, B:C4)
45. We must take all factors into consideration. (2:39, 4:15, B:C5, D:15)
46. Is the student puzzled or confident about what is being taught? (3:22, 4:4, B:C6)
47. I am sure no one is going to give anyone anything on a silver platter. (2:30, B:C7, D:2)
48. The use of solar systems can replace gasoline and reduce pollution by cars. (3:23, 4:5, B:C8)
49. If we are to succeed in this research.... (4:28, B:C9)
50. We don't have to worry about an embargo or a cutoff in the supply of oil. (2:36, 4:6, B:C10)
51. I like to get presents, especially on my birthday. (2:31, B:C11)
- 52. She made a cake for me. (2:27, 4:25, B:C12, D:1)
53. I am always thinking about her. (2:42, B:C13)
54. I lived at Fort Story for one year. (2:43, 4:3, B:C14)

55. It was not unusual to see people in wigs because at that time people wore wigs a lot. (3:11, B:C15)
56. I was working for an unemployment agency. (4:30, B:C16)
57. When people put their index finger on their face.... (2:32, B:C17)
58. My parents are worried about me. (2:23, B:C18)
59. They help me with everything. (2:44, B:C19, D:11)
60. I am going to tell you about my family. I will begin with myself. (3:12, 4:8, B:C20)
61. Taking their backgrounds into consideration.... (2:40, B:C21, D:16)
62. Oil combined with water is a bad combination. (3:26, 4:16, 4:23, B:C22, D:18)
63. I don't believe in abortion as the solution to the problem. (4:29, B:C23, D:17)
64. When I first arrived in this country.... (2:24, B:C24)
65. I am going to compare them based on the old people of Costa Rica and of the United States. (2:33, 4:1, 4:22, B:C25, D:6)
66. Also, it is a vice on which smokers spend a large amount of money each year. (3:31, 4:24, B:C26, D:19)
67. I got married in 1977 and went to live in small city in the northwest of Spain. (2:19, 3:24, 4:17, 4:27, B:C27, D:10)
68. ...but on the other hand.... (3:15, 4:9, B:C28)
69. The World Series baseball game went into overtime yesterday. (2:20, B:C29, D:3)
70. Later I am going to an activity at my church. (4:32, B:C31, D:21)
71. In the U.S., there were no women doctors until 1846. (3:10, B:C31)
72. All the children bring candy to school to share with the other children. (3:25, 4:10, B:C32)
73. Every night I watch news and sports on TV. (2:34, 4:11, B:C33)

74. We arrived in the United States, at New York Airport, in December, 1978. (1:4, 2:22, 4:12, 4:26, B:C34)
75. I got a job in New York City twelve days after we arrived. (2:37, 4:18, B:C35)
76. I like this country because the people are great to me. (2:25, B:C36, D:4)
77. ...because all of us laughed at my jokes. (3:32, 4:19, B:C37)
78. ...When a student is copying the answer from the student next to him/her and the teacher sees him/her. (3:13, B:C38)
79. When she dropped milk on the table.... (2:35, 4:21, B:C39, D:8)
80. He is in the seventh grade. (2:38, 4:13, B:C40)
81. The teacher should not deprive the disabled student of that right. (2:28 B:C41)
82. They shouldn't continue hanging on to thought associated with the "good old days." (2:21, 4:2, B:C42, D:7)
83. The United States should look at the rest of the world (and learn about a regulated health care system). (3:9, B:C43, D:20)
84. She got married to my cousin two years ago. (2:26, B:C44)