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Analysis of prepositions: *near* and *away from*

Frames of reference

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I. Abstract

Traditional strategies and procedures to learn a foreign language include the study of rules of grammar and doing exercises such as filling the gaps, repetition of words, drills, memorization of irregular verbs and sentences which may express usual expressions of everyday life. Even if the array of exercises is adequate, polysemy in prepositions causes difficulties in choosing the proper preposition conveying the meaning required by different contexts.

Two prepositions of the horizontal axis (*near* and *away from*) are taken into consideration in this paper. Approaching the problem from the theory of polysemy and understanding, the use of these prepositions is explored along the dimensions of function, topology – which is the study of physical space–, and force dynamics – introduced in studies such as Navarro (1998)–, as well as the notion of frame of reference (Levinson, 2004). Then, the different senses and uses of these prepositions of the horizontal axis are systematized, explained and examples are used to illustrate the difficulties in learning a language and the doubts which students may have in some situations.

Key words: horizontal directions, landmark, trajector, frames of reference, visual perception.

II. Introduction

Traditional approaches to the teaching of prepositions in English are often reduced to a series of rules and typical examples, but students often have doubts in applying these rules correctly in different contexts. Handbooks of foreign language usually present grammar through irregularities and expose students to mechanical exercises, and the memorization of phrases and paradigms.

According to Langacker (2008), while norms are required to learn grammar, the importance of wonder and curiosity cannot be disregarded. Meanings may be elaborated and constructed with complex expressions such as phrases, clauses and sentences. Communication reflects the basic experience of moving, perceiving and acting on the world.

Many students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) do not find the use of prepositions to be an easy topic. A point in case is the connection between the English prepositions such as *in*, *on* and *at* and the Spanish preposition *en*. Since the English and Spanish systems overlap in the contents of space relationships in terms of prepositions like these, Spanish EFL students often find problems in

learning their proper use in a context (Navarro, Campoy & Caballero 2001).

In my view, as a student but especially recently as a teacher, I have noticed that students of a foreign language do not know which prepositions are the correct option when producing oral or written English (compositions, letters or emails). Although they know about the rules of grammar to follow when dealing with prepositions, they do not master the nature of prepositions, their main senses and contextual uses. Based on their own answers in an exercise on writing compositions, they use their intuition. Practice, therefore, seems the most effective way towards correction.

This research focuses specifically on the horizontal directions, *near* and *away from*, and will explore their main uses and senses. A previous paper dealt with the kind of practice that students need to improve their understanding of the preposition *on*: should the learning of rules and drills prevail or should learning rely on a practical approach as a more natural way to learn space relationships by focusing on the nature and contextual uses of prepositions?

Therefore, from the perspective of cognitive linguistics and as a continuation of the strand of research explored by other studies of the approach to prepositional polysemy developed by Navarro (1998), I will devise and test this learning approach as regards two prepositions pertaining to the visual point of view. More specifically, I will focus on two prepositions of horizontal directions, *near* and *away from*, including examples from dictionaries.

The main objectives of my research together with a detailed description of the procedures followed to carry out this study can be found under the objectives subsection and the method section below. Before diving into these sections, and for the purpose of clarity, a brief description of the theoretical bases that support this approach will be provided.

III. Theoretical background: frame of reference

The notion of frames of reference may be understood as places, the location of objects which they occupy and as the places containing the objects. Aristotle mentioned an example, the conundrum in which the river is the frame of reference and a boat is moving with the river.

In the cognitive paradigm, prepositions are considered as particles which relate two elements, these are called the trajector and the landmark, which are referred to as TR and LM in short (Langacker, 1987). The trajector is the most significant entity, it is usually situated before the preposition and it can be changed more easily from one place to another. However, the landmark is the

entity to which the trajector is related. It is situated after the preposition and it is the point of reference for the trajector.

A variety of frames of reference can be used when reading some sentences. For instance: *I lived near the school* (Macmillan dictionary) or *I will be away from home for two weeks* (Merriam Webster dictionary). It is clear that the sense of distance depends on the landmark and the speaker. Sometimes there is an ambiguity because of the position of the object and the landmark.

Nevertheless, a question must be asked by some speakers when position and spatial information are referring from a frame to another direction of movement. There are some distinctions of spatial frames of reference according to Levinson (2004): *relative*, *absolute*, regarding space as relations between objects, directions and relations between objects, *deictic*, *intrinsic*, which depends on the landmark or visual perception and as well as *viewer-centred*, *object-centred* and *environment-centred* which are centred on the speaker, the object or the environment respectively.

When *relative space* is being considered, it refers to the egocentric coordinate system and when *absolute space* is being considered, it refers to non-egocentric systems (Kant (1991), as cited by Levinson (2004)). The distinction between *egocentric* and *allocentric* refers to the coordinate system centred within the subjective body frame and the second one centred within elsewhere, the geographic orientation which is not often specified. Then, it is related to *body-centred* and *environment-centred* frames of reference. As philosophers argued (Campbell 1993), the egocentric frame is joined with *body-centred*, a *speaker* and a *body-schema* in a spatial interaction.

Another distinction is based on the theory of vision, in which the notions are *viewer-centred* and *object-centred*. As Levinson (2004) pointed out, this theory of vision is the process of the vision of a retinal image to the recognition of an object itself, that is from 2.5D sketch to a model of 3D as a structural description. This distinction is related to the linguistic distinction of *deictic* and *intrinsic* perspectives. Then, the *deictic* perspective would be the *viewer-centred*, while the *intrinsic* perspective would be the *object-centred*.

Indeed, there are also notions of orientation, called *orientation-bound* and *orientation-free*. The first orientation refers to both *absolute* and *relative* frames, while the second one, which is *orientation-free*, refers to *intrinsic* frames. In fact, linguists have distinguished *deictic* and *intrinsic* frames of reference. There are three different interpretations of *deictic* and *intrinsic* in Table 2.1 (Levinson 2004). The first one is *speaker-centric* and *non-speaker centric* (Levelt 1989). The second one is centred on any of the speech participants and non-centred (Levinson 1983). The third one refers to ternary and binary spatial relations (Levelt 1984, 1996).

Carlson-Radvansky and Irwin (1993: 224, quoted in Levinson 2004: 32) explained frames for spatial relationships among objects.

In a viewer-centred frame, objects are represented in a retinocentric, head-centric or body-centric coordinate system based on the perceiver's perspective of the world. In an object-centred frame, objects are coded with respect to their intrinsic axes. In an environment-centred frame, objects are represented with respect to salient features of the environment [...]. In order to talk about space, vertical and horizontal coordinate axes must be oriented to one of these reference frames so that linguistic spatial terms such as «above» and «to the left of» can be assigned.

Thus, the notions of *deictic*, *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* are related to the corresponding linguistic interpretations of *viewer-centred*, *object-centred* and *environment-centred* frames of reference. So, in a spatial representation system, the frame of reference is accepted for a coordination of perception and language.

For instance, it is clear that *egocentric* refers to *relative* or *viewer-centred*, 2.5D sketch refers to *deictic* frame, *intrinsic* corresponds to *object-centred* or 3D model, *absolute* corresponds to *environment-centred*.

Regarding frames of reference in a linguistic view, the notion *absolute* as the frame of reference is used by many languages such as fixed bearings (West, North). Otherwise some European languages would use the notion of *relative* or *viewer-centred* such as *left*. Essentially, the frames of reference *absolute*, *relative* and *intrinsic* are the main ones in order to describe the horizontal spatial directions.

For instance, according to Levinson (2004), some sentences are viewed as a *deictic* frame:

1. *The ball is in front of me. The ball is in front of the tree.* (Levinson, 2004). (As speaker-centric.)

Then, regarding the prepositions *near* and *away from*:

2. *I lived near the school* (Macmillan dictionary) or *I will be away from home for two weeks* (Merriam Webster dictionary). (As speaker-centric.)

Other sentences are viewed as an intrinsic frame:

3. *The ball is in front of the chair.* (Levinson, 2004). (As non-speaker-centric, the chair.)
4. *The ball is in front of you.* (Levinson, 2004). (As non-speaker-centric, the addressee.)
5. *The ball is to the right of the lamp, from your point of view.* (Levinson, 2004). (As non-speaker-centric, the addressee.)

Then, regarding prepositions *near* and *away from*:

6. *They are near to solving the puzzle. Keep away from the stove – it's very hot* (Macmillan). (As non-speaker-centric, the addressee.)

Coordinate systems are frames of reference and, in language, frames can be distinguished according to origins such as the speaker, the addressee, etc.

Table. 1 Classification of frames of reference

INTRINSIC	ABSOLUTE	RELATIVE
Origin ≠ ego	Origin ≠ ego	Origin = ego
Object-centred	Environment-centred	Viewer-centred
Intrinsic-perspective		Deictic-perspective
3D Model		2.5 D sketch
	Allocentric	Egocentric
Orientation-free		Orientation-bound

2.1. Linguistic categories of prepositions and the three dimensions of perception

In cognitive linguistics, there is some research about space semantics which is likely to arrange an order, despite the difficulty of the concepts, by means of the application of a system with radial networks, in which each prepositional or adverbial sense is located on a node in accordance with its centrality within the network. More literal (spatial or physical) meanings tend to be associated with most focuses in more central senses, from which abstract meanings result from the help of metaphoric and metonymic processes (Navarro, 1998).

For example: *the bottle is on the table*. The bottle is the TR which can be moved easily and its resting side falls across the LM, in this case, the table, which can work as a supporting point for the TR. Another example: *A group of students were standing near the entrance*. The students are the TR which can be moved easily and its resting side falls across the LM, in this case, the entrance, which can work as a building for the TR.

Thus, prepositions, in cognitive linguistics, are considered as «linguistic categories» themselves surrounding a series of elements such as meanings or senses arranged in the structure of a radial category, with a prototype and peripheral members; these are, therefore, polysemic elements with several meanings.



Among the range of research on prepositions from a cognitive linguistic perspective, Navarro's model (1998, 2006) provides a fully-fledged model, which is a model completely developed, for the semantic representation of prepositions whose senses are derived and arranged in terms of three semantic dimensions of perceptual space or aspects of construal. Therefore, three dimensions that can help in determining the spatial relationship established between the two entities (trajector and landmark) as mentioned above, in human conceptualization, specifically:

1. Topology: The visual perception of objects gives the speaker clues for establishing and conceptualizing topological relations like coincidence, contact, inclusion, proximity, and the like.
2. Force-dynamics: Human beings have experience of self-motion and object motion, which provides the clues for conceptualizing patterns of interaction in terms of dynamics.
3. Function: Human beings have experience of the effects of interaction, as well as the consequences of those effects for survival and well-being. (Navarro, 2006: 171).

Regarding the specialisation of meaning, metonymic and metaphoric extensions can be shown in senses. These senses can be detailed by profiling certain aspects of the conceptual schema.

In force-dynamic configuration senses, the interaction axis between trajector and landmark is seen as the central aspect of the relation. Though still present, other aspects like the topological relation of contiguity and the functional orientation remain in the background. The direction of the movement is also determined by the trajector's functional front and by the landmark's accessible zone as well. The context for the sense of *search for contiguity*, which is derived from the central force-dynamic senses, requires motion verbs and other dynamic expressions like *come, fly, go, run, swing, make, jump, dive* and so on.

In topological configuration senses, the topological relation of contiguity is prevalent over force-dynamic or functional aspects. The sense of *coincidence* reflects a «coincidence» between the trajector and the landmark. Some words such as location, place or point are frequent in this sense.

The trajector is something understood as if it is attached to a part of an entity and the landmark designates that part. Some words are used in this sense like *beginning, top, bottom, middle, centre, head, edge* and so on.

In functional configuration senses, from the conceptual image schema the functional space can be described with the relation of functionality itself. In the background it is remained the force-

dynamic dimension and the topological relationship. Here places are designated for the landmarks where people usually do certain activities or they participate in certain events. Landmarks are thus often buildings or public spaces. Then, trajectors are people who control or use them in a certain way with relation to them. Trajectors may also be concepts which realise these activities that are carried out by those people. (Navarro, 1998)



2.2. Vandeloise's spatial relations

The object to be located is called the *trajector* (Langacker), and this author uses the corresponding reference point, the *landmark*. In this case, Vandeloise (1991) refers to the object to be located as the *target* and to the object of reference as the *landmark*. In well-formed utterances, the target always corresponds with the subject of the relation, and the landmark coincides with its object. The linguistic principle may be expressed as follows:

- subject of spatial relation = target
- object of spatial relation = landmark

What are the characteristics of target and landmark? It should be pointed out that the position of the target constitutes new information, while the position of landmark states known information. Although the target is difficult or small to perceive, generally the landmark is large and easy to be distinguished. Also the target is mobile, while the landmark is immobile and stable. For instance, *look at the falling star! Near the church tower or look at the church tower! Near the falling star.*

The falling star, momentary and brief, is drawing the speaker's attention. It seems as it is the ideal target, while the church tower, immobile and immense, shows the characteristics of the usual landmark. In contrast the second sentence is uncommon.

Another example: *the bus stop is near the house or the house is near the bus stop.* In this contrast it is seen the reason of the sense from an element that is not understood explicitly. The pedestrians' path is between the house and the bus stop. Here the speaker is recognised with the landmark. The first sentence may be understood by imagining a principal path from the house to the bus stop, whereas the second sentence proposes the opposite course. Indeed both target and landmark are immobile in both examples, and the degree of being acceptable is justified by the speaker who may be moved along the path possibly.

When describing the scene, the speaker may choose among several different strategies for situating the landmark. When a non-egocentric landmark is eliminated, there is one strategy between not introducing an egocentric landmark and expressing a landmark with the correspondent preposition. Thus, the landmark may be omitted when the speaker is sufficiently identified with the landmark (e.g.,

Saint-Cloud). The degree to which the speaker locates the landmark determines the situation in which this landmark is expressed or not. Then, the landmark refers to the fact of the *virtual* position of the speaker.

Thus, the speaker could change a variety of points of view, and a conversation may continue as long as the addressee is able to understand the situation and the movement of the speaker in such a case. The unexpressed landmark often identifies the speaker's position, but this position may be either real or virtual. Concerning the expressions *near* and *away from*, what the speaker has to carry out is to move to the place of the landmark itself.

These expressions *near* and *away from* are described as directions of distance between target and landmark. In terms of distance, it is considered to a certain norm which depends on the movement to be approached of the target/landmark and to the landmark/target. The expression *près de (near)* is reduced to spatial and temporal domains, whereas the other expression *proche (close to) de* suggests proximity in every domain.

Thus, the expression *near* would refer to smaller distance than *away from*. For instance: *Jupiter is near Saturn. The electron is far from its nucleus*. In the first sentence *near* is identified as a larger distance between target and landmark than *far from* in the second example. So, the principal characteristic of this distance as a norm relate to the accessibility of the target/landmark to the landmark/target.

According to Vandeloise (1991), this norm of distance depends on the trajector and the relation with the landmark as well as the dimension of the landmark, the speed of the target, the speed of the landmark, the size of the speaker, the speed of the speaker, the size and the speed of the addressee, the facility of access and types of access too. Regarding the dimension of the landmark, infrequently the landmark is smaller than the target. The norm may increase in proportion to the landmark. The distance between the target Jupiter and the landmark may be greater in the following example, *Jupiter is near the Milky Way* than in the example of *Jupiter is near Saturn*.

Indeed, the speed of the target is also relevant, since the norm may increase with the speed of the target when the target is moving towards the landmark. For instance: *the tortoise is far from the lake or the antelope is far from the lake*. In this case the lake is seen further from the antelope than from the tortoise. However, when the target is moving away from the landmark, the extent of the norm will diminish as speed decreases. In other words, when the speed of the target is gathering with the landmark in an easier or more difficult way, the normal distance increases or decreases, respectively.


Thus, the speed of the landmark is not seen as a common context when the landmark is mobile. However, there are some sentences in which the distance increases with the speed of the landmark. For instance: *the man is far from the helicopter*. Here the landmark is moving from the target. *The fox is near the rabbit*. Here it depends on the speed of the landmark. Another case is the size of the speaker, which could be near when is a father or far when is a child and it depends on the age.

Moreover, the speed of the speaker varies when the speaker is driving a car or walking. Also the size and the speed of the addressee could vary when the addressee is a hiker and then it is near –for example a farm from a village–, or if this is lame.

Finally, the facility of access may be different when the path is easy or difficult to access and the distance increases or diminishes. For example, *the red house is far*. Here the speaker is walking up and it is far. *The yellow house is near*. When the speaker is walking down and it is near in such case. There are types of access such as the visual access and the physical access. For example, if the speaker sees the mountain from the hotel window, it may be near, or if the speaker wants to hike there, it may be far. Another situation is when a sailboat may be far from the visual access of the eyes, but it may be near through binocular. There is a value of distance which is changed by the types of access of the speaker or target.

The access to the meeting point and the factors of making it easier or not easier between the target and the landmark play an important role. The main factors are pointed out below.

Table 2. Classification of accessibility

<p>Accessibility</p> 	Relative speed of target and landmark
	Distance
	Type of access

The temporal sense is also used with the preposition *near*, which indicates the spatial reference. For example, *it is near Christmas*. In the domains of color terminology the expression *proche de* (close to) is preferred over *près de* (near). An example of this sense: *mauve is close to blue*.

Thus, isn't it more direct to define the prepositions *near* and *away from* concerning the accessibility and inaccessibility? Then, the distance itself would be one of several possible factors which may affect access.

IV. Research objectives

The main objective of this research is to analyse and compare the two prepositions *near* and *away from* in order to systematise the main uses and illustrate them with some sentences. Several authors' explanations and their background knowledge are detailed too.

Some prepositions express where something is in physical relation to another thing:

Example: There was a bird *near* the tree. There was a bird *away from* the tree.

About these examples, the following can be said:

- A bird is the trajector in the relationship expressed by the preposition.
- The tree is the landmark of the preposition.
- The preposition tells us where the trajector is in relation to the landmark.
- *Near / away from* are prepositions of distance. Also, because both the subject and the landmark are concrete things, we can say that *near/ away from* are being used literally.

Although there are less than one hundred English prepositions, they do not take ending positions, that is to say they are not usually written in the end of a sentence, and even if the structure of most prepositional phrases is usually easy, the use of English prepositions is complex. Then, most prepositions have more than one meaning, as described, for example, in the prepositional approaches of polysemy in Navarro's model.

As it is well known, English prepositions play an important role in sentences of many key notions, those pertaining to physical objects in their visual perceptions, arrangements, orientations and so forth.

V. Methodology

The methodology of this research is to look for examples of the prepositions *near* and *away from* on the following dictionaries to identify their main uses:

- Cambridge dictionary
- Merriam Webster
- Macmillan
- English Oxford dictionary

After comparing the meaning of these prepositions, some examples are written to illustrate their uses. Then, each sentence and the preposition is analysed regarding the frames of reference, the three dimensions, the spatial relations and the two concepts which are trajector and landmark.

In order to understand the tree structures of sentences, some concepts of analysis will first be made clear. In traditional grammar and modern syntactic theory, the notion constituency is an essential construct. It is described by linguists as assigned fixed hierarchical structures which are considered as inverted «trees» metaphorically. Then, details vary and styles may change, but an example of the usual format is the nominal or noun phrase as *a table near the door* (noun phrase- article and noun, prepositional phrase- preposition, article and noun).

Three kinds of information can be found in syntactic tree structures. Grammatical category (N, P, NP...), linear order (left to right on the page) and constituency (hierarchical grouping). Prime examples are the subject and object relations. Thus, a subject is designated as a nominal whose profile corresponds to the trajector of a profile relationship. An object is characterised as a landmark of a profile relationship.

A complex activity must be called as the act of talking and something which people do rather than whatever they have must be viewed as a language. Some aspects of this activity are motor, perceptual and mental, which are established by the procedure in brain, that is to say in a wide sense a cognitive activity is talking.

The knowledge of a language is a situation of controlling skills in distinct contexts. Some regions of the brain are involved in language and the processing activity constitutes linguistic units. Thus, these units are not separated or independent, but they overlap with other units or even add them as components.

In general, units embody the rules and regularities of a language. Thus, linguists may consider rules in one of the three ways which are as constructive rules, as filters or as schemas. In cognitive grammar, rules take the form of schemas. These units are connected by relationships of categorization and they can form networks of any size. (Langacker, 2008)

VI. Results and discussion

According to Merriam Webster, Macmillan, Cambridge dictionary, and English Oxford dictionary *near* can be used in the following ways:

1) as a preposition (close to someone or something): *A group of students were standing near the entrance. I lived near the school.* I'll write and let you know nearer the time (Macmillan). Beaches near the city (Merriam Webster).

2) as an adverb (not far away in distance): Come nearer, and I'll tell you the whole story (Macmillan). Is there a restaurant near here? (Cambridge)



3) as an adjective: I went into the nearest room. A climb in the mountains led to near disaster (Macmillan). In the near future (not far distant in time) (Merriam Webster).

4) in the preposition phrase near to: Pull your chair nearer to the table (Macmillan).

a) getting close to a particular state or situation: (near to) Julian was near to panic as he suddenly realized that he was trapped (Macmillan). People near to retirement need to know their pension funds are sufficient (Macmillan).

b) near to doing something: *They are near to solving the puzzle* (Macmillan).

According to Merriam Webster, Macmillan, English Oxford dictionary and Cambridge dictionary, *away from* can be used in the following ways:

1) Somewhere else: somewhere else, or to or in a different place, position, or situation: as an adverb.

Ms Watson is away on holiday until the end of the week (Cambridge).

Keep/Stay away from him (Cambridge).

a) Distant: at a distance (of or from here): as an adverb

How far away is the station? (Cambridge).

The office is a half-hour drive away (Cambridge).

We live five kilometres away from each other (Cambridge).

Keep away from the stove – it's very hot (Macmillan).

b) far from people, places, or things, especially so that you feel separated from them.

I will be away from home for two weeks (Merriam Webster).

It's nice to have a weekend away from London (Macmillan).

She's been away from her family for too long (Macmillan).

2) Away as an adjective:

- (of a sports fixture) played at the opponents' ground:

Tomorrow night's away game at Leicester (English Oxford dictionary).

An away victory (English Oxford dictionary).

3) Relating to or denoting a sports team that is playing at the opponents' ground:

The away side scored first (English Oxford dictionary).

Away fans chanted and cheered (English Oxford dictionary).

In this section, some examples of the preposition *near* are described with the purpose of understanding the use of frames of reference:

- *A group of students were standing **near** the entrance* (Macmillan).

The students are the trajector (TR) which can be moved easily and the landmark (LM) is situated after the preposition and it is the

point of reference for the trajector, in this case, the entrance, which can work as a building for the TR.

The frame of reference is intrinsic which corresponds to object-centred, since it depends on the accessibility from the trajector to the landmark.

The dimensions are topology because of the proximity and function when there is an interaction. The spatial relations of Vandeloise are the type of access and the facility of access to this entrance as a building and the speed of the target (a group of students).

- *I lived near the school* (Macmillan).

The speaker is the TR and the subject and the school is the LM and the place where the speaker is situated. The frames of reference are absolute which corresponds to environment-centred and relative which corresponds to viewer-centred, since it depends on the type of access.

The dimensions are topology because of the proximity and function when there is an interaction and accessibility. The spatial relations of Vandeloise are the type of access and the facility of access of the school and the speed of the target as a speaker.

- *They are near to solving the puzzle* (Macmillan).

The subject, which is *they*, is the TR and the puzzle is the LM as the object which they try to solve. This preposition means near to doing something. The Frames of reference are intrinsic which corresponds to object-centred and relative which corresponds to viewer-centred.

The dimensions are topology (metaphoric sense) because of the proximity as a temporal situation and function when there is an interaction and dynamic when there is a movement. The spatial relations of Vandeloise are the speed of the target as a subject of this sentence to solve the puzzle and the dimension of the landmark (the puzzle).

Some examples of the preposition *away from* are the following:

- *Keep away from the stove – it's very hot* (Macmillan).

The viewer is the TR and the stove is the LM as the object to be away from. The frames of reference are intrinsic which corresponds to object-centred and relative which corresponds to viewer-centred.

The dimensions are topology because of the distant and function when there is an interaction and dynamic when the viewer has to keep away. The spatial relations of Vandeloise are the speed of the speaker to keep away from the stove and the dimension of the landmark (the stove).

- *I will be away from home for two weeks* (Merriam Webster).

The speaker is the TR and the subject and the home is the LM as the building. The frames of reference are absolute which

corresponds to environment-centred and relative which corresponds to viewer-centred.

The dimensions are topology because of the distant and function when there is an interaction. The spatial relations of Vandeloise are the type of access and the facility of access and the space of time of two weeks.

- *It's nice to have a weekend away from London* (Macmillan).

The speaker is the TR as an opinion of the speaker and the city itself is the LM where the speaker is situated. The frames of reference is absolute which corresponds to environment-centred, since it depends on the situation of the city on the map.

The dimensions are topology because of the distance and function when there is an interaction. The spatial relations of Vandeloise are the facility of access and the type of access and the speed of the target as the subject of this sentence and as well as the dimension of the landmark (the city).

VII. Conclusions

In grammatical structure, prepositions relate two elements and these are considered as nouns. These elements are called the trajector and the landmark, in linguistics, which are referred to as TR and LM (Langacker, 1987). Briefly, the trajector is usually situated before the preposition, it is the most meaningful concept and it can be changed more easily from one place to another. However, the landmark is situated after the preposition and it is the concept to which the trajector is related. Then, this is the point of reference for the trajector.

Regarding the English language as a foreign language, this subject is not an easy one for many students and they encounter great difficulty as they learn English prepositions in this field of knowledge and study. A case in point is the connection between the English prepositions *near* and *away from* and the Spanish prepositions *cerca* and *lejos*.

The frames of reference *absolute*, *relative* and *intrinsic* are the main ones in order to describe the horizontal spatial directions which are the directions of the prepositions *near* and *away from* in this research. The following three terms are synthesised above (Levinson, 2004):

- Absolute which corresponds to environment-centred
- Relative which corresponds to viewer-centred.
- Intrinsic which corresponds to object-centred

In these spatial directions, the usual dimensions are topology when there is a proximity, contact or inclusion and function when there is an interaction and some effects between the trajector and the landmark.

The norm of distance, which Vandeloise (1991) explained, depends on the trajector and the relation with the landmark. These two terms (TR and LM) are determined by the dimension of the landmark, the speed of the target or the subject of the sentence, the speed of the landmark or the object of the sentence, the size of the speaker, the speed of the speaker, the size and the speed of the addressee, the facility of access and types of access regarding the building or the place where the speaker is situated.

Therefore, some questions should be asked to consider: what are the two elements which prepositions relate?, how are the three dimensions called in spatial directions?, what are the main frames of reference in the horizontal directions?

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