1. Definition

Dixon (1991)

- primary use of prepositions: Introduction of a peripheral noun phrase, providing:
  - locational or temporal specification (in the house, at three o'clock)
  - marking an instrument (with a stone)
  - a beneficiary (for Mary)
  - a recipient (to John)

Chalker, S./E. Weiner (1994)

- "A traditional word class, comprising words that relate two linguistic elements to each other and that generally precede the word which they "govern"." (p. 310)
- stranded prepositions (What did you do that for?)
- overlapping with other word classes
  - adjective alike
  - adverbs
  - conjunctions


- it is a word that governs, and normally precedes, a noun or pronoun
- expresses the noun's or pronoun's relation to another word
- prepositions determines the case (in English usually the accusative)
- prepositions can also be heads of phrases containing various dependents

2. Semantic meaning of the preposition *over*

- Over in reference to spatial relations
- Over in reference to abstract use of place prepositions
- Over in reference to time
- Over in reference to abstract use of time prepositions

3. Exercises
2. Semantic meaning of the preposition *over*

- various meanings
- spatial relations and time reference

### 2.1 *over* in reference to spatial relations

- position
  - relative position of objects on vertical axis
  - accompanied by verbs of static meaning (be, hang)
  - indicates spatial proximity
    - The ambulance man was leaning *over* the body.
    - Events in Chechnya have cast a shadow *over* our hopes for further political and economic reform in Russia.
    - Enormous clouds of black smoke hung *over* the volcano.

- superiority, advantage or preference
  - She respected those *over* him.
  - New World gods, in contrast to Old World gods (at least, one of the more widely publicized of them), did not give humans "dominion *over* the fish of the sea and *over* the fowl of the air, and *over* every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

- to indicate something is overcome, circumvented, or disregarded
  - They gained a big lead *over* the others.

- destination
  - She respected those *over* him.
  - New World gods, in contrast to Old World gods (at least, one of the more widely publicized of them), did not give humans "dominion *over* the fish of the sea and *over* the fowl of the air, and *over* every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

- passage and movement
  - John jumped *over* the ditch.
  - He threw a blanket *over* her.
  - A satellite on such a polar orbit will pass *over* the same place at the same time of day.

- accomplishment
  - The passed *over* the governor's veto.

- no example found in the corpus
2. Semantic meaning of the preposition *over*

2.1 *over* in reference to spatial relations

- **passage and movement**
  - real movement vs. implied movement
    - She was walking *toward* the traffic light. (real movement)
    - She glanced *over* her shoulder. (implied movement)

- *over* can only express implied movement.
  - One can only picture them looking *over* their shoulders as they set out into the ocean, proclaiming "You could never do this, but we will!" And they did it. (implied movement)

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2.1 *over* in reference to spatial relations

- **orientation**
  - static sense of orientation
    - They live *over* the street.
    - About a minute later his last transmission was "The camper and the car just *over* to the south of me [David Johnston's camp] are covered... It is going to get me, too."

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2. Semantic meaning of the preposition *over*

2.1 *over* in reference to spatial relations

- **resultative meaning**
  - *over* has meaning of motion, it can express static resultative meaning with *be*
    - Ann jumped *over* the wall. (motion) *-->* Ann is *over* the wall. (result)
  - Also, these volcanoes are *over* the general area where the subducting plate has reached a depth of about 100 kilometers

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2. Semantic meaning of the preposition *over*

2.1 *over* in reference to spatial relations

- **pervasive meaning**
  - Ann was running (all) *over* the flower borders.
  - static and motional meaning
    - All *over* Europe, regions and nations that preserve their own special character within a bigger state are flourishing, from Bavaria in Germany or Catalonia in Spain to my native Scotland in Britain. (static meaning)
    - Adam Smith's hand is invisible – unlike that of the old Communist Parties. But all *over* Central Europe and Eastern Europe, the idea of the marketplace spread a real and justified optimism that the future can be better. (motional meaning)

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2. Semantic meaning of the preposition *over*

2.1 *over* in reference to spatial relations

- **accompanying circumstances**
  - We discussed it *over* a glass of wine.
  - no example found in the corpus
2. Semantic meaning of the preposition **over**

### 2.2 **over** in reference to abstract use of place prepositions
- **occurs in clear relation to locative use through metaphorical connection**
- **Intensity-preposition**
  - The car was travelling **over** 60 miles an hour.
  - The number of BUC and Army searches has dropped dramatically, from **over** 5,000 in 1994 to 164 during the first three months of 1995.
- **British companies have **over** 1000 subsidiaries in Germany.**

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### 2.3 **over** in reference to time
- **Durational meaning parallel to pervasive meaning**
  - We now have effective defence arrangements, based on an integrated command structure, common doctrine and procedures, common systems and the habits of co-operation and understanding, developed **over** many years of working together.
  - along with noun phrases representing special occasions
  - But the biggest rebuff for the government came **over** Christmas.
  - **Saturday and Sunday special meaning**
    - You have to work **over** Saturday. But not: We stayed there **over** Thursday.

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### 2.4 **over** in reference to abstract use of time prepositions (?)
- **the ending point of a duration or period of time, parallel to the resultative meaning of position**
  - By evening the main eruption was **over**, and the ugly stump of Mount St. Helens was only 3,364 feet high - a loss of 1,313 feet (400 meters).
  - Ninety percent of the original snow-and-ice field still remains on Nevado del Ruiz; continuing earthquakes and small eruptions indicate that the volcano's present activity is not **over**.

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### 3. Exercises

1) During its operational life of 89 days it transmitted 23,000 pictures, **over** half of which were meteorologically useful.

2) Three, that we have to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of the refugees in Kosovo and to prevent, by any means necessary, the humanitarian disaster which we can see just **over** the horizon as winter approaches.
3. Exercises

1) Once the councillors were chosen by lot - the date is controversial and apparently unresolvable - direct control over the Council by patrons was further minimized.

2) Spontaneous unrest over food shortages was beginning to merge with political opposition to the war.

3. Exercises

1) Chronic anxiety over the grain staple induced a range of measures to secure the necessary imports, to restrain prices and to check profiteering, but it was not until the Hellenistic age that the Greek cities themselves began to buy corn from abroad systematically.

4. Bibliography


Internet sources

- English-German translation corpus. <http://ell.phil.tu-chemnitz.de/search/>. 03.07.2006
- Merriam Webster Online. <http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary>, 06.07.06.