

# THE SYNTACTIC FUNCTIONS OF PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES IN SENTENCES USED IN SHORT STORIES IN STORYSTAR.COM

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## Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah membandingkan fungsi sintaksis dari frasa preposisi dalam kalimat pada cerita pendek di situs storystar.com berdasarkan tema fiksi pengetahuan dan cinta. Data penelitian adalah 101 data dari dua tema cerita pendek yaitu fiksi pengetahuan sebanyak 52 data dan cinta sebanyak 49 data. Sumber data yaitu cerita pendek dalam situs storystar.com. Temuan penelitian yaitu adjunct, conjunct, complementation of verb adalah fungsi sintaksis dari frasa preposisi yang terdapat pada kalimat dalam cerita pendek yang bertema fiksi pengetahuan. Adjunct, postmodifier, complementation of verb, complementation of adjective adalah fungsi sintaksis dari frasa preposisi pada kalimat dalam cerita pendek yang bertema cinta.

Kata Kunci: syntactic function, prepositional phrase, short story, science fiction, love/romance

## A. Introduction

Preposition is one of parts of speech. It is often used in English, both in spoken and written language. In the most general terms, a preposition is the first word of a phrase that contains a noun or a pronoun. According to Garner (1998) preposition is a word that shows a relationship between its object and some others in sentences. So, Most of sentences in English must have preposition in order to show a relationship between its object and some other in sentences.

In addition, Ehrlich and Murphy (1990) state that a preposition is a word that conveys a meaning of position, direction, time, or other abstraction. It serves to relate its object to another element of the sentence. They tell the position of people or things in relation to where other people or things are located. They can show relationship between objects in space (where one thing is in relation to another) and they can show relationships in time (when an event occurred in relation to another event). It means that prepositions have different functions and meanings in English sentences.

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We use preposition all the time in speaking and writing. We should be conscious of how we use it because it can be useful when writing and speaking. That is why, it is very important in sentences because it expresses the meaning which is related to the meaning expressed by adverbs and adjectives : where, when, how and what kind. It can also express a sense of why or who.

Prepositions begin grammatical structures called prepositional phrase. Prepositional phrase always begins with a preposition and end with a noun or pronoun which is the preposition's object ( the word that the preposition is in relation to).

Example : *They take a rest **after the swimming championship***

In this sentence, ***after the swimming championship*** is the prepositional phrase because it consists of ***after*** ( preposition ) + ***the swimming championship*** ( noun phrase ). In this sentence, ***after*** is the preposition and ***the swimming championship*** is the preposition's object.

Prepositional phrases have syntactic functions in sentences, that is the grammatical relationship of one constituent to another within a syntactic construction. Syntactic functions of prepositional phrase plays an integral role to express the meaning which is related to the meaning expressed by adverbs and adjectives : where, when, how and what kind. It can also express a sense of why or who. If we do not know the syntactic functions of preposition in sentences, it will be difficult to get what information is conveyed in that sentence through using the appropriate prepositional phrases.

The writer needs to compare the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance because it seems that there are few syntactic functions of preposition in one theme that are not found in another theme. In other words, there seems to have similarities and differences about the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance in website storystar.com. That is why the writer is badly interested in conducting a research about the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/romance in website storystar.com

The writer analyzed the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance in website storystar.com, then the writer compared the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in each theme of the short stories. The writer finds these themes interesting because each theme of the short stories' themes is great and has moral value. In addition, the writer finds the short stories interesting with the use of correct structure, good language and they have variations of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases. The data are taken by choosing several short stories based on the selected themes.. So, we can also find out the syntactic functions of prepositional phrase in sentences used in the short stories about science fiction and love/ romance in the website storystar.com.

Storystar.com is a website in which there are many short stories available. The short stories have already been classified based on the themes, such as :

love/romance, science fiction, family/friends, drama, classic shorts, Inspiration, Survive/success, fantasy/ fairy tale, Adventure, Mystery/crime, and general interest. This website is designed for those who are interested in reading short stories.

In a sentence, there must be some groups of words that construct a meaning. One of them is a phrase. A phrase is a group of words (or sometimes a single word) that form a constituent and functions as a single unit in a sentence. According to Radford (2009), a phrase is a process of merging (a technical meaning ‘combining’) two words together. For example, speaker A : *what are you trying to do ?*, the speaker B : **help you**. By merging the word *help* with the word *you*, it will form the phrase **help you**.

In addition, Biber, Conrad and Leech (2000) states that a phrase may consists of a single word or a group of words. For example, *the opposition demands a more representative government*. This sentence consists of three phrases. They are *the opposition*, *demands* and *a more representative government*. So, phrase is a group of related words that may have noun or verbals and it does not have a subject which is doing a verb. It functions as a single part of a sentence but it does not act as a sentence

In short, prepositional phrase is related to the study of phrase because it belongs to a type of phrases. Phrases are a group of words that do not have subject- verb relationship. On the contrary, clauses are a group of words that consist of at least one subject and one verb. Compound words are the combination of two or words that form a new word. So, Phrases and compound words are group of words that exist in a clause, and a group of clauses will form a sentence. A sentence may have one or more clauses.

The writer analyzed the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories in [www.storystar.com](http://www.storystar.com). This website is a site in which many short stories are available, and the short stories have already been classified based on the themes. In this research, the writer analyzed the syntactic functions of prepositional phrase in sentences used in short stories in [www.storystar.com](http://www.storystar.com) based on the themes. First, the theme is about science fiction and the second is about love/ romance. The writer compared the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance in website [www.storystar.com](http://www.storystar.com) because it seems that there are few syntactic functions of preposition in one theme that are not found in another theme. In other words, there seems to have similarities and differences about the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance in website [storystar.com](http://www.storystar.com). That is why the writer is interested in conducting a research about the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/romance in website [storystar.com](http://www.storystar.com). There are two theories related to syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences. The first theory is by Frank (1972) states that there are some syntactic functions of prepositional phrases of sentences, they are nominal function which consists of prepositional object, Adverbial function which consists of modifying a verb and modifying an adjective and the last one is Adjectival function. In the meantime, Randolph Quirk and Greenbaum

(1973) states that there are six syntactic functions of prepositional phrases, they are : it functions as adjunct, postmodifier conjunct, disjunct, complementation as verb and complementation as adjective.

The writer uses a theory related to this topic. The writer uses a theory by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) because this theory is more complete than Frank's theory. It gives more complete explanation. It can be seen on how each function of prepositional phrases is specified into several classification, and it will be easier to understand them all. There are six syntactic functions of prepositional phrases. They are adjunct, postmodifiers, disjunct, conjunct, complementation of verb and complementation of adjective.

Adjunct is one of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that answers the questions ' how, when, where, why, what and who.' Especially, adjunct is the phrases that express the meaning of cause, purpose, reason, motive, intended destination, recipient, goal, target, source, origin, means- agentive, manner, instrument, stimulus, accompaniment, support and opposition. At the end of one spectrum of cause- purpose, we prepositions expressing either the material cause or the psychological cause (motive). Postmodifier is one of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that occurs if a prepositional phrase appears after a noun phrase, and the noun phrase together with the prepositional phrase function as a subject in the sentence.

Disjunct is an adjunct and one of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that especially expresses about concession (in spite of, despite, for+all, with+ all, notwithstanding), reference (with regard to, with reference to (formal), as to (BrE), as for, exception and negative condition

Conjunct is an adjunct that adds information to the sentence that is not considered part of the propositional content (or at least not essential) but which connects the sentence with previous parts of the discourse. Example : For one thing, for another thing, for a start, to begin with, in the same way, for instance, as a result, etc.

Complementation of verb is one of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that express about subject matter, ingredients, material and reaction. The phrases combine with a considerable range of verbs. Complementation of an adjective is one of the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that combine a considerable range of adjectives. The phrases express the relation between the prepositional phrase with the adjective that comes before it. The phrases express about subject matter, and respect- standard.

The purpose of this study is to compare the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories based on two themes, they are science fiction and love/ romance. From the comparison, it can be seen the similarities and differences between the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance in website storystar.com.

## **B. Discussions**

The writer analyzed and compared the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories in storystar.com. The writer compared

the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences based on two themes in the short stories in storystar.com. The themes are science fiction and love/romance. In short, the research finding is described in the table below:

**Table. The percentage of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/romance in storystar.com**

The Syntactic Functions of Prepositional Phrases	The Themes of Short Stories			
	Science Fiction		Love/ Romance	
	Total	%	Total	%
1. Adjunct	50	96, 15%	44	89, 79 %
2. Postmodifier	-	-	1	2, 84 %
3. Disjunct	-	-	-	-
4. Conjunct	1	1, 92 %	-	-
5. Complementation of verb	1	1, 92 %	3	6, 12 %
6. Complementation of Adjective	-	-	1	2, 04 %
	52	100 %	49	100 %

According to analysis, the writer found 101 data, 52 data from the short stories about science fiction and 49 data from the short stories about love/romance. In the short stories about science fiction, the writer found three types of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases, they are adjunct, conjunct and complementation of verb. The number of adjunct is 50 data (96, 15 %), conjunct is 1 data (1, 92 %) and complementation of verb is 1 data (1, 92 %). On the other hand, the writer found more syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in short stories about love/romance, they are adjunct, postmodifier, complementation of verb and complementation of adjective. The number of adjunct is 44 data (89, 79 %), Postmodifier is 1 data (2, 84 %), complementation of verb is 3 data (6, 12 %) and complementation of adjective is 1 data (2, 04 %).

In analyzing the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences. It needs a great understanding in sentence structure and parts of speech because it is one of the greatest ways to use English very well, both in spoken and written. In this research, the writer found some similarities and differences about the syntactic functions in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love romance in storystar.com

There are some similarities about the syntactic functions in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/romance. First, the short stories whose themes are science fiction and love/romance mostly use adjunct as the syntactic function of prepositional phrases in sentences. Adjunct is one of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that answers the questions ‘ how, when, where, why, what and who.’ Especially, adjunct is the phrases that express the meaning of cause, purpose, reason, motive, intended destination, recipient, goal, target, source, origin, means- agentive, manner, instrument, stimulus, accompaniment, support and opposition. At the end of one spectrum of cause-

purpose, we prepositions expressing either the material cause or the psychological cause (motive). Most of adjuncts expresses the meaning of place and time. For example, a sentence in the short story about science fiction, “She had a very happy life until she was murdered on her wedding day”. On her wedding day is a prepositional phrase that functions as adjunct because it shows when ‘ she ‘ was murdered. So, it shows about time and it answer the question ‘ when ‘ in the sentence. and some adjuncts express about the meaning of instrument, intended goal/ target, destination, source, origin and cause.

Second, The short stories whose themes are science fiction and love/ romance use complementation of verb as the syntactic function of prepositional phrases in sentences eventhough the number is very limited. Complementation of verb is one of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that express about subject matter, ingredients, material and reaction. The phrases combine with a considerable range of verbs. Example, *They speak about hobby. About hobby* is a prepositional phrase that functions as complementation as verb because the prepositional phrase is combine with the verb ‘ speak.

The last similarity is the prepositional phrases in sentences used in both themes do not have the syntactic function of disjunct. Disjunct is an adjunct and one of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that especially expresses about concession (in spite of, despite, for+all, with+ all, notwithstanding), reference (with regard to, with reference to (formal), as to (BrE), as for, exception and negative condition. The example of prepositional phrase that functions as disjunct that express about concession. The phrases express about concession : in spite of, despite, for+ all, with+ all, notwithstanding. *He still loves her, in spite of her fault. In spite of her faults* is a prepositional phrase that functions as disjunct because ‘ in spite of ‘ is a general purpose preposition of concession.

Instead of having similarities, there are also some differences about the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance. First, The prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about love/ romance do not have conjunct as the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences. Conjunct is an adjunct that adds information to the sentence that is not considered part of the propositional content (or at least not essential) but which connects the sentence with previous parts of the discourse. Example : For one thing, for another thing, for a start, to begin with, in the same way, for instance, as a result, etc. *On the contrary, her old friend can be a succesful singer. On the contrary* is a prepositional phrase that functions as conjunct because the preposition ‘on’ is followed by a noun phrase that give a contradictive meaning.

The second difference is the prepositional phrases in the sentences used in short stories about science fiction do not have Complementation of adjective. Complementation of an adjective is one of the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that combine a considerable range of adjectives. The phrases express the relation between the prepositional phrase with the adjective that comes before it. The phrases express about subject matter, and respect- standard. The example of prepositional phrases that function as complementation as an adjective that expresses about subject matter. *He is sad about murder. About murder* is a

prepositional phrase that functions as complementation of an adjective. It completes the adjective 'sad'.

The last difference is the prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction do not have postmodifiers as the syntactic function of prepositional phrases in the sentences. Postmodifier is one of syntactic functions of prepositional phrases that occurs if a prepositional phrase appears after a noun phrase, and the noun phrase together with the prepositional phrase function as a subject in the sentence. The example of prepositional phrases that function as postmodifier, *a mother with a boy is in the waiting room*. *With a boy* is a prepositional phrase that functions as postmodifier because the prepositional phrase appears after the noun phrase a mother. Then the noun phrase is together with the prepositional phrase function a subject in a sentence.

After analyzing all the data, this research is sufficient to answer the formulation of the problem. The formulation of the problem is, " what are the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance. Through the data analysis, the writer proves that the sentences in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance have some similarities and differences in using the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases.

### **C. Conclusions and Suggestions**

From the finding of research and discussion, It can be concluded that the prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/romance mostly use adjunct as the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases because the prepositional phrases in sentences used in these two themes indicate about meaning of of cause, purpose, reason, motive, intended destination, recipient, goal, target, source, origin, means- agentive, manner, instrument, stimulus, accompaniment, support and opposition.

Second, The prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction and love/ romance do not have disjunct as the syntactic function of prepositional phrases because the prepositional phrases in sentences used in these themes do not express about concession (in spite of, despite, for+all, with+ all, notwithstanding), reference (with regard to, with reference to (formal), as to (BrE), as for, exception and negative condition.

The third, the prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about science fiction only have three types of prepositional phrases. They are Adjunct, Conjunct and complementation of verb because there are no prepositional phrases that appear after a noun phrase and used as a subject in a sentence. There are no prepositional phrases that especially express about concession (in spite of, despite, for + all, with + all, notwithstanding), reference (with regard to, with reference to (formal), as to (BrE), as for, exception and negative condition. There are no prepositional phrases that are combined with a considerable adjectives.

The fourth, The prepositional phrases in sentences used in short stories about love/ romance have more syntactic functions of prepositional phrases. They are adjunct, Complementation of verb, postmodifier and complementation of adjective. In this theme of short story, there are no prepositional phrases used to

add information to the sentence or connect the sentence with previous parts of the discourse, for example : for one thing, for another thing, for a start, to begin with, in the same way, for instance, as a result, and so on.

There are many aspects that can be studied. The writer suggests to readers to study more about this topic in order to enrich the knowledge. The next writers may study this topic by comparing the syntactic functions of prepositional phrases in sentences used in classic short stories, middle and modern short stories, for example.

**Note:** This article is written based on the Deny Setiawan's paper under the supervision of Rusdi Noor Rosa S.S., M. Hum.

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