

**MICHAEL SKIBA, PARTICIPIAL PREPOSITIONS
AND CONJUNCTIONS IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH.
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Michael Skiba's monograph is a revised version of his doctoral dissertation, which was successfully defended in 2019 at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, under the supervision of Professor Ursula Lenker. It provides a detailed overview of the subgroup of English prepositions and conjunctions that have affinities with the class of verbs, focusing on their origin, development, and grammatical properties. The findings are examined in the context of the history of English and language change. The book consists of eight chapters, which are all summarized below.

Following a brief introduction to the topic, chapter 2 provides an overview of the definitions of participles, prepositions, conjunctions, and adverbs in the history of grammar writing. The chapter starts with the definitions used in antiquity, then continues with those used in Old English grammar books, Early Modern as well as Late Modern grammar books. Definitions are also discussed from a synchronic perspective, as each of the current grammar books provides a slightly different description of prepositions, adverbs, and conjunctions. Traditional grammar books, like Quirk et al.'s *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, restrict the definition of prepositions as licensing three kinds of complements (a nominal phrase, a nominal *wh*- clause, and a nominal *-ing* clause), while Huddleston and Pullum's *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* broadens the definition of prepositions by adding several adverbial and conjunctive uses. In the end, Skiba decides to follow the traditional division of the word classes, since all English dictionaries, including the *Oxford English Dictionary*, follow this convention. The second part of the theoretical chapter shifts its focus to the syntactic conditions that allowed for dangling participles to start functioning as prepositions. The papers of Kortmann and König (1992) and Kortmann (1991) are consequently discussed, as they provide a good starting point for the discussion on deverbal prepositions and conjunctions. These studies examine the phonological, morphosyntactic, and semantic changes deverbal prepositions were subjected to during grammaticalization. The gradience of word classes, as well as mechanisms such as reanalysis, analogy, lexicalization, and borrowing are also briefly touched upon to help the reader understand the full context of language change. Ultimately, Skiba concludes that borrowing as well as calquing are essential for understanding how participles became prepositions and conjunctions, as many of the discussed words are of Anglo-French or Latin origin.

Chapter 3 looks at the participial prepositions and conjunctions in the context of Germanic and Romance languages. The chapter begins with a historical overview of English, starting with earlier Middle English and then going back to Old English (OE) to find the antecedents of the Middle English (ME) prepositions. The section devoted to the Middle English period deals with the participial prepositions and conjunctions that were part of the Middle English inventory. The following section investigates Old English syntax with a focus on the appositive and absolute participles which imitate Latin constructions. While both OE and ME participial constructions are structurally similar, they are semantically as well as functionally different. On the grounds of



these differences, Skiba concludes that there is no direct connection between the OE participial constructions and the late ME participial prepositions and conjunctions. To understand the origin of the underlying construction that gave rise to English participial prepositions and conjunctions, the chapter discusses Germanic languages (German, Dutch, Gothic, and reconstructed Proto-Germanic), and Scandinavian languages (Old Norse, Swedish). Due to the lack of space, only a small section is devoted to each of the languages to determine whether there are any parallels between the participial prepositions and conjunctions in these languages and those in English. More importantly, the chapter aims to uncover whether participial prepositions are native to any of the discussed languages or whether they were all borrowed into the languages through Romance languages. To understand the provenance of these constructions in Latin, the syntax of Proto-Indo-European is also discussed. The reader is also walked through the topic of participial prepositions in the modern Romance languages. The data confirm that this type of preposition is typical for all languages belonging to this language family. In sum, the cross-linguistic chapter succeeds in familiarizing the reader with the construction in the other languages and finding the sources of English participial prepositions in Anglo-French and Latin. The author also achieves its objective of determining when participial prepositions and conjunctions were introduced into the English language and of explaining the emergence of these constructions in the context of typological changes in the language.

The methodological chapter addresses the problems of scarcity, inconsistency, and fragmentation of historical data. Although the *Helsinki Corpus* lacks more concrete dating of the manuscripts, Skiba does not see it as an obstacle to determining the chronology of syntactic changes. The study uses the *Helsinki Corpus* for the qualitative analysis, while the *Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse*, the *Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence*, and the *Corpus of Late Modern English texts* are analyzed qualitatively. The chronology is corroborated by the data extracted from the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Middle English Dictionary*. The second half of the chapter introduces a list of three main and two minor syntactic types of participial prepositions. Only a short paragraph is devoted to each of the five types. All participial prepositions are then assigned to one of the five groups. Consequently, the criteria which were used to differentiate the prepositional uses from the participial ones are discussed (such as position in front of the complement or pronoun in the oblique case, e.g. *he failing* vs. *failing him*). A short section at the end of the chapter examines different types of complements that the prepositions and conjunctions license.

Chapter 5 provides a quantitative analysis of the data extracted from the *Helsinki Corpus* with a focus on chronology and textual genres. Individual words are chronologically ordered based on the first attestation in each of the word classes: participles, prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositions introducing prepositional phrases. All attestations in the *Helsinki Corpus* are verified with the dates found in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). The chapter aims to help the reader better understand the chronological order of changes. The author also tries to determine when this syntactic pattern was most productive. The stylistic distribution of the first attestations of prepositions is also examined to determine in which genres the participial prepositions first occurred. The study also takes into consideration the uneven distri-



bution of the data across periods. Skiba's findings confirm that the genres are equally distributed across the periods of the *Helsinki Corpus*, apart from the religious and philosophical texts which may be a cause of slight distortions of numbers. Despite this, the data confirm that educational texts form the backbone of innovations, while legal texts become common only in later stages and eventually subsume educational texts. The same methodology is consequently applied to two selected participial prepositions (*notwithstanding* and *except*) to examine them from a qualitative perspective.

In the longest chapter of the book, the profiles of participial prepositions and conjunctions are described in alphabetical order, with related items grouped together. Based on the information from the OED, DOEL (Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*), AND (*Anglo-Norman Dictionary*), and the *Helsinki Corpus*, the following information is presented: the first attestation as a preposition in each of the sources, allocation to one of the syntactic types presented in chapter 3 and semantic domains based on Langacker (2013) and Kortmann (2012). The first attested quotations are then examined in more detail to confirm whether the prepositional status of these items is truly unambiguous. For some prepositions, Skiba provides an alternative timing of the first attestation, as the OED seems to misidentify some of the first prepositional uses. Skiba also investigates English-French cognates (e.g. *during*, *indurand*, *enduring*) which all have origin in the same Anglo-French word (e.g. *durant*). Coexistences of calques (e.g. *pending*) and borrowed words (e.g. *pendant*) are discussed as well. Skiba also addresses the variability of voice, as some of the examined words occur in the form of the past participle as well as the present participle (e.g. *seen* versus *seeing*). In addition, the chapter examines pathways followed by selected words during the process of grammaticalization. The most dominant pattern starts with a participle, followed by a preposition, a conjunction with *that*, and ends with a conjunction. A less frequent pattern is when a 'pure conjunction' occurs before a conjunction with *that*. A comparison between the first attestations of verbs and related prepositions confirms that the verbs are borrowed into English from Anglo-French earlier than the prepositions are first attested in the vast majority of cases. As regards the most frequent semantic classes, most prepositions refer to the semantic domain of place, in addition to time and thought. Skiba concludes that all of the examined participial prepositions and conjunctions have an important pragmatic function, as they help with the structuring of thought, concepts, and discourse.

Chapter 7 shifts focus to the most recent additions to the class of participial prepositions and conjunctions which have not yet been fully recognized as prepositions. To illustrate the point, Skiba selects four prepositional items which best represent innovations in the English language. The complex preposition *according to* represents a new syntactical type of participial prepositions. The native participial preposition *following* is also examined, as it proves that the pattern has become productive enough to spread beyond participles of French and Latin provenance. Two other potential candidates for participial prepositions are also discussed, that is a complex passive preposition *based on* and a complex native preposition *looking at*. To examine these four items, data from the *Corpus of Historical American English* (COHA), the *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA), and the *British National Corpus* (BNC) are extracted to cover both American and British English. In a similar fashion to chapter 6,



profiles summarizing the first attestations in the dictionaries, syntactic types, and semantic domains of the items are presented for each of the four prepositional items. The overview is followed by a discussion and analysis of the data extracted from the BNC and COHA. In sum, the chapter reveals that these items have been in the language for centuries even though they are not still recognized as full-fledged prepositions. The productivity of the pattern is confirmed by the fact that native participles are starting to form prepositions in addition to the participles of French and Latin origin. Additionally, a new syntactical type (complex participial prepositions) seems to have become productive in the English language. The distribution in Present-Day English follows the same pattern as in the Middle Ages. The most recent additions to the class of participial prepositions first occur in written and more formal texts (especially academic texts) and then spread to other genres (mostly journalistic texts and literary texts) and marginally even into spoken discourse. Participial prepositions are, according to Skiba, now an integral part of English grammar and lexicon.

The last chapter summarizes what has been discussed in the previous chapters. Skiba concludes that the influx of participial prepositions and conjunctions during the Middle English period was a consequence of intensive language contact between English and French and Latin. In both languages, the development of these constructions was facilitated by the typological shift from a synthetic to an analytical language. Following the summary of the main findings, topics for future research are introduced (such as a closer look at the semantics of participial prepositions and conjunctions, polyvalency of some of the examined items, or the most recent developments of complex native participial prepositions).

To conclude, this publication succeeds in exposing the origin of participial prepositions and conjunctions and their subsequent development in the English language. Skiba skillfully combines quantitative and *BUCLD 34: Proceedings* qualitative approaches to examine the data from both perspectives. In the study, Skiba acknowledges the importance of Latin and French for this construction and gives sufficient space to the languages which gave rise to these constructions through syntactic borrowing. The organization of the book helps the reader find relevant topics easily. Especially, chapter 6 in which individual participial prepositions and conjunctions are organized in alphabetical order as a dictionary can be useful for any reader investigating any of these words. Since the study aims to cover all English participial prepositions and conjunctions, individual profiles of the items and subsequent discussions are occasionally too brief, but chapter 7 offers a more in-depth analysis of the most recent innovations. As the title of the study suggests, the work aims to examine both prepositions and conjunctions. However, while participial prepositions are given a detailed look in every chapter, participial conjunctions are only mentioned marginally. The imbalance is mostly noticeable in chapters 4 and 7. Skiba explains that since participial prepositions are more frequent than conjunctions and since the pattern of forming prepositions is more productive than the one forming participles, participial prepositions are given more space in the study. As participial prepositions and conjunctions are only marginally discussed in most English dictionaries and grammar books, this publication makes an outstanding contribution to the subject matter.

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Kristína Valentínyová

Department of English Language and ELT Methodology,
Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague
nám. J. Palacha 2, 116 38
Praha 1, Czech Republic
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-4018-9739
Kristina.Valentiny@gmail.com

