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Časové a prostorové předložkové vazby v britské a americké angličtině
Prepositional phrases denoting time and space in British and American English

Děkuji vedoucí své práce PhDr. Markétě Malé, Ph.D. za cenné připomínky a pomoc při psaní této bakalářské práce.

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně, že jsem řádně citovala všechny použité prameny a literaturu a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

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ABSTRAKT

Bakalářská práce se zabývá rozdílem v používání časových a prostorových předložkových vazeb v americké a britské angličtině. Teoretická část se opírá o sémantickou klasifikaci časových a prostorových předložkových vazeb, která je vymezena v gramatice *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk, R. a kol., 1985). Praktická část je zaměřena na analýzu tří problematických oblastí: a) předložek, které se liší pouze ve formě v britské a americké angličtině, b) rozdílů v přítomnosti/nepřítomnosti předložek v britské a americké angličtině ve vazbách jako *I'll do it on Monday* (BrE)/*I'll do it Monday* (AmE), c) používání různých předložek pro vyjádření téhož významu v každé z variet. Materiál je čerpán ze dvou velkých korpusů současné britské a americké angličtiny – Korpusu současné americké angličtiny (COCA) a Britského národního korpusu (BNC).

Klíčová slova: časové a prostorové předložky, britská a americká angličtina, korpusově založené metody.

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with the difference in the use of time and space prepositional phrases in British and American English. The theoretical background rests on the semantic classification of time and space prepositional phrases in *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk et al., 1985). The practical part of the thesis focuses on the analysis of three problematic areas: a) prepositions which differ only in form in the two varieties, b) the difference in the presence vs. absence of a preposition in the two varieties, e.g.: *I'll do it on Monday*. (BrE)/*I'll do it Monday*. (AmE), c) different prepositions used for expressing the same meaning in British and American English. The material was drawn from two large corpora, namely the Corpus of Contemporary American English and the British National Corpus.

Key words: time and space prepositional phrases, British and American English, corpus-based and corpus-driven methods.

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1. Introduction

The BA thesis is concerned with the prepositional phrases denoting time and space in British and American English. Although most prepositional phrases denoting time and space are used identically in BrE and AmE, there are a few cases when AmE speakers tend to use different prepositional phrases than BrE speakers would for describing the same meaning.

The theoretical part gives a general characteristic of time and space prepositional phrases, focusing on the survey of various time and space prepositional meanings in the two varieties. Its aim is to summarize and analyze what is known and written about this topic in authoritative grammars. The practical part focuses on certain cases concerning the usage of prepositions in BrE and AmE that have not been previously described in detail. In particular, its objective is to concentrate on three problematic areas (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 79-81):

- (a) prepositions which differ only in form in the two varieties: e.g. *round* (BrE)/*around* (AmE)
- (b) the difference in the presence vs. absence of a preposition in the two varieties: e.g. *I'll do it on Monday.* (BrE)/*I'll do it Monday.* (AmE)
- (c) different prepositions used for describing the same meaning in BrE and AmE: e.g. *at Christmas* (BrE)/*on Christmas* (AmE)

In this way, the thesis not only examines the preferences of BrE and AmE speakers when using space and time prepositional phrases, but also results in the creation of a database of examples that can be used by others. The topic is relevant for two major reasons: there is neither detailed description of this problem in the context of a semantic classification of prepositional phrases denoting time and space, nor a sufficient number of examples available illustrating the above-mentioned problematic cases.

The theoretical background rests on the semantic classification of prepositions, specifically prepositional meanings of time and space (Quirk et al., 1985: 673-695). Relevant examples for the practical part will be excerpted from two corpora, namely Corpus of Contemporary American English (Brigham Young University) and British National Corpus (Brigham Young University). The examples for comparison will be selected on the basis of frequency of occurrence and cultural relevance in both the UK and the USA since typical Americanisms or notions relevant in the UK context only cannot provide an adequate basis for comparison within this thesis.

2. Theoretical Part

2.1. Prepositional Phrases Denoting Time

Prepositions are a closed word class which “expresses a relation between two entities, one being that represented by the prepositional complement, the other by another part of the sentence” (Quirk et al., 1985: 657). A prepositional phrase is composed of a preposition and a complement (a noun phrase, a nominal *wh*-clause, or a nominal –ing clause) (ibid.). Consequently, prepositions serve as “links introduc[ing] prepositional phrases” (Biber et al., 1999: 74).

Time prepositional phrases express various time relations and describe various time prepositional meanings, such as: ‘time position’, ‘measurement into the future’, ‘duration’ and others (Quirk et al., 1985: 687-692). In comparison with space prepositional phrases, time prepositional phrases are characterized by ‘one-dimensionality’ and ‘unidirectionality’¹. This fact partially explains why there are fewer time than space prepositional meanings described in this thesis (Dušková et al., 2006: 288).

The first half of the theoretical part also provides insights on the absence of prepositions in time, frequency and duration expressions, which is relevant to this thesis.

2.1.1. Time Position.

Within the group of prepositional phrases denoting ‘time position’, we can distinguish two subgroups expressing ‘point of time’ and ‘period of time’ meanings (Quirk et al., 1985: 687).

The prepositional meaning of ‘point of time’ is limited to one preposition only – *at*, when it denotes exact time or moment. This refers to ‘clock-time’, e.g.: *at six o’clock*, *at a quarter to three*, *at half past eight*, *at 2.30 p.m.*; and “more traditional points in a day”, e.g.: *at sundown*, *at dawn*, *at noon* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 182).

Prepositional phrases indicating ‘period of time’ can be introduced by the prepositions *at*, *on*, *in*, *during*, *by*.

At is used for “periods conceived as points of time”, denoting limited periods of time, e.g. *at dinner-time*, *at tea-time*, *at night* (Quirk et al., 1985: 688). Furthermore, *at* is used in such prepositional phrases as: *at present*, *at the/that time*, which still seem to denote a limited period of time, however not within a day, but rather more generally. *At* can also be used in prepositional phrases “to express (virtual) coincidence with either the beginning or

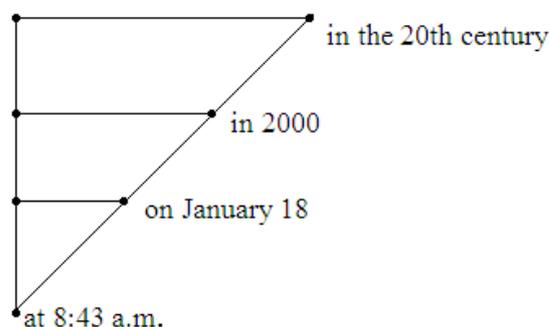
end of a period of time”, e.g. *at the beginning/end of the month*, which are still conceived by the speaker as ‘points of time’, when indicating periods (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 182).

On is used in prepositional phrases of ‘period of time’ for denoting ‘days as periods of time’, or simply dates and days of the week: *on Monday, on Sunday, on October (the) first*. This subgroup also includes many one-day holidays, which have the word ‘day’ in the prepositional phrase: *on New Year’s Day, on St. Valentine’s Day*. Moreover, *on* is used in prepositional phrases “with a complement referring to a part of a day, rather than a whole day”: *on Friday evening, on the next morning, on the morning of 1 September* (Quirk et al., 1985: 688).

Both *at* and *on* are used in prepositional phrases describing ‘holiday periods’: *at/on Christmas, at/on the weekends*. At least two authoritative sources, *IEGVSE* and *CGEL*, point out that *on* in prepositional phrases denoting ‘holiday periods’ is mostly typical of American English. This issue will be thoroughly analyzed in the practical part of the thesis.

In is used in prepositional phrases which may describe “periods longer or shorter than a day”: *in the morning, in the evening, in May, in 2013, in (the) spring, in the tenth century* (ibid.).

One may notice that the preposition *in* tends to denote the longest periods of time out of the three above mentioned prepositions, *at, on, in*, since *in* is used for denoting years and centuries, whereas *at*, which is used for expressing clock-time, denotes the shortest period of time, the so-called ‘point of time’. This observation can be depicted as shown in Picture 1, illustrating the exact time when the Tagish Lake meteorite fell on the earth:



Picture 1. Prepositions denoting the exact time when the Tagish Lake meteorite fell in the Tagish Lake area in northwestern British Columbia, Canada²

The last two less commonly used prepositions which are to be mentioned with regard to the prepositional phrases denoting ‘time position’ are: *during* and *by*.

Although **during** is chiefly used in prepositional phrases denoting ‘duration’, it can

¹ English equivalents of Czech ‘jednorozměrnost’ and ‘jednosměrnost’ (Dušková et al., 2006: 288).

² Robert Weryk, “Tagish Lake Meteorite/Fireball Investigation,” *The Department of Physics and Astronomy, The*

also be used for expressing ‘time position’: *during Holy Week, during the summer*, because “without such durative markers as *stay* and *whole*, *during* refers to a point or period within duration rather than duration itself” (ibid.: 688-689):

(a) She spoke *during the meeting*.

(b) During *our stay in/visit to Japan* we met several old friends.

The first example does not exhibit any durative markers, while the second one does. Therefore, in the first example *during* denotes ‘time position’, whereas *during* in the second example expresses ‘duration’.

Preposition *by* is used in the idioms *by day, by night* “with some activities such as travelling”. In fact, it replaces non-idiomatic prepositional phrases: *during the day, during the night* (ibid.).

The summary of various prepositional phrases denoting ‘time position’ is shown in Table 1. The examples in red present the field of study that this thesis focuses on and will be further investigated in the practical part.

	<i>at</i>	<i>on</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>during</i>	<i>by</i>
point of time	clock-time: <i>at two o'clock, at noon, at midnight, at sunset, at 4.30 p.m.</i>				
period of time	holiday periods (BrE&AmE): <i>at the weekend, at Christmas, at Easter</i>	holiday periods (AmE): <i>on the weekend, on Christmas, on Easter</i>	periods longer or shorter than a day: <i>in the morning/afternoon/evening/night, in the early morning/late afternoon, in October, in 1988, in the months that followed, in (the) spring, in the fifteenth century</i>	periods longer or shorter than a day: <i>during Holy Week, during the summer</i>	in the idioms with some activities such as travelling: <i>by day/night (= during the day/night)</i>
	periods conceived as points of time: <i>at breakfast time/lunchtime/dinner time, at night</i> (as opposed to <i>in the evening/day</i>), <i>at the/that time, at the moment</i>	days as periods of time: <i>on Wednesday, on the following/next day, on September (the) second, on New Year's Day/St. Patrick's Day/Thanksgiving Day</i> with a complement referring to a part of a day, rather than a whole day: <i>on Sunday morning, on the following/next morning, on the evening of 31 December</i>			

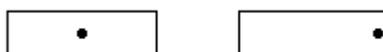
Table 1. Summary of prepositional phrases denoting ‘time position’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 687-688)

2.1.2. Measurement into the Future

The prepositional meaning of ‘measurement into the future’ is expressed by means of the preposition *in*, which “denote[s] measurement from the present time” (Quirk et al., 1985: 688):

- (a) We’ll meet *in three months’ time*.
- (b) We’ll meet (*in*) *three months from now*.

The prepositional meaning of ‘measurement into the future’ “mark[s] a time period used to provide an upper bound on a delay, a period during which, hence by the end of which, an event will occur” (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 657). Therefore, one may notice that time accuracy is approximate in the above-mentioned examples, time boundaries are not well-defined and the exact date and time of the meeting is not clear:



Picture 2. The visual representation of the prepositional meaning ‘measurement into the future’ (“the completion of the task in question can occur well within the time frame [...], or just at (but not after!) its end”) (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 79)

The constructions mentioned in examples (a) and (b) above “[are] only acceptable with the meaning of “at the end of a period of three months starting from now”. In order “[to] measure[e] forwards from a point of time in the past”, the following construction is used (Quirk et al., 1985: 689):

- (c) He finished the job *in three months*.

2.1.3. Duration

Time prepositional phrases which convey the meaning of ‘duration’ answer the question *How long?* (Quirk et al., 1985: 689).

The preposition *for* “is perhaps the most polysemous of the prepositions of English”, with one of its basic meaning being ‘duration’ (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 655). More precisely, it refers to ‘a stretch of time’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 694):

We stayed *for a week*.

The phrase *for a week* “indicates that the [stay] lasted as long as the [week] period” (Quirk et al., 1985: 689). However, “[s]ometimes the length of time is a period during which something did not happen”, as in the example (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 231):

A baby flamingo has been born at Harewood House – the first *for 20 years*.

For can be replaced by *in*, but only in negative sentences, which is typical especially of AmE

(Quirk et al., 1985: 690):

I haven't done that in years. (AmE) = I've not done that for years.

Other examples include (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 79):

I haven't seen him in weeks. (AmE)

I haven't seen him in ages. (AmE)

During, a time preposition “deriving from the French verb meaning ‘to last’”, is the next frequently used preposition denoting ‘duration’ (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 78). The semantic properties of this preposition together with the relevant examples and the difference between ‘a point or period within duration’ meaning and ‘duration’ meaning were analyzed in 2.1.1.

Throughout means “continuously or continually from beginning to end” and puts stress on “continuity or frequency of occurrence within a period of time”, whereas time preposition ***through*** “is not so emphatic about continuity” (ibid.: 131). This notable difference between *through* and *throughout* can also be illustrated by Czech equivalents, ‘po dobu’ and ‘po celou dobu’, respectively (Dušková et al., 2006: 291):

His wife nursed him *through a dangerous illness*.

Jeho žena ho ošetřovala po dobu nebezpečné nemoci.

throughout the war

po celou válku

When the time preposition ***over*** expresses durational meaning it “normally accompanies noun phrases denoting special occasions (such as holidays and festivals)” (Quirk et al., 1985: 689): *over Christmas, over the weekend, over the Sabbath*. However, it also “tend[s] to give a ‘summary view’ of a period of time” (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 130):

House prices up 1.1 per cent *over the year*.

In addition to that, *over* can be used in prepositional phrases denoting ‘duration’ “with landmark nouns such as *dinner, beer, and coffee*” (ibid.):

Kevin met Marjorie *over a couple of beers*.

Across is used only occasionally to denote ‘duration’ (ibid.):

So much has changed *across the years*.

The next few paragraphs analyze the difference in the usage of the following pairs of time prepositions: *over* × *throughout*, *during* × *throughout* and *over* × *during*.

Although *over* and *throughout* may seem to be interchangeable, there is a significant difference in meaning. Firstly, the time preposition *over* generally refers to a shorter period of time than *through(out)*” (Quirk et al., 1985: 689):

We camped there *over the holiday/over Christmas/over the weekend/over the Sabbath/over night*.

We camped there *through(out) the summer*.

Secondly, the time preposition *throughout* “suggests that the period of time is gone through almost day by day, if not minute by minute”, whereas “[o]ver, in contrast, does tend to give a ‘summary view’ of a period of time” (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 129-130):

Thoughtful ideas to create more romance *throughout the year* will be more appreciated than a one-time gift.

House prices up 1.1 per cent *over the year*.

The difference between *during* and *throughout* underlies the fact that “*during* [...] is much less definite than *throughout* about the trend being more or less continuous from the beginning of the period to its end”. As a result, “compar[ed] to *throughout*, *during* is quite vague in general”. *During* can illustrate “any of the temporal ‘scenes’” shown in Picture 2 (ibid.):



Picture 3. The visual representation of the time prepositional phrase ‘daydream during a film’ (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 130)

Just like *throughout*, *over* also tends to be “more precise” than the preposition *during* and, “it is used mainly with landmark nouns of pure time such as *hour*, *day*, and *year* – and not with nouns like *film* and *war* (which refer to relatively prolonged events)” (ibid.).

	duration
<i>for</i>	used frequently, refers to a stretch of time: We stayed <i>for a week</i> . denotes a period during which something did not happen: A baby famingo has been born at Harewood House – the first <i>for 20 years</i> .
<i>in</i>	used in negative sentences only: <i>I haven't done that in years.</i> (esp. AmE)
<i>during</i>	used frequently, quite vague in general: During <i>our stay in/visit to</i> Japan we met several old friends.
<i>through</i>	doesn't emphasize continuity, equals to Czech 'po dobu': His wife nursed him <i>through a dangerous illness</i> .
<i>throughout</i>	emphasizes continuity or frequency of occurrence within a period of time, equals to Czech 'po celou dobu': <i>throughout the war</i>
<i>over</i>	denotes special occasions (such as holidays and festivals): <i>over Christmas, over the weekend, over the Sabbath</i> . gives a 'summary view' of a period of time: House prices up 1.1 per cent <i>over the year</i> .

	used with landmark nouns, such as <i>dinner, beer, and coffee</i>: Kevin met Marjorie <i>over a couple of beers</i> .
<i>across</i>	used occasionally: So much has changed <i>across the years</i>

Table 2. Summary of prepositional phrases denoting ‘duration’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 689-691)

Other frequently used prepositions and pairs of prepositions connected with the notion ‘duration’, but which, however, cannot be presented in the table under one single heading, are analyzed below.

The preposition *between* denotes “intervals between similar objects or events which occur repeatedly (Quirk et al., 1985: 692):

between meals/dances/acts/classes

As opposed to the pairs of prepositions *from... to*, *from... till* and *(from)... through*, which are analyzed below, the construction *between... and* “does not refer to the whole time span” (ibid.: 690-691):

I’ll ring *between Thursday and Saturday*.

By is primarily used to denote “the time at which the result of an event is in existence” (ibid.: 692), or, in other words, ‘time deadlines’ (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 655):

Your papers are to be handed in *by next week*.

Besides, *by* can also denote an ‘ending point’, with *already*, *still*, *yet* and *any more* related in meaning (Quirk et al., 1985: 692):

By the time we’d walked five miles, he was already exhausted.

The time preposition *to* is frequently used in such expressions as: *from beginning to end*, *from morning to evening* (Dušková et al., 2006: 290). *To* signifies the ‘ending point in a period of duration’, but also ‘clock times’ (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 660):

I’ll be available *from two to three*.

ten to six (*ten of/before six in AmE*)

Generally, in expressing clock-time BrE speakers use prepositions *to* and *past*, whereas AmE speakers can also use prepositions *of*, *till* and *after* (“this differs regionally in the USA”) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 80). Compare:

twenty to three (BrE/AmE) **twenty of three or twenty till three (AmE)**
five past eight (BrE/AmE) **five after eight (AmE)**

According to *CGEL*, *until* is more frequent than *till*. In positive context prepositions *till* and

until co-occur with durative verbs only; whereas in negative contexts they can be used either with durative or momentary verbs (Quirk et al., 1985: 690-691):

My girlfriend worked there *till Christmas*.

She didn't arrive there *till Christmas*.

The preposition *by* must be used in positive contexts with momentary verbs (ibid.: 692):

She arrived *by Christmas*.

The preposition *by* cannot occur with durative verbs (ibid.: 692), the preposition *until* being the only possible option in this case:

The troops remained there *until midnight*.

The preposition *up to* can denote either 'a maximum' (a) or 'a cut-off time' (b), although in the latter example "*until* is a more refined alternative" (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 203):

(a) ...custom tattoos that last *up to 3 weeks*.

(b) They serve food *up to 7-45 pm*.

The preposition *from* denotes the 'starting point of a period' (Quirk et al., 1985: 690):

From 1982 (onwards) the rules were changed.

Besides, the preposition *from* can "extend to duration in time" (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 656):

It lasted *from Sunday to Friday*.

In BrE "the 'inclusiveness' must be stated separately if ambiguity is possible" (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 80):

Monday to Friday (inclusive)

Monday up to and including Friday

The reason for this is that the pairs of prepositions *from... to* and *from... till* create ambiguity "as to whether the period mentioned second is included in the total span of time" (Quirk et al., 1985: 690):

We camped there *from June to/till September*.

In AmE another pair of prepositions with the same meaning is used, viz. *(from)... through*, which avoids the above mentioned ambiguity, and clearly states that September is included in the total span of time (ibid.):

We camped there (from) June through September. (AmE)

When the preposition *from*, denoting the 'starting point of a period', is absent, only *until*, *till*,

up to and *through* (AmE) can be used to specify the ‘ending point of a period’ (ibid.):

We camped there *until/till/up to/through* (AmE) *September*.

However, the preposition *to* is possible alongside *till* in the cases like (ibid.):

You can stay *to/till the end of September*.

I have only *a few years to/till retirement*.

Since denotes a starting point (Dušková et al., 2006: 290; Quirk et al., 1985: 691):

Things have changed *since those days*.

We have lived in New York *since 1980*.

Prepositions *before* and *after* are used to describe ‘the order of events’ (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 107); they have opposite meanings (Quirk et al., 1985: 691):

The meeting will take place after the ceremony.

The ceremony will take place before the meeting.

In English prepositions *before*, *after*, *since*, *till* and *until* may function either as conjunctions or prepositions. There are certain conditions under which they function as prepositions (ibid.):

(a) followed by a temporal noun phrase (*after next class*)

(b) followed by a subjectless -ing clause (*since leaving school*)

(c) followed by a noun phrase with a deverbal noun

(d) followed by a noun phrase interpreted as equivalent to a clause (*since electricity = since electricity was invented*)

2.1.4. Absence of Preposition in Point in Time Expressions

The prepositions which may be omitted in point in time expressions are restricted to *at*, *on*, *in*; whereas *before* and *since* are obligatory (Quirk et al., 1985: 693). This can be explained by the formula:

I’ll see you *on* Monday. = I’ll see you Monday.

I’ll see you *before* Monday ≠ I’ll see you Monday.

Particularly, the preposition *on* is often omitted in AmE before specific dates or days of the week if it “indicates a time removed from the present” (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 80):

The sale started on Jan. 1st. (BrE)

The sale started Jan. 1. (AmE)

I’ll do it on Sunday. (BrE)

I'll do it Sunday. (AmE)

Other significant examples of absence of prepositions in point in time expressions are listed in Table 3, which summarizes the cases when prepositions are obligatorily and optionally absent, highlighting the difference between BrE and AmE.

obligatorily absent	immediately before the deictic words <i>last, next, this, that</i>: <i>I'll mention it <i>next time</i> I see her.</i>
	before the quantitative words <i>some, every</i>: <i>Every <i>summer</i> she returns to her childhood home.</i>
	before nouns which have 'last', 'next', or 'this' as an element of their meaning: <i>I'll see her <i>tomorrow (evening)</i>.</i>
optionally absent	with deictic phrases referring to times at more than one remove from the present: <i>(on) Monday week</i> <i>(on) the day before yesterday</i> <i>(in) the January before last</i>
	in phrases which identify a time before or after a given time in the past or future: <i>(in) the previous spring</i> <i>(at) the following weekend (BrE)</i> <i>(on) the following weekend (AmE)</i> <i>(on) the next week</i> <i>(on) the following day</i> <i>(on) that day</i>
	in postmodified nondeictic phrases containing <i>the</i> (AmE): <i>We met (on) the day of the conference.</i> <i>We met (in) the spring of 1983.</i>
	in phrases with the inverted word order (only in BrE, such inversion does not occur in AmE): <i>(on) Sunday next</i> <i>(in) January last</i>

Table 3. Summary of cases when prepositions are obligatory and optionally absent in 'point in time' expressions (Quirk et al., 1985: 692-693)

2.1.5. Absence of Preposition in Frequency Expressions

There is no preposition in a frequency construction like (Quirk et al., 1985: 689):
Three times a week we play darts.

Also, there is no preposition with a frequency indicator *every*. But in case *every* is omitted, the preposition is optional; yet, **the construction without a preposition is considered to be informal, or mostly typical of AmE** (ibid.):

Every Sunday we usually go for a walk.

On Sunday(s) we usually go for a walk.

Sunday(s) we usually go for a walk. (informal/esp. AmE)

In the second and third examples nouns can be either singular or plural without a difference in the meaning; this is possible only when they denote weekdays (ibid.). However, *IEGVSE* points out that the nouns must become plural if the preposition is omitted before "temporal nouns indicating repetition or habitual action" (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 80):

On Saturdays we go to London. (BrE/AmE)

Saturdays we go to London. (AmE)

2.1.6. Absence of Preposition in Duration Expressions

The case of optional absence of a preposition in duration expressions is restricted to one preposition only, viz. *for*. This happens when the preposition *for* is used in the sentence with a stative verb (Quirk et al., 1985: 689):

We stayed there (*for*) *three months*.

The snowy weather lasted (*for*) *the whole time* we were there.

Examples when preposition *for* is obligatory present or absent are illustrated in Table 4.

obligatorily present	with dynamic verbs where the action of the verb is clearly not continuously coextensive with the period specified: I haven't spoken to her <i>for three months</i> .
	in initial position in the clause: <i>For 600 years</i> , the cross lay undisturbed.
	in <i>for</i>-phrases, such as <i>for ages, for days, for years</i>: <i>For years</i> we have all been expecting this event
obligatorily absent	in phrases beginning with <i>all</i>, such as <i>all (the) week, all day</i>: I haven't seen her <i>all day</i> .

Table 4. Summary of cases when preposition *for* is obligatory present and obligatorily absent in 'duration' expressions (Quirk et al., 1985: 692-693)

Also, in BrE the preposition *from* is often deleted "in phrases denoting a period of time from or after a given time", whereas in AmE it cannot be deleted (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 81):

a week this Tuesday (BrE)

a week *from* this Tuesday (AmE)

2.2. Prepositional Phrases Denoting Space

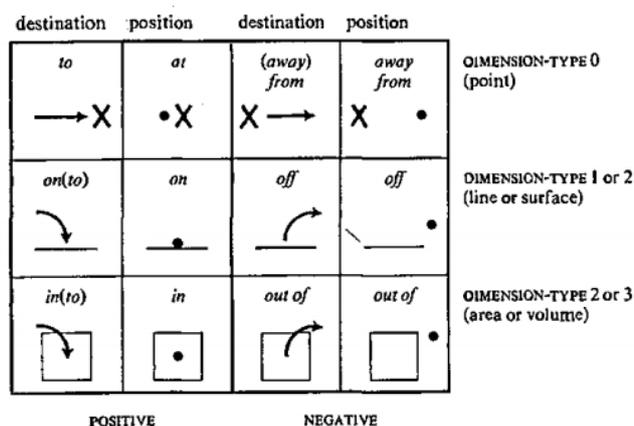
This chapter on prepositional phrases denoting space is based on the notion ‘dimension’, because “[w]hen we use a preposition to indicate space, we do so in relation to the dimensional properties, whether subjectively or objectively conceived, of the location concerned” (Quirk et al., 1985: 673). Moreover, this notion allows to systematically analyze and classify numerous space prepositional meanings.

CGEL distinguishes the following types of dimension (ibid.: 673-674):

- (a) dimension-type 0 (point)
- (b) dimension-type 1 or 2 (line or surface)
- (c) dimension-type 2 or 3 (area or volume)

Besides, *CGEL* introduces the term ‘position’ (‘static location’) and ‘destination’ (‘movement with respect to an intended location’), between which “a cause-and-effect relationship obtains” (ibid.: 675).

The scheme below illustrates the dimension-types of negative and positive ‘position’ and ‘destination’, which make the core of this chapter (ibid.: 674):



Picture 4. Space and Dimension (Quirk et al., 1985: 674)

Although space prepositional phrases denoting ‘position’ may accompany any verb, “this meaning is particularly associated with verbs of stative meaning [...], such as *be*, *stand*, *live*, etc.” On the contrary, space prepositional phrases denoting ‘destination’ usually collocate with “a verb of dynamic ‘motional’ meaning, such as *go*, *move*, *fly*, etc” (ibid.: 675).

In addition to that, the chapter focuses on other common meanings of space prepositions, such as: ‘relative position’ and ‘relative destination’, ‘passage’, ‘movement with reference to a directional path’. Just as in the case with time prepositions, the chapter deals only with frequently used primary space prepositions and excludes metaphorical usages, set phrases and (phrasal-) prepositional verbs.

Due to a great number of space prepositions in the English language, only the most frequently used space prepositional meanings will be described and analyzed, paying attention to the differences between AmE and BrE.

2.2.1. Positive Position and Destination

	positive	
	destination	position
dimension-type 0 (point)	<i>to</i> : Ann went <i>to</i> Oxford.	<i>at</i> : Ann was <i>at</i> Oxford.
dimension-type 1 or 2 (line or surface)	<i>on (to)</i> : Ann climbed <i>onto</i> the roof.	<i>on</i> : Ann was <i>on</i> the roof.
dimension-type 2 or 3 (area or volume)	<i>in (to)</i> : Ann dived <i>into</i> the water.	<i>in</i> : Ann was <i>in</i> the water.

Table 5. Space prepositions denoting ‘positive position’ and ‘positive destination’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 675)

The first part of this subchapter focuses on the frequently used ‘position’ prepositions, such as: *at*, *on* and *in*, which answer the question *Where?* (Dušková et al., 2006: 279).

The preposition *at* is frequently used to denote ‘position’, or, in other words, ‘location in broad scope views’, because “[in] order to see all of a vast geographical area, one must be, or imagine oneself to be, high above it” (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 176). Lindstrombergh uses an abstract term ‘zooming out’ to describe this notion. Therefore the distinction between the prepositions *in* and *near* disappears, and as a result the preposition *at* is used (ibid.):

After receiving the waters of many tributaries, the Mississippi is at last joined *at St Louis* by...the mighty Missouri.

Lindstrombergh specifies that “the confluence of the two rivers is actually some miles north of the city” (ibid.). Similarly, *CamGEL* points out that *at* “express[es] location in a specific geographical position conceived as a point in the plane” (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 654):

at the North Pole

In the same way, *at* is often used for (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 174-177):

- (a) ‘battlefields’: Wolfe’s victory *at Quebec*; the victory *at Trafalgar*;
- (b) ‘hotels’ and ‘restaurants’ (before proper names): *at the Ritz*, *at Morelli’s*, *at the Odeon*
- (c) ‘points on a route’ (‘way stations’, ‘ports of call’, ‘pause points’):
[Chopin] set out for London, but stopped *at Paris*.
We got off the ship *at all ports*.

(d) “an airport, bus or train station, dock or some other point of (dis)embarkation”:

Our flight from Islamabad to Manchester had a stopover *at Dubai*.

(e) ‘points on a scale’:

What voltage should a car battery be *at*?

Antarctica’s continental shelf sits *at a depth of* about 400 meters.

(f) “contact with (or extreme nearness to) edges, ends and extremities in general”:

a box *at the edge of a roof*

(g) ‘boundaries’, ‘borders’, ‘frontiers’, ‘edges’:

A visit to Canada begins with a stop *at customs*.

(h) ‘a turning point’:

Make a right turn *at the first light*.

(i) “way-stations and pause points on (semi-)metaphorical routes”:

I stopped *at page 7*.

When the preposition *on* denotes ‘positive position’, it corresponds to Czech *na*, as shown in the example (Dušková et al., 2006: 282):

something *on the table*

něco *na stole*

In this example, the preposition *on* “means that the [s]ubject is in contact with a [l]andmark that is a supporting surface”, so “[i]f the surface were not there, the [s]ubject would fall – given the presence of gravity”; this is the case of “[a] purely geometrical part of [the] meaning”, see Picture 5 (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 51-52):



Picture 5. The basic spatial meaning of preposition *on* and other variations of this meaning (see below) (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 51-52)

However, this ‘physical arrangement’, as illustrated in Picture 5, can be rotated, with the basic meaning ‘position’ preserved (ibid.):

(a) the mirror *on the wall* (‘contact’ + ‘support’)



(b) the security light *on the out-/inside of the house* (‘contact’ + ‘support’)



(c) the bug *on the ceiling* (‘contact’ + ‘support’)



(d) chewing gum *on the bottom of the table* (‘contact’ + ‘support’)



Also:

(e) Here is a blob *on a line* (‘contact’ but not ‘support’)

(f) a shadow *on a wall* (“where the [l]andmark supports the [s]ubject and scenes where this is more of an illusion”)

Sometimes, “[the] supportive contact blends into non-supportive contact” as in the phrasal constructions (ibid.: 52-53):

(a) Only a rattlesnake has a rattle *on the end of its tail*.

(b) I feel like a balloon *on the end of a string*.

(c) Both of these campgrounds are right *on the ocean*.

(d) The Luxembourg Shell station *on the motorway* to France happens to be Europe’s largest one.

The preposition *in* “is the basic preposition for expressing interior location”

(Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 657):

in the box

However, this also applies to the objects “[b]eing ‘in’ without really being geometrically ‘in’”

(Lindstrombergh, 2010: 73-74):

A banana and some apples *in a bowl*.



Picture 6. Being ‘in’ without really being geometrically ‘in’ (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 73-74)

Also, *in* denotes ‘position’ when describing ‘sizeable territories’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 675):

(a) ‘continents’ and ‘countries’: *in Asia, in China*

(b) ‘provinces’ and ‘counties’: *in British Columbia, in Cheshire*

(c) ‘city districts’: *in Brooklyn, in Hampstead*

Some important differences in the use of ‘position’ prepositions include: *in* × *on* and *at* × *on*.

“The contrast between *on* [‘surface’] and *in* [‘area’] has various implications according to context”, as in the examples below (ibid.: 676):

The frost made patterns *on the window*. (window = ‘glass surface’) ×

A face appeared *in the window/mirror*, (window/mirror = ‘framed area’)
The players were practising *on the field*, (field = ‘surface for sports’) ×
Cows were grazing *in the field*. (field = ‘enclosed area of land’)

Besides, in AmE the preposition *on* is more likely to be used in the space prepositional phrases denoting ‘position’, like (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 80):

to be on a team (AmE) × *to be in a team* (BrE)
to live on a street (AmE) × *to live in a street* (BrE)

Both *at* and *in* can be used to denote ‘towns’, ‘villages’, ‘cities’, etc. Unlike *in*, the preposition *at* is most likely to be used when (Quirk et al., 1985: 676):

(a) “a large city [is] treated as a point on the map if global distances are in mind”:

Our plane refuelled *at London* on its way from New York to Moscow.

(b) a university bears the name of the city:

She’s *at Oxford*. = She’s a student at Oxford University.

(c) “a building in its institutional or functional aspect” is in mind:

Ann works *at a publishing house*.

Unlike *at*, the preposition *in* is generally used to denote (Quirk et al., 1985: 676):

(a) “a very large city [...] treated as an area”:

He works *in London*, but lives *in the country*.

(b) ‘a three-dimensional structure’:

Ann works *in a publishing house*.

The following paragraphs focus on the frequently used ‘destination’ prepositions: *to*, *(on)to*, *in(to)*, *toward(s)*.

The ‘destination’ preposition *to* “denotes completive movement in the direction of a place” (ibid.: 677):

He went *to the post-office*.

In other words, *to* indicates “the goal in physical movement” (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 660):

She went *to Paris*.

Similarly, “secondary senses include the end point in a change of state” (ibid.):

The snow turned *to water*.

The lights turned *from red to green*.



Picture 7. The visual representation of the ‘destination’ preposition *to* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 29)

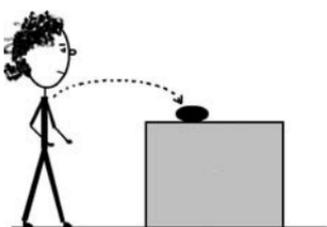
However, “with the perfective aspect, *to* may also be used in a way which appears to make it interchangeable with *at* or *in*” (Quirk et al., 1985: 677):

Ann has been *to/at Oxford*. (‘as a student’)

Ann has been *to/in Oxford*. (‘as a visitor’)

The ‘destination’ preposition *on* often collocates with causative verbs (ibid.):

She put the thing *on the table*.



Picture 8. The visual representation of the ‘destination’ preposition *on* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 55)

“Semantically, *onto* is a transitive, dynamic, and therefore potentially emphatic, form of *on*”; *onto* is mostly used to describe a situation when “a [s]ubject makes forceful contact with a surface” (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 54):

Powerful ocean waves *crash onto shore*.

Mix the compound, paint and aggregate and spray it *onto the ceiling*.



Picture 9. The visual representation of the ‘destination’ preposition *onto* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 54)

Besides, the ‘destination’ preposition *onto* can also denote ‘movement into a location of prominence’ (ibid.: 55):

The hostess came *onto the stage*.

The ‘destination’ prepositions *in* and *into* are used “when we think of the [l]andmark as something with a boundary and an interior, [...] regardless of whether it is 2- or 3-dimensional” (ibid.: 31):

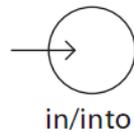
Get *in the car*.

Shall we go *into the drawing room*?

I'm going *into town/the city* (to see the sights).

Just like *on(to)*, prepositions *in* and *into* often collocate with causative verbs (Quirk et al., 1985: 675):

She put the keys *in(to) the drawer*.



Picture 10. The visual representation of the ‘destination’ preposition *in(to)* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 54)

The major difference between ‘destination’ prepositions *in* and *into* is that “*in* keeps the focus on the result (enclosure) and off the movement that led up to enclosure”, whereas *into* “highlights the fact of movement”, and therefore “*into* is more dynamic” (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 32):

We got *in the car*.

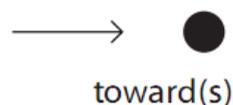
We got *into the car*.

The last frequently used ‘destination’ preposition is *toward(s)*, with “the choice of the *-ward/-wards* forms” (Quirk et al., 1985: 675):

They drove *towards Edinburgh*.

Toward or *towards* (esp. BrE) means ‘nearer and nearer, in the direction of’, therefore “[t]he [l]andmark is not necessarily the endpoint of the path since the path may never reach the endpoint” (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 29):

She...started *toward the house*, but then turned *toward the barn*.



Picture 11. The visual representation of the ‘destination’ preposition *toward(s)* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 29)

2.2.2. Negative Position and Destination

This subchapter deals with the three space prepositions denoting ‘negative position’ and ‘negative destination’, or, in other words, ‘source’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 677): (*away*) *from*, *off* and *out of*. One may notice that “[t]here is a cause-and-effect relation with negative destination and position parallel to that of positive destination and position” (ibid.: 677-678).

	negative	
	destination	position
dimension-type 0 (point)	<i>(away) from:</i> Ann drove <i>(away) from</i> home.	<i>away from:</i> Ann is <i>away from</i> home.
dimension-type 1 or 2 (line or surface)	<i>off:</i> The book fell <i>off</i> the shelf.	<i>off:</i> The book is <i>off</i> the shelf.
dimension-type 2 or 3 (area or volume)	<i>out of:</i> Tom got <i>out of</i> the water.	<i>out of:</i> Tom is <i>out of</i> the water.

Table 6. Space prepositions denoting ‘negative position’ and ‘negative destination’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 678)

In fact, the above mentioned negative prepositions “may be defined simply by adding the word *not* to the corresponding positive preposition” (ibid.):

away from = *not at*

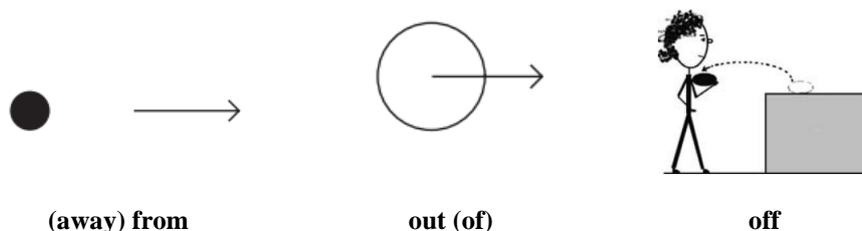
off = *not on*

out of = *not in*

In case there is “a reference to an opening or aperture”, prepositions *out* and *out of* can be used interchangeably without a difference in meaning. However, *out* is more typical of informal BrE and AmE (ibid.):

She looked *out the window*. (AmE/informal BrE)

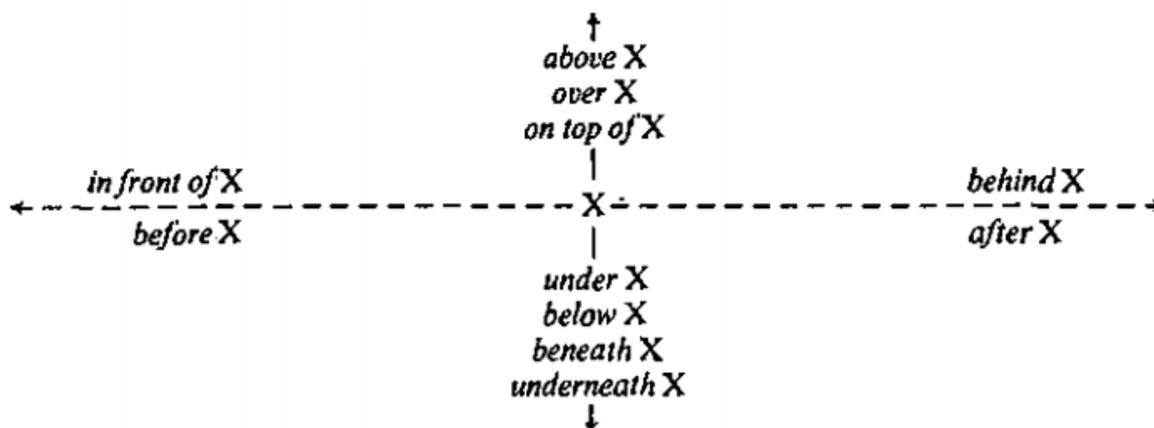
She loooked *out of the window*. (BrE/AmE)



Picture 12. The visual representation of the space prepositions denoting ‘negative position’ and ‘negative destination’: *(away) from*, *out (of)* and *off* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 29, 55)

2.2.3. Relative Position and Destination

Not only can space prepositions denote ‘simple position’, but they can also “express the relative position of two objects or groups of objects” (Quirk et al., 1985: 678). “*Above*, *over*, *on top of*, *under*, *underneath*, *beneath*, and *below* express relative position vertically, whereas *in front of*, *before*, *behind*, and *after* represent it horizontally”, which can be illustrated schematically (ibid.):



Picture 13. Space prepositions expressing relative position vertically and horizontally (Quirk et al., 1985: 678)

According to *CGEL*, “the actual use of the prepositions relating to relative position varies considerably” in BrE and AmE (ibid.: 679). This statement about space prepositions denoting ‘relative position’ will be further analyzed in the practical part of the thesis by analyzing their frequency of occurrence.

In AmE the preposition *behind* is often replaced by the prepositional phrase *in back of* (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 79):

I put it *behind the shed*. (BrE)

I put *in back of the shed*. (AmE)

In addition to that, space prepositions denoting ‘relative position’ can generally function as prepositions denoting ‘relative destination’, with the exception of prepositions *above* and *below* (Quirk et al., 1985: 678):

He threw a blanket *over her*.

The bush was the only conceivable hiding place, so I dashed *behind it*.

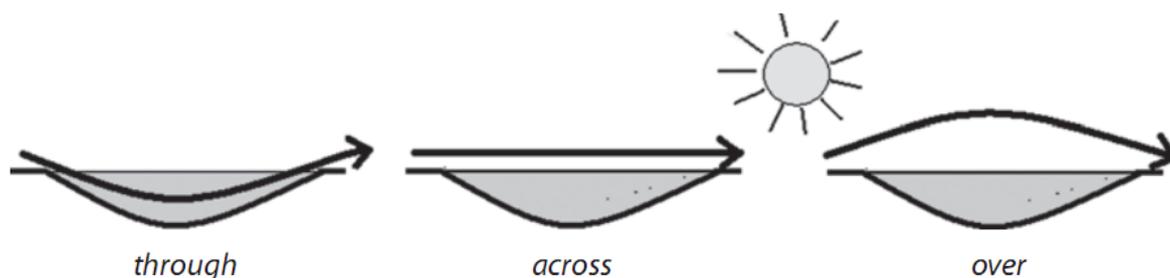
When it started to rain, we all went *underneath the trees*.

2.2.4. Passage

When the space prepositions *over*, *under*, *underneath*, *behind*, *across*, *through*, *past*, *by* are used together with the verbs of motion, they can express the idea of ‘passage’, or, in other words, “movement towards and then away from a place” (Quirk et al., 1985: 681-682):

He jumped *over a ditch*.

The difference between the most frequently used space prepositions denoting ‘passage’, such as *across*, *through* and *over*, can be best explained with the help of a picture below (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 127)



Picture 14. The visual representation of the space prepositions denoting ‘passage’: *through, across* and *over* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 127)

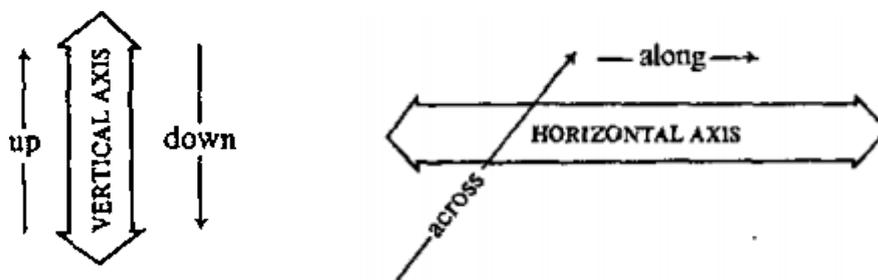
However, sometimes the above mentioned prepositions can denote either ‘passage’ or ‘destination’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 681-682):

The ball rolled *underneath the table*.

In this example, it is not clear whether “the ball passed under the table on the way to some other destination” (‘passage’) or simply “the ball rolled under the table and stayed there” (‘destination’) (ibid.).

2.2.5. Movement with Reference to an Axis or a Directional Path

The space prepositions *up, down, along, across* and *(a)round*, when used with the verbs of motion, can express the idea of ‘movement with reference to an axis or a directional path’:



Picture 15. The visual representation of the space prepositions denoting ‘movement with reference to an axis or a directional path’: *up, down, along, across* (Quirk et al., 1985: 682)

Generally, the prepositions *up* and *down* “contrast in terms of vertical direction” (Quirk et al., 1985: 682):

We walked *up the hill* and *down the other side*.

Along denotes the notion ‘from one end towards the other’ or ‘in a line parallel with’ and contrasts with *across* “in terms of a horizontal axis”, as shown in the picture above (ibid.: 683):

I took my dog for a walk *along the river*.

Be careful when you walk *across a street*.

(A)*round* signifies that “the directional path is an angle or a curve” (ibid.: 683):

We ran (a)*round the corner*.



around

Picture 16. The visual representation of the space preposition *around* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 134)

At least two authoritative sources mention that the form *round* is more typical of BrE, whereas AmE speakers prefer the longer form *around* (Lindstrombergh, 2010: 133; Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 79):

She lives *round the corner*. (BrE)

She lives *around the corner*. (AmE)

3. Material and Method

The theoretical part of this thesis provided a general characteristic of the most frequently used primary time and space prepositional phrases, outlining the major differences between their usage in BrE and AmE and presenting them in red. As it has been stated in the Introduction section, there are three main problematic areas concerning these differences (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 79-81). With the help of the authoritative grammars, the theoretical part of the thesis has extended the number of relevant examples illustrating each subgroup:

<i>problematic area</i>	<i>meaning</i>	<i>BrE</i>	<i>AmE</i>
(a) prepositions which differ only in form in the two varieties	‘destination’	towards	toward
	‘negative position and destination’	out of	out
	‘movement with reference to an axis or a directional path’	round	around
(b) the difference in the presence vs. absence of a preposition in the two varieties	‘point in time’	The sale started on Jan. 1 st . I’ll do it on Sunday.	The sale started Jan. 1. I’ll do it Sunday
	‘in postmodified nondeictic phrases containing <i>the</i> ’	We met on the day of the conference. We met in the spring of 1983.	We met (on) the day of the conference. We met (in) the spring of 1983.
	‘frequency’	On Sunday(s) we usually go for a walk	Sunday(s) we usually go for a walk.
(c) different prepositions used for describing the same meaning in the two varieties	‘holiday periods’	at the weekend at Christmas at Easter	on the weekend on Christmas on Easter
	‘duration’	<i>used in negative and positive sentences:</i> for years for weeks for ages	<i>used in negative sentences only:</i> in years in weeks in ages
	‘clock time’	ten to six five past eight	ten of/before/till six five after eight
	‘starting and ending points of a period’	from June to/till September /(from) June until/till/up to September	(from) June through September
	‘relative position’	behind the shed	in back of the shed
	‘positive position’	to be in a team to live in a street	to be on a team to live on a street

Table 7. Summary of the differences between BrE and AmE in the use of time and space prepositional phrases described in the theoretical part on the basis of authoritative grammars

The primary objective of the research part is to thoroughly analyze these three subgroups by using language corpora. The material for the research part is drawn from two

corpora, namely Corpus of Contemporary American English 1990-2012 (COCA), comprising 450 million words, and British National Corpus 1980s-1993 (BNC), comprising 100 million words. The methods for data excerption include the ‘corpus-driven approach’ and the ‘corpus-based approach’ described by Elena Tognini-Bonelli in *Corpus Linguistics at Work*.

The first subgroup, which includes prepositions differing only in form in the two varieties, is analyzed by applying the ‘corpus-driven approach’, which seems to be beneficial in this case, because “[t]here might be a large number of potentially meaningful patterns that escape[d] the attention of the traditional linguist” (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001: 86). In practice, all the prepositions (with minimum frequency of 100) are searched for in COCA and BNC and sorted by relevance (using the MI-score). Afterwards, the results from BNC and COCA are presented in the tables and compared side by side. “The unexpectedness of the findings” when using the ‘corpus-driven approach’ in this case helps to support this thesis with some interesting evidence (ibid.).

The second and third subgroups are investigated with the help of the ‘corpus-based approach’, a method used “to expound, test or exemplify theories and descriptions” (ibid.: 65). To be more precise, a specific query is formulated for each problematic case and run in BNC and COCA. In this way all the problematic areas illustrated in the second and third subgroups are covered and analyzed.

As a result of the research done, one is able to see the actual difference in the use of the above-mentioned problematic cases in AmE and BrE. All the findings in the research part are commented on and supported by the examples from the two corpora, presenting relevant time and space prepositional phrases in the context.

4. Research Part

4.1. General Observations on Time and Space Prepositions in BrE and AmE: a Corpus-Driven Approach

This subchapter is based entirely on the ‘corpus-driven approach’ where BNC and COCA serve as a basis from which relevant material is extracted without any prior hypothesis (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001: 84-100). All prepositions were sorted by relevance and compared side by side in the two corpora, viz. COCA and BNC).³ The results are summarized in Tables 8 and 9.

Important criteria of selection and inclusion into the tables below are the following:

- only the first 100 prepositions from BNC and COCA are taken into consideration (based on relevance comparison between the two corpora; only those prepositions which occur 100 times at least were considered);
- only time and space prepositions are included into the tables below;
- the prepositions *at*, *out*, *on*, *up*, etc (which are frequently used in a great number of (phrasal-) prepositional verbs and set expressions, and therefore can affect the analysis negatively) are excluded.

A colour guide to Table 8 and Table 9:

- ‘yellow’ denotes the difference in form in the two varieties
- ‘green’ denotes those space and time prepositions which can also function as adverbs
- ‘grey’ denotes space prepositions with the meaning ‘relative position and destination’

WORD/PHRASE	1: COCA	2: BNC	PM 1	PM 2	RATIO
TOWARD	120552	1153	267.89	11.53	23.23
ATOP	6608	135	14.68	1.35	10.88
ASIDE	4052	282	9.00	2.82	3.19
NEXT ⁴	29751	2795	66.11	27.95	2.37
ABOARD	5464	562	12.14	5.62	2.16
ONTO	50271	5955	111.71	59.55	1.88
AMID	8639	1039	19.20	10.39	1.85
AROUND	165384	22594	367.52	225.94	1.63
AMONG	159398	22155	354.22	221.55	1.60

³ The drawback of this method is that it relies on the part-of-speech tags annotation of the corpora. The preposition tag may occasionally be used for word classes other than prepositions. The concordances were therefore checked manually, and irrelevant results were discarded.

⁴ As a part of a complex preposition *next to*.

FRONT ⁵	42764	6015	95.03	60.15	1.58
INSIDE	47448	6979	105.44	69.79	1.51
ACROSS	123833	20211	275.18	202.11	1.36
ALONG	97829	16622	217.40	166.22	1.31
BEHIND	109455	18734	243.23	187.34	1.30
BEYOND	58039	10032	128.98	100.32	1.29
AHEAD	13952	2464	31.00	24.64	1.26
THROUGH	394085	70500	875.74	705.00	1.24
PAST	32460	6044	72.13	60.44	1.19
SINCE	52698	10123	117.11	101.23	1.16
DURING	217908	42789	484.24	427.89	1.13
BENEATH	22042	4378	48.98	43.78	1.12
UNDERNEATH	4470	946	9.93	9.46	1.05
UNTO	1740	375	3.87	3.75	1.03
OUTSIDE	53734	11741	119.41	117.41	1.02
NEAR	62946	14097	139.88	140.97	0.99
BESIDE	22610	5323	50.24	53.23	0.94
BEFORE	199453	46979	443.23	469.79	0.94
ASTRIDE	482	114	1.07	1.14	0.94
THROUGHOUT	45104	11320	100.23	113.20	0.89
BELOW	20985	5382	46.63	53.82	0.87
ABOVE	50293	13165	111.76	131.65	0.85

Table 8. Frequently-used time and space prepositions in AmE. Compared side by side to the results from BNC (1:COCA – number of occurrences in COCA, 2:BNC – number of occurrences in BNC, PM1 – frequency per million words in COCA, PM2 – frequency per million words in BNC, RATIO – PM1/PM2 ratio)

WORD/PHRASE	2: BNC	1: COCA	PM 2	PM 1	RATIO
ROUND	10716	3905	107.16	8.68	12.35
AMONGST	4401	2669	44.01	5.93	7.42
TOWARDS	27017	20753	270.17	46.12	5.86
OPPOSITE	952	1953	9.52	4.34	2.19
TILL	2659	5704	26.59	12.68	2.10
ALONGSIDE	2813	7355	28.13	16.34	1.72
WITHIN	43723	127576	437.23	283.50	1.54
BETWEEN	87783	301082	877.83	669.07	1.31
UNTIL	8855	30958	88.55	68.80	1.29
UNDER	53327	186451	533.27	414.34	1.29
AMIDST	475	1702	4.75	3.78	1.26
ABOVE	13165	50293	131.65	111.76	1.18
BELOW	5382	20985	53.82	46.63	1.15
THROUGHOUT	11320	45104	113.20	100.23	1.13
ASTRIDE	114	482	1.14	1.07	1.06
BEFORE	46979	199453	469.79	443.23	1.06
BESIDE	5323	22610	53.23	50.24	1.06

Table 9. Frequently-used time and space prepositions in BrE. Compared side by side to the results from COCA (1:COCA – number of occurrences in COCA, 2:BNC – number of occurrences in BNC, PM1 – frequency per million words in COCA, PM2 – frequency per million words in BNC, RATIO – PM2/PM1 ratio)

Concerning the formal aspect, the analysis of the data excerpted from COCA and BNC shows that while AmE speakers prefer using the forms of space prepositions *amid*, *among* and *along*, BrE speakers tend to use their longer forms, that is *amidst*, *amongst* and

alongside. Secondly, the tables support the theoretical part since they show a significant difference in the use of prepositions *round* and *towards* in BrE and AmE:

round: BNC (107.16 per million words) × COCA (8.68 per million words)

towards: BNC (270.17 per million words) × COCA (46.12 per million words)

The results from COCA demonstrate that AmE speakers opt for the forms *around* and *toward*:

around: COCA (367.52 per million words) × BNC (225.94 per million words)

toward: COCA (267.89 per million words) × BNC (11.53 per million words)

Thirdly, AmE speakers tend to use the potentially emphatic form *onto*⁶ more frequently than BrE speakers do (ex. 1):

onto: COCA (111.71 per million) × BNC (59.55 per million)

- (1) Circulation staff downloaded all purchased titles *onto* each of the Kindles, providing users with the full complement of the libraries' Kindle e-books. (COCA: 2012 ACAD LibraryResources)

Table 8 (i.e. prepositions used significantly more often in AmE) contain many prepositions which can also function as adverbs, such as *atop* (ex. 2) or *past* (ex. 3):

- (2) Sitting *atop* the Land Rover, I'm mesmerized by the hunt. (COCA: 2012 MAG NationalGeographic)
- (3) Little Miller tried to dart *past* him, but Tom was much bigger and he pushed Little Miller roughly. (COCA: 2012 MAG SatEvenPost)

Lastly, it is important to analyze space prepositions denoting 'relative position and destination' (highlighted grey in Table 8 and Table 9), e.g.:

- (4) "If I see three cars *in front of* a diner, I'm stopping in to say hello." (COCA: 2012 NEWS NYTimes)
- (5) Perhaps that will be a thought for people who foolishly keep money *under* the mattress or in a jam jar. (BNC: CH1 W_newsp_tabloid)

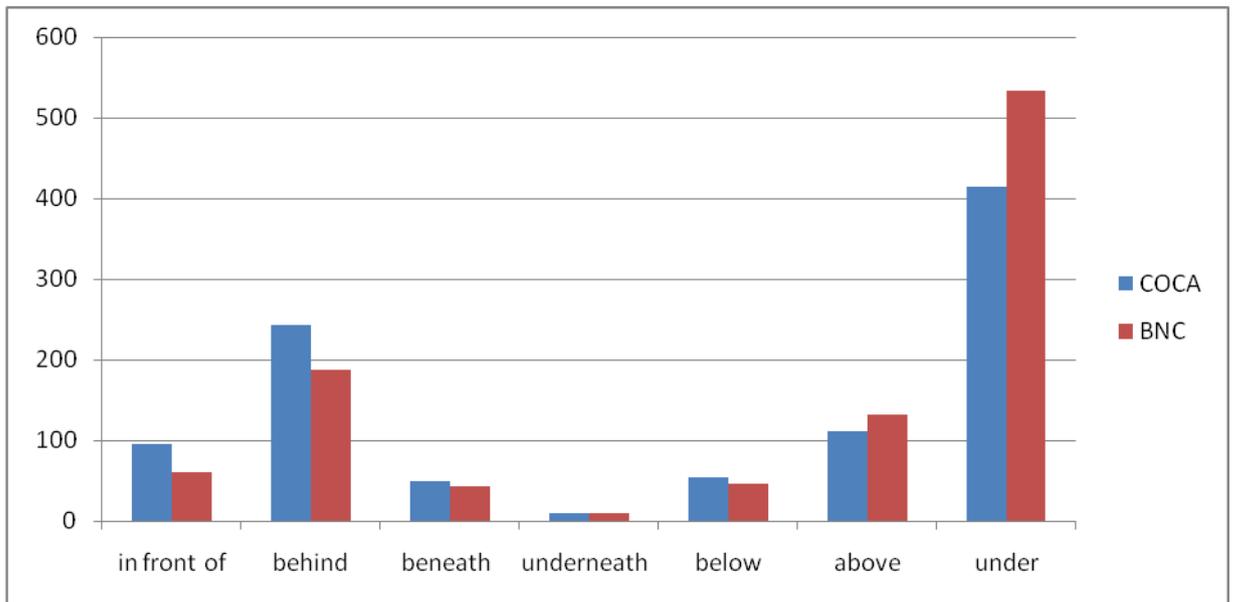
As it has been stated in the theoretical part "the actual use of the prepositions relating to relative position varies considerably" in BrE and AmE (Quirk et al., 1985: 679). However,

⁵ As a part of a complex preposition *in front of*.

⁶ cf. Lindstrombergh, 2010: 55.

the results of expection show the opposite evidence.⁷ As one may conclude, there is no considerable⁸ difference in the use of the above-mentioned prepositions in BrE and AmE.

Compare:



Histogram 1. The actual difference in the use of space prepositions denoting ‘relative position and destination’ in BrE and AmE (frequency per million words)

⁷ The preposition *before* is excluded from this analysis because it is frequently used as a time preposition, which may affect the overall results negatively.

⁸ It is only the difference in the frequency of *under* that is statistically significant (Log-likelihood) at the level of $p < 0.001$ (0.1% level).

4.2. Analysis of Time and Space Prepositional Phrases in BrE and AmE: a Corpus-Based Approach

The following subchapter rests upon the ‘corpus-based approach’, which means a specific query is formulated for each problematic case described in Chapter 3 ‘Material and method’ (specifically, the second and third subgroups in Table 7). Afterwards, the query is run in COCA and BNC. In this way, the subchapter aims to describe two areas, in particular the difference in the presence/absence of a preposition in BrE and AmE and the case when different prepositions are used for describing the same meaning in the two varieties. The third part of this subchapter also applies this method to examine one particular problematic case when prepositions differ only in form in BrE and AmE, viz. the space prepositions used for describing ‘negative position and destination’, *out of* in BrE and *out* in AmE (the examples are taken from the first subgroup in Table 7). The first subgroup, which includes prepositions differing only in form in the two varieties, has already been analyzed by means of the corpus-driven approach in the previous subchapter 4.1., however this particular case can be analyzed by applying the ‘corpus-based approach’ only.

4.2.1. Analysis of the Difference in the Presence/Absence of a Preposition in BrE and AmE

This subchapter deals with the difference in the presence/absence of a preposition in BrE and AmE. Two meanings will be analyzed, namely ‘point in time’ and ‘frequency’.

Focusing first on the ‘point in time’ meaning, the query aims to explore whether the time preposition *on* is omitted in AmE before days of the week and months, as shown in Table 10:

‘point in time’	
BrE	AmE
on	-
The sale started on Jan. 1 st . I’ll do it on Sunday.	The sale started Jan. 1. I’ll do it Sunday.

Table 10. The difference in the presence/absence of a preposition in BrE and AmE. ‘Point in time’ meaning (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 80)

In the case of the presence/absence of the time preposition *on* before the dates, the analysis had to take into account the alternative ways of writing the date, e.g.:

- January 1st/January 1 (Tables 11, 12)
- the 1st of January/the 1 of January (Tables 13, 14)
- 1st January/1 January (Tables 15,16)

Important criteria of selection and inclusion data into Tables 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 are the following:

- only the first 50 collocates in BNC and COCA are analyzed
- frequency of occurrence is taken into consideration (at least 2)
- context is examined (only the preposition *on*, verbs and non-finite verb forms are presented below⁹)

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	32544	4.56
ACCESSED	976	9.63
RETRIEVED	820	8.89
DATED	648	8.18
DIED	539	4.35
ENDED	501	5.24
RECEIVED	406	4.23
ACCEPTED	405	5.36
HELD	326	3.18
BORN	269	3.87
BEGINNING	257	3.30
OPENS	228	4.89
ENDING	207	5.35
STARTING	205	3.55
ANNOUNCED	171	3.82
BEGINS	153	3.58

Table 11. Collocates of the dates in the form ‘January 1st/January 1’ in AmE.¹⁰ Results excerpted from COCA (COCA: 450,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	15667	4.99
ENDING	82	5.70
DATED	62	5.81

Table 12. Collocates of the dates in the form ‘January 1st/January 1’ in BrE.¹¹ Results excerpted from BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	1097	3.60
CELEBRATE	22	6.42
CELEBRATING	10	6.20
CELEBRATED	5	4.58
DATED	4	4.77
CELEBRATES	2	5.00

Table 13. Collocates of the dates in the form ‘the 1st of January/the 1 of January’ in AmE.¹² Results excerpted from COCA (COCA: 450,000,000 words)

⁹ Since the analysis concentrates on the meaning ‘point in time’ only, it focuses, apart from the preposition *on*, only on verbal immediate left collocates (both finite and non-finite). This decision is based on the syntactic reasons, viz. the clause pattern (S)-V-A.

¹⁰ The query formulated in COCA: immediate verbal and prepositional left collocates of the expression January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December [md*][mc*]

¹¹ The query formulated in BNC: immediate verbal and prepositional left collocates of the expression January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December [md*][mc*]

¹² The query formulated in COCA: [md*][mc*] of January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	399	3.31
DATED	5	5.80
COMMENCING	4	7.99
ENDING	2	3.97

Table 14. Collocates of the dates in the form ‘the 1st of January/the 1 of January’ in BrE.¹³ Results excerpted from BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	4287	3.30
ACCESSED	152	8.61
DATED	115	7.35
DIED	103	3.63
PUBLISHED	80	4.07
RELEASED	75	4.36
OPENED	62	3.22
ENDED	55	3.71
ANNOUNCED	48	3.65
ISSUED	43	4.44
LAUNCHED	41	4.45
SIGNED	33	3.23
ACCEPTED	32	3.36
ENDING	27	4.07
ARRESTED	27	3.68
RETRIEVED	20	5.19
AIRD	12	5.26
OUTDOORED	11	11.52
UNVEILED	10	5.03
EXPIRED	6	4.72
MAILED	5	4.02
FINALIZED	4	5.31
POSTMARKED	3	6.85
ADJOURNED	3	5.88
CHRISTENED	3	5.47

Table 15. Collocates of the dates in the form ‘1st January/1 January’ in AmE.¹⁴ Results excerpted from COCA (COCA: 450,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	11396	4.27
DATED	427	8.33
BORN	405	5.91
DIED	360	5.03
ENDED	210	5.19
ENDING	47	4.64
BAPTIZED	46	7.84
COMMENCING	17	6.19
BURIED	17	3.11
CLOSES	6	3.90

(the query finds left collocates [v*][i*] 4,0)

¹³ The query formulated in BNC:

[md*][mc*] of January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December
(the query finds left collocates [v*][i*] 4,0)

¹⁴ The query formulated in COCA:

[md*][mc*] January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December
(the query finds left collocates [v*][i*] 2,0)

DEPOSITED	5	3.09
REOPEN	3	4.29
CHRISTENED	3	4.21
RETIRES	3	4.12
SCRAPPED	2	3.01

Table 16. Collocates of the dates in the form ‘1st January/1 January’ in BrE.¹⁵ Results excerpted from BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words)

As one may conclude from Tables 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 the time preposition *on* is frequently omitted before the dates in AmE but not in BrE. In most cases this happens after verbs of ‘beginning’ (*begin, start, open, be born, debut*) and ‘ending’ (*end, resign, expire, die, finalize*). For instance:

- (6) The panda *was born July 9th* with no fur and its eyes closed. (COCA: 2005 SPOK CNN_SatMorn)
- (7) In an out-of-court settlement *announced 25 February*, school officials, parents, and civil liberties groups reached agreement on a Bible course introduced into the curricula of seven high schools in Fort Myers, Florida. (COCA: 1999 ACAD Church&State)
- (8) The marathon trial *ended March 10* and involved reams of documents and 115 witnesses. (COCA: 2006 NEWS Chicago)

Many occurrences in COCA come from a legal subject area (*issue, sign, expire*) and citations of Internet sources (*retrieve, access*), e.g.:

- (9) Under a six-year pact that *expired 31 December 1994*, China was allowed nine geostationary pay-loads. (COCA: 1996 ACAD WorldAffairs)
- (10) Womble, M., Hall, H. and Turner, J. (1997). Middle school vocational teachers’ knowledge of the characteristics of at-risk learners. *Journal of vocational and technical education*. 14 (1). *Retrieved May 9, 2008*, from [http: **54;52117; TOOLONG](http://**54;52117;TOOLONG). (COCA: 2011 ACAD Education)

The results in Table 12, 14 and 16 illustrate that there are some cases in BrE when the time preposition *on* tends to be omitted before the dates. Just as in the case with AmE, in BrE this happens mostly after verbs of ‘beginning’ (*be born, commence*) and ‘ending’ (*end, die, be buried, close, retire*), the verb-form is frequently non-finite:

- (11) He *died 28 September 1651*, while on his way to church in Hornchurch, Essex, leaving a widow and a daughter. (BNC: GSX W_biography)

¹⁵ The query formulated in BNC:
 [md*][mc*] January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December
 (the query finds left collocates [v*][i*] 2,0)

However, it should also be mentioned that some of the results in COCA and BNC are not relevant for this analysis since they include inscriptions on graves, excerpts from reports, e.g.:

- (12) This is the last resting place of the local Davison family, and under the name Emily Wilding Davison, *born 11 October 1872, died 8 June 1913*, is inscribed the phrase ‘Deeds, not words’. (COCA: AD7 W_misc)
- (13) First Annual Report and Balance Sheet, year *ending July 12th, 1908* and the Bondholders Account to 31st October, 1908. (BNC: AMY W_non_ac_humanities_arts)

Tables 17 and 18 show the collocates of the days of the week in BrE and AmE (for criteria of selection and inclusion of the data in Tables 17 and 18 see above).

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	32539	4.96
SAID	3604	3.29
DIED	1558	6.28
ANNOUNCED	519	5.82
OPENS	496	6.41
RELEASED	383	5.45
CLOSED	341	4.67
OPENING	286	4.70
REPORTED	264	3.65
STARTING	247	4.21
MEET	207	3.27
BEGINS	206	4.40
WIN	195	3.38
BEGINNING	183	3.21
ENDED	136	3.75
STARTS	106	3.48
PUBLISHED	100	3.12

Table 17. Collocates of the days of the week in AmE.¹⁶ Results excerpted from COCA (COCA: 450,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	11011	5.69
STARTS	53	5.53
OPENS	5	3.32

Table 18. Collocates of the days of the week in BrE.¹⁷ Results excerpted from BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words)

Tables 17 and 18 also support the statement that the time preposition *on* is omitted before the days of the week mostly in AmE, as compared to BrE. In AmE this usually happens after non-finite verb forms and verbs of ‘speaking’ (*say, announce, report*), although

¹⁶ The query formulated in COCA: immediate left collocates of the expression Monday|Tuesday|Wednesday|Thursday|Friday|Saturday|Sunday -[nn*]

¹⁷ The query formulated in BNC: immediate left collocates of the expression Monday|Tuesday|Wednesday|Thursday|Friday|Saturday|Sunday -[nn*]

verbs of ‘beginning’ (*begin, start, open*) and ‘ending’ (*die, close, end*) are also present, e.g.:

- (14) “This is going to be hard work,” a senior White House official *said Saturday*.
(COCA: 2003 MAG Newsweek)
- (15) The gardens *will be closed Tuesday* for a private party. (COCA: 1998 NEWS Atlanta)
- (16) *Starting Tuesday*, MTV will broadcast “Diary Presents: Brandy-Special Delivery”. (COCA: 2002 NEWS AssocPress)

Nevertheless, the results in Table 18 illustrate two cases in BrE when the time preposition *on* may be omitted before the days of the week, viz. after the verbs *start* and *open*, e.g.:

- (17) Sessions *begin on Monday* June 14 and the exhibit *starts Wednesday* June 17.¹⁸
(BNC: CT9 W_non_ac_tech_engin)
- (18) The main museum building *opens Sunday 13* June with the display of Rockwell’s renowned ‘Four Freedoms’ series, based on Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s 1941 conception of the four fundamental conditions of the democratic society. (BNC: CKW W_pop_lore)

The second problematic area to be examined by means of the ‘corpus-based approach’ deals with the postmodified nondeictic phrases containing *the* (Quirk et al., 1985: 693). The query aims to investigate whether in AmE the time prepositions *on* and *in* are omitted before them as illustrated in Table 19:

‘point in time’			
postmodified nondeictic phrases containing <i>the</i>			
BrE		AmE	
on	in	-	-
We met on the day of the conference.	We met in the spring of 1983.	We met (on) the day of the conference.	We met (in) the spring of 1983.

Table 19. The difference in the presence/absence of a preposition in BrE and AmE. Postmodified nondeictic phrases containing *the* (Quirk et al., 1985: 693)

Important criteria of selection and inclusion of the data in Tables 20 and 21 are the following:

- only the first 50 collocates in BNC and COCA are analyzed
- frequency of occurrence is taken into consideration (at least 2)

¹⁸ As shown in ex. 17, within one sentence the preposition *on* is used with the date after the verb *begin*, but is omitted after the verb *start* in BrE. This may further support the observation that the absence of the preposition before a date is associated with a specific set of verbs.

–context is examined (only the prepositions *on* and *in*, and verb forms are presented below¹⁹)

CONTEXT	FREQ
IN	5249
ON	2309
WAS	218
IS	90
BE	26
CAME	21
HAPPENED	19
BEEN	9
SAID	9
TAKEN	8
CALLED	7
ANNOUNCED	6
DID	6
DRINKING	6
HAD	6
SAY	6
DATED	5
WEARING	5
WERE	5

Table 20. Collocates of the postmodified nondeictic phrases containing *the* in AmE.²⁰ Results excerpted from COCA (COCA: 450,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ
IN	1336
ON	636
WAS	28
IS	14
MADE	10
STAYING	2
WORK	2

Table 21. Collocates of the postmodified nondeictic phrases containing *the* in BrE. Results excerpted from BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words)

Tables 20 and 21 support the idea that the time prepositions *on* and *in* is omitted before the postmodified nondeictic phrases containing *the* more often in AmE than in BrE:

(19) The winner for this event *will be announced the day of the Games*, but the actual winner will be determined the week before. (COCA: 2004 MAG ChildLife)

(20) Detectives went to talk to the brothers, and of course checked to see where both men *were the day of the fire*. (COCA: 2011 SPOK NBC_Dateline)

¹⁹ Just as in the case with the analysis of the meaning ‘point in time’, it appears relevant here to focus on verb forms only. This decision is based on the syntactic reasons, viz. the clause pattern (S)-V-A: *We met (in) the spring of 1983*. However, Tables 20 and 21 exclude those verbs which take a direct object, e.g. *remember, describe, forget* and cases when the postmodified nondeictic phrase containing *the* functions as a subject, e.g.: *Then came the day of the anti-hero*. (COCA: B1J W_religion)

²⁰ The query formulated in COCA and BNC: the day|night|spring|summer|winter|autumn of (the query finds left collocates [v*][i*] 2,0)

(21) *It happened the summer of 1954* at a boys' camp in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina. (COCA: 2011 FIC Bk:TonguesAngels)

In both varieties the omission of the time prepositions *on* and *in* before the postmodified nondeictic phrases containing *the* usually takes place after the verb *be*.²¹ In AmE, the omission may also co-occur with other verbs, e.g. *came*, *happened*, *said* (i.e. usually verbs introducing the event on the scene), albeit less frequently.

The third problematic area in this subchapter describes the difference in the presence/absence of a preposition in frequency expressions in the two varieties. The query looks at whether the time preposition *on* is omitted before frequency expressions in AmE, as shown in Table 22:

'frequency'	
BrE	AmE
on	-
On Sunday(s) we usually go for a walk.	Sunday(s) we usually go for a walk.

Table 22. The difference in the presence/absence of a preposition in BrE and AmE. 'Frequency' meaning (Quirk et al., 1985: 694)

Important criteria of selection and inclusion of data in Tables 23 and 24 are the following:

- only the plural forms of the days of the week are considered²²
- only the first 50 occurrences in BNC and COCA are analyzed
- frequency of occurrence is taken into consideration (at least 2)
- context is examined (only the preposition *on*, verbs and non-finite verb forms are presented below²³)

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	3460	5.22
CLOSED	91	6.26
APPEARS	44	5.44
OPEN	43	3.47
RUNS	41	5.28
APPEAR	17	3.97
AIRS	16	8.81
MEETS	16	6.08

Table 23. Collocates of the frequency expressions (plural forms of the days of the week) in AmE. Results excerpted from COCA (COCA: 450,000,000 words)

²¹ The corpora show the cases when the lexical verb *be* is followed by an adverbial, as shown in ex. 20, and the cases when the copular verb *be* takes a subject complement, which are not relevant for this analysis.

²² The singular options are ignored due to a great number of irrelevant results occurring in COCA and BNC. The query formulated in COCA and BNC: immediate left collocates of the expression Sundays|Mondays|Tuesdays|Wednesdays|Thursdays|Fridays|Saturdays

²³ Just as in the case with the analysis of the meaning 'point in time', it is relevant here to focus on verb forms only. Tables 23 and 24 exclude those verbs which take a direct object, e.g. *hate*, *select*, *exclude*, *spoil*.

CONTEXT	FREQ	MI
ON	889	5.81
WORK	17	3.11
REPEATED	14	7.33
OPEN	9	3.81
CLOSED	5	4.60
SHOPPING	2	4.62
APPLY	2	3.53

Table 24. Collocates of the frequency expressions (plural forms of the days of the week) in BrE. Results excerpted from BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words)

When analyzing the concordances in COCA and BNC, one may conclude that some of the results are not relevant for this analysis since they include schedules and other instances of block language, comprising days of the week in plural after the verbs *close*, *open*, *repeat*, *appear*, *run*, *air*, e.g.:

- (22) Viewing hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The library is *closed Saturdays and Sundays*. Admission is free. Call 713-942-8000 or visit www.hmh.org. (COCA: 2010 NEWS Houston)
- (23) Useful information: From October to March the Tourist Information Office in the Burg (44 86 86) is open Mon-Sat 9.30am-12.45pm and 2am-5.45pm, *closed Sundays*. (BNC: A3P W_newsp_brdsht_nat_misc)
- (24) *Open Mondays* (only for World War II veterans), *Wednesdays and Saturdays*. (COCA: 2010 MAG TownCountry)
- (25) The Natural History Programme: Fridays at 11.30am; *repeated Sundays* at 9pm. (COCA: EFF W_pop_lore)

That means that although these verbs are presented in Tables 23 and 24, they are not relevant for the analysis, which deals with the meaning ‘frequency’ only.

However, the meaning ‘frequency’ is found in COCA with the verb *meet*:

- (26) Sami Angawi, the head of the Makkiah discussion group in Jeddah, which *meets Tuesdays* at his home, said he had not been asked yet to register or stop the meetings that take place in his home. (COCA: 2007 NEWS CSMonitor)
- (27) The board of directors *meets Saturdays* in Craig’s den-turned-command center. (COCA: 1996 SPOK CBS_Sixty)

According to the BNC results, in BrE the time preposition *on* is often omitted before frequency expressions after the verb *work*:

- (28) We went out for Sunday lunch (pause) cos I don’t *work Sundays* any more. (BNC: KCL S_conv)

(29) Then, when I was eleven, he had a friend who owned a music store and he talked him into letting me *work Saturdays*. (BNC: C9M W_pop_lore)

4.2.2. Analysis of Different Prepositions Used for Describing the Same Meaning in BrE and AmE

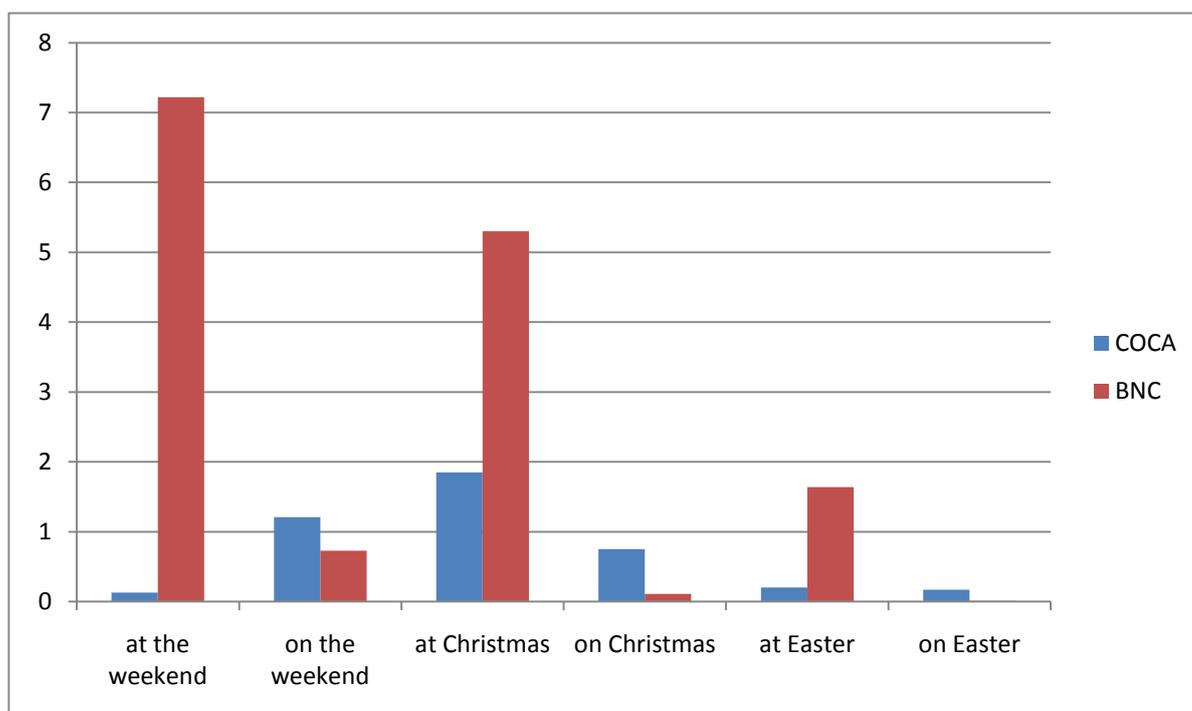
The next part of this chapter concentrates on various cases when different prepositions are used in BrE and AmE for describing the same meaning. Within this area, six meanings will be analyzed, namely ‘holiday periods’, ‘duration’, ‘clock time’, ‘ending points of a period’, ‘relative position’ and ‘positive position’.

The first problematic area in this subchapter concentrates on the case when different time prepositions, *at* and *on*, are used in BrE and AmE for denoting ‘holiday periods’, as shown in Table 25.

‘holiday periods’	
BrE	AmE
at	on
at the weekend at Christmas at Easter	on the weekend on Christmas on Easter

Table 25. Different time prepositions used for describing the same meaning in BrE and AmE, viz. ‘holiday periods’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 687-688)

In order to look at their frequency of occurrence, the exact phrases ‘at the weekend’, ‘at Christmas’, ‘at Easter’, ‘on the weekend’, ‘on Christmas’ and ‘on Easter’ will be searched for in COCA and BNC. Afterwards, the data from both corpora will be presented in the form of a histogram and compared with each other.



Histogram 2. The actual difference in the use of time prepositions *at/on* denoting ‘holiday periods’ in BrE and AmE²⁴ (frequency per million words)

The analysis of the results excerpted from COCA and BNC prove that AmE speakers generally use the preposition *on*, meaning ‘holiday periods’ (however, the time prepositional phrase *at Christmas* is also very frequent in AmE) while BrE speakers prefer the preposition *at*. Some examples include:

- (30) *On Easter* they’d wake us early so we could dye eggs and make baskets.
(COCA: 2005 NEWS Houston)
- (31) It was nice to hear that he volunteers to help the homeless *on Christmas*.
(COCA: 2012 MAG Shape)
- (32) *At Christmas* I ask a suburban church for special wrapped toys and clothes for each child, remembering how Mother Cabrini spent the last night of her life wrapping Christmas candy for children. (COCA: 2011 MAG USCatholic)
- (33) *On the weekend* he called Mr. Boehner in another attempt to restart their talks.
(COCA: 2011 NEWS NYTimes)

When analyzing different prepositions used for describing ‘duration’ in BrE and AmE, it is important to distinguish between their usage in negative and positive sentences.

²⁴ The queries formulated in COCA and BNC:
 Easter -[n*] (the query finds immediate left collocates [i*] 1,0)
 Christmas -[n*] (the query finds immediate left collocates [i*] 1,0)
 the weekend -[n*] (the query finds left collocates [i*] 2,0)

According to *CGEL* *in years/in weeks/in ages* is possible only in negative sentences in AmE, as illustrated in Table 26:

‘duration’	
BrE	AmE
for	in
<i>used in negative and positive sentences:</i> for years for weeks for ages	<i>used in negative sentences only:</i> in years in weeks in ages

Table 26. The case when different time prepositions, *for* and *in*, are used for describing the same meaning in BrE and AmE, viz. ‘duration’²⁵ (Quirk et al., 1985: 689-690)

The query formulated in BNC and COCA finds the immediate left collocates for the selected nouns, but focuses only on two of them, viz. time prepositions *in* and *for*. Afterwards, the first five hundred occurrences in BNC and COCA are manually checked in order to find out whether prepositions *for* and *in* are used in negative or positive sentences in BrE and AmE, which is relevant for this kind of analysis.

WORD/PHRASE	1: COCA	2: BNC	PM 1	PM 2
IN	4522	502	10.05	5.02
FOR	25277	3187	56.17	31.87

Table 27. Collocates of the nouns *years/weeks/ages*: time prepositions *in* and *for* (1: COCA – number of occurrences in COCA, 2: BNC – number of occurrences in BNC, PM1 – frequency per million words in COCA, PM2 – frequency per million words in BNC)

The results of the analysis show that AmE speakers frequently use both forms in negative and positive sentences:²⁶

	for	in
positive sentences	<p>(34) That’s because Gracenote’s music-recognition technology has been dutifully identifying CD track names in apps like iTunes and Windows Media Player <i>for years</i>. (COCA: 2012 MAG PopMech)</p> <p>(35) A list of royalist soldiers killed at Falkirk had circulated round Edinburgh <i>for weeks</i>. (COCA: 2011 FIC Bk:MineIsNight)</p> <p>(36) “I have been waiting to hear what’s up with Julia Stiles <i>for ages!</i> So excited to see her on the cover! Looove that dress too!” (COCA: 2011 MAG Cosmopolitan)</p>	<p>(37) Our conversation was the best I’d had <i>in years</i> and I kept it going as long as I could. (COCA: 2012 FIC NewEnglandRev)</p> <p>(38) This was the first chance the two of them had had <i>in weeks</i> to simply stop and be still for a little while. (COCA: 1999 FIC Bk:Area51)</p> <p>(39) This is the most valid commentary I have read <i>in ages</i>. (COCA: 2004 MAG PopScience)</p>

²⁵ The query formulated in BNC and COCA: *weeks|years|ages -[nn*]* (the query finds immediate prepositional left collocates [i*] 1,0)

²⁶ Since the results in COCA and BNC were checked manually, the exact number of occurrences in each case is difficult to detect.

negative sentences	<p>(40) Chrysler in the past spent little on compact-car development and hasn't offered a competitive one <i>for years</i>. (COCA: 2012 NEWS AssocPress)</p> <p>(41) She had not left the homestead <i>for weeks</i>. (COCA: 2012 FIC Bk:SnowChildNovel)</p> <p>(42) Lucy had not been in the Knitting Nest <i>for ages</i>, but she did recall Peter's wares took up a good portion of the space. (COCA: 2009 FIC Bk: WhileMyPrettyOne)</p>	<p>(43) He hadn't spoken to her <i>in years</i>, not since the last time she cursed him and cast him out. (COCA: 2012 FIC Bk:Plunder)</p> <p>(44) I hadn't practiced piano <i>in weeks</i>, and I had a lesson the next day... (COCA: 2011 FIC LiteraryRev)</p> <p>(45) She hasn't been to an airport <i>in ages</i> because they make her tense and because she's afraid of flying, but this time she finds the place interesting, the thought of going on a plane bizarrely appealing. (COCA: 2002 FIC NewEnglandRev)</p>
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Table 28. Collocates of the nouns *years/weeks/ages*: time prepositions *in* and *for*. Their usage in positive and negative sentences in AmE. Examples excerpted from COCA

Judging by the results from BNC, one may conclude that BrE speakers also use both forms in negative and positive sentences:

	for	in
positive sentences	<p>(46) Just be very brief, chair, erm could I ask that we have a report before council on this, and I know it will be an extra two hours on the poor council debate, but I think this is so important, and it does affect the planet for hundreds of years to come, and I think if we can't have a discussion on this in full council, well, it's the most important thing we've had <i>for years</i> probably, and I think we should have a discussion before council sit. (BNC: KS1 S_meeting)</p> <p>(47) <i>For weeks</i> he was the trouble of my dreams and it took real courage to go to see him in Attila the Hun. (BNC: CB0 W_fict_poetry)</p> <p>(48) She'd been wanting to be my best friend <i>for ages</i>. And I had to say yes, because I didn't want to be called a snob too. (BNC: G3P W_misc)</p>	<p>(49) He knew it was wrong, but it is the first experience of real love and tenderness he has known <i>in years</i>. (BNC: CGEW_religion)</p> <p>(50) "Call me Terry, and I do wish you'd brought Gwen Bear with you because this is the most interesting conversation we've had <i>in weeks</i>!" (BNC: HGY W_fict_prose)</p> <p>(51) I feel wonderful inside and out, it has been the most productive period <i>in ages</i>, and one day I'll need my sound nerves more than ever... (BNC: ADP W_biography)</p>
negative sentences	<p>(52) '<i>For years</i> I didn't know what to do with myself when I wasn't acting. I've always dreaded vacations. But now I reckon I deserve a holiday.' (BNC: CH5 W_newsp_tabloid)</p> <p>(53) Mr Major and President Mitterrand have not spoken <i>for weeks</i>, relaying any necessary messages through Germany's Chancellor Helmut Kohl. (BNC: CBF W_newsp_other_report)</p> <p>(54) We didn't speak <i>for ages</i> as there were so many complications with debt and the record company. (BNC: K4V W_newsp_other_social)</p>	<p>(55) 'I haven't felt like this <i>in years</i>,' said Dannii, 21, sister of former Neighbour's star Kylie. (BNC: CBC W_newsp_other_social)</p> <p>(56) Hayley Burton was thin and very pale, with small sores around her mouth and nose, greasy fair hair that hadn't been washed <i>in weeks</i>, and dark-shadowed pale blue eyes. (BNC: JY0 W_fict_prose)</p> <p>(57) He certainly hadn't done anything like this <i>in ages</i>. (BNC: FYY W_fict_prose)</p>

Table 29. Collocates of the nouns *years/weeks/ages*: time prepositions *in* and *for*. Their usage in positive and negative sentences in BrE. Examples excerpted from BNC

The third part of the subchapter analyses various prepositions used for denoting ‘clock time’ in BrE and AmE, as shown in Table 30:

‘clock time’	
BrE	AmE
ten to six five past eight	ten of/before/till six five after eight

Table 30. Different prepositions used for describing the same meaning in BrE and AmE, viz. ‘clock time’ (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 80)

The occurrences of the individual prepositions will be looked at in the two corpora, afterwards the results of the excerption will be presented below.²⁷

The first part of this analysis focuses on the preposition *to*. When looking at the first five relevant hits in BNC and COCA one may notice that the overwhelming number of results in COCA are not relevant for the analysis of the meaning ‘clock time’. The reason for this is that in COCA the preposition *to* was used to show scores or ratio, rather than denote time (only 2 results in COCA give examples of ‘clock time’).

(58) Hamish looked at his watch. *Ten to one*. Oh, well, only ten minutes to wait.

(COCA: 2002 FIC BkSF: HighlandChristmas)

(59) He looked at his watch. It was *ten to one*. McEvoy wasn’t supposed to call back

until after one. (COCA: 2001 FIC Bk: DarknessMoreThan)

The same problem occurs in BNC, however there are more cases when the preposition *to* is used to denote ‘clock time’:

(60) She reached the restaurant at *ten to one*, precisely on time. (BNC: GUU W_fict_prose)

(61) We’ll be back tomorrow at *five to one*, join us then, but for now, from everyone on the lunchtime team, good afternoon. (BNC: J1M W_news_script)

The preposition *of* used for denoting ‘clock time’ is suggested in grammars to be typical of AmE. This statement is partially supported by the fact that no relevant results are found in BNC (all 13 hits were looked at). There are many irrelevant results in COCA as well (the first 20 hits were analyzed), however there are still some cases when the preposition *of* is used to denote ‘clock time’, e.g.:

²⁷ The queries formulated in COCA and BNC:

five|ten|fifteen|twenty to [mc*] -[n*]

five|ten|fifteen|twenty of [mc*] -[n*]

five|ten|fifteen|twenty before [mc*] -[n*] (relevant results are found neither in COCA nor in BNC)

five|ten|fifteen|twenty till [mc*] -[n*]

five|ten|fifteen|twenty past [mc*] -[n*]

five|ten|fifteen|twenty after [mc*] -[n*]

(62) She checks her watch. It's *five of twelve*. (COCA: 2002 FIC Mov: ComingUpDown)

(63) Lee always left Dr. Carpenter's office at exactly *five of twelve*. At *six of twelve* Opal casually opened the door of the private entrance to his upstairs office. (COCA: 1992 FIC Bk: AllAroundTown)

The third part of this analysis focuses on the preposition *till*, which is also suggested in grammars to be mostly used by AmE speakers. However, a few examples of using the preposition *till* for denoting 'clock time' have still been found in BNC (only the first five hits were analyzed in both corpora), e.g.:

(64) What the film? Is it? What time's it start? (SP:PS04B) Is it ten o'clock? (pause) (SP:PS04C) Ten? (SP:PS04B) *Ten till twelve*. (BNC: KBE S_conv)

(65) Er it will be at ten. *Ten till two* or something like that. (BNC: F7A S_meeting)

The occurrences of the preposition *till* used for denoting 'clock time' are much more frequent in AmE, e.g.:

(66) Finally, at *ten till five*, Betty called. She was sorry, she had just been swamped all day long. But she had news. She had found my file with all its sordid details. (COCA: 2004 FIC LiteraryRev)

(67) She rubs her eyes. "What time is it?" "*Ten till one*. Welcome to Indianola, Mississippi, home of B. B. King and me." (COCA: 1993 FIC SouthernRev)

(68) 'We should leave the house no later than *ten till seven*, so any time before that.' Denise glanced at the kitchen clock. (COCA: 2000 FIC Bk: OneRainyNight)

(69) She checked her wristwatch. *Ten till nine*. (COCA: 2001 FIC Bk: Dark)

The preposition *past* used for denoting 'clock time' is very frequent in both corpora (the first twenty hits were looked at in COCA and BNC), e.g.:

(70) At *five past seven*, when he'd had his tea and had had a look at the television, he drove into the yard of Macey's Hotel. (COCA: 2004 FIC NewYorker)

(71) A glance at my watch showed that it was still only *ten past five*. (BNC: CKF W_fict_prose)

The preposition *after* used for denoting 'clock time' is again suggested in grammars to be typical of AmE. Just as in the previous cases, this statement is partially supported by the fact that only one relevant result was found in BNC, viz. when *after* is used to give the time (all the 4 hits were looked at), e.g.:

(72) Were you in time? (SP:PS126) Yes (SP:PS0H7) Hmm? Yes? (SP:PS126) Yes I was very (unclear). I was there about *five after nine*. (BNC: KCV S_conv)

There are many examples of using *after* for denoting ‘clock time’ in AmE (the first 10 hits were analyzed), e.g.:

(73) If he left the bookstore at a quarter to four, arrived at Finedorffs at *five after four*, spent fifteen minutes there, departing at four-twenty, he certainly would have arrived home in plenty of time to have quarreled with Patty Kay, then to have murdered her. (COCA: 1994 FIC Bk: ScandalInFairHaven)

(74) Lisa is driving by to pick him up at *ten after three*. (COCA: 2007 FIC NewEnglandRev)

The fourth problematic area in this subchapter analyses the case when different time prepositions, viz. *to*, *till*, *until*, *up to*, *through*, can be used in BrE and AmE for denoting ‘ending points of a period’, as illustrated in the examples in Table 31:

‘starting and ending points of a period’	
BrE	AmE
from June to/till September (from) June until/till/up to September	(from) June through September

Table 31. Different time prepositions used for describing the same meaning in BrE and AmE, viz. ‘ending points of a period’ (Quirk et al., 1985: 690-691)

According to the results excerpted from COCA and BNC, which are summarized in Table 32, the time preposition *to* used for denoting ‘ending points of a period’ is frequent in both varieties. As it has been suggested in the theoretical part, *through* is mostly typical of AmE and *until* of BrE:

(75) And *from May through October*, Dina’s garden becomes a classroom where she instructs her students on the multiple uses of a wide variety of plants, ranging from ornamental to culinary, medicinal, and body-care applications. (COCA: 2007 MAG OrganicGarden)

(76) Outbreaks of disease occur *from June until November*, but are most common *from July until September*. (BNC: JXN W_ac_nat_science)

	COCA	BNC
through ²⁸	1113	5
to ²⁹	1093	458

²⁸ The query formulated in BNC and COCA:
January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December through
January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December

²⁹ The query formulated in BNC and COCA:
January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December to

till ³⁰	6	5
until ³¹	2	27
up to ³²	no matching records	no matching records

Table 32. Analysis of time prepositions used for denoting ‘ending points of a period’ in BrE and AmE. Number of occurrences in COCA and BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words, COCA: 450,000,000 words)

The fifth problematic area deals with two different space prepositions used for describing ‘relative position’ in BrE and AmE, namely *behind* and *in back of*, presented in Table 33.

‘relative position’	
BrE	AmE
behind	in back of
behind the shed	in back of the shed

Table 33. Different space prepositions, *behind* and *in back of*, used for describing the same meaning in BrE and AmE, viz. ‘relative position’

Since the noun *shed* is not very frequent, it would be relevant to choose as a head word the noun *house*, which is more likely to appear in different texts in the two corpora. The exact phrases ‘behind the house’ and ‘in back of the house’ will be looked at in COCA and BNC. Afterwards, the data from both corpora will be presented in the form of a histogram and compared with each other.

January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December

³⁰ The query formulated in BNC and COCA:

January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December till

January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December

³¹ The query formulated in BNC and COCA:

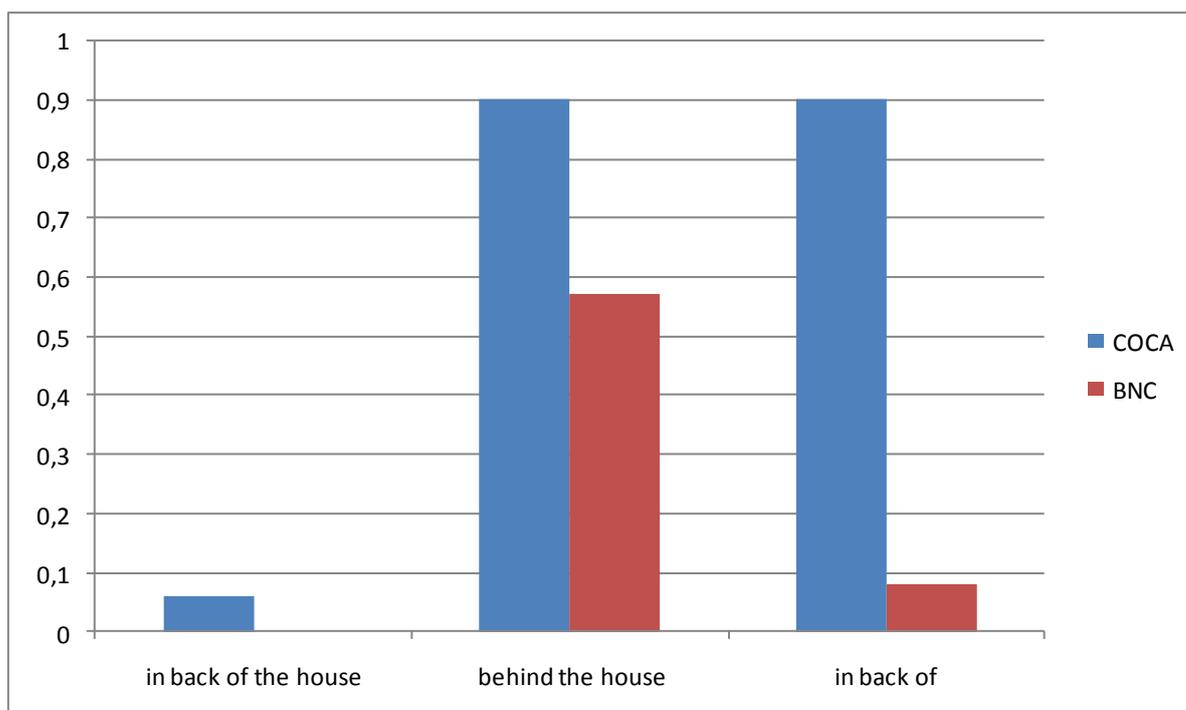
January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December until

January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December

³² The query formulated in BNC and COCA:

January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December up to

January|February|March|April|May|June|July|August|September|October|November|December



Histogram 3. The actual difference in the use of two prepositional phrases, viz. *behind the house* and *in back of the house*, and the complex preposition *in back of* in BrE and AmE (frequency per million words)

In COCA there are 417 instances of *behind the house* and 26 instances of *in back of the house*; in BNC there are 55 instances of *behind the house* and no instances of *in back of the house*. The results from two corpora suggest that the space prepositional phrase denoting ‘relative position’ *in back of the house* is not typical of BrE:³³

(77) “He started making cuttings and raising them in his greenhouse, which is still up there *in back of the house*.” (COCA: 2001 MAG SouthernLiv)

(78) They get out of the car in front of the house. They see a woman *in back of the house*, sitting on a deck chair, staring at the sea, a blanket around her. (COCA: 1992 FIC Mov: Basic Instinct)

(79) During the summer, all activities happened outside, *behind the house*, where there was a generous flagstone patio with a grill, picnic table, and dramatic views plunging in all directions. (COCA: 2011 FIC NewEnglandRev)

(80) He took her to a graveyard high on the slope *behind the house*. (BNC: CB5 W_fict_prose)

³³ Actually, there are only eight hits for the phrase ‘in back of’ (in seven different texts, three of them spoken) in BNC.

The last problematic area in this subchapter comprises the case when prepositions *in* and *on* are used in the two varieties for describing the meaning ‘positive position’, as shown in Table 34:

‘positive position’	
BrE	AmE
in	on
to be in a team to live in a street	to be on a team to live on a street

Table 34. Different space prepositions, *in* and *on*, used for describing the same meaning in BrE and AmE, viz. ‘positive position’

Since the category ‘positive position’ is so broad, an all-encompassing query is hard to find. For this reason, it would be appropriate to formulate a query³⁴ for the expressions used as illustrations of ‘positive position’ in *IEGVSE* (presented in Table 34 above).

CONTEXT	FREQ
[LIVE] on [determiner] street	20
[LIVE] in [determiner] street	2

Table 35. [live] [i*] [d*] street – number of relevant occurrences in COCA (COCA: 450,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ
[LIVE] on [determiner] street	0
[LIVE] in [determiner] street	2

Table 36. [live] [i*] [d*] street – number of relevant occurrences in BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ
[BE] on [determiner] team	36
[BE] in [determiner] team	1

Table 37. [be] [i*] [d*] team – number of relevant occurrences in COCA (COCA: 450,000,000 words)

CONTEXT	FREQ
[BE] on [determiner] team	1
[BE] in [determiner] team	1

Table 38. [be] [i*] [d*] team – number of relevant occurrences in BNC (BNC: 100,000,000 words)

The results excerpted from COCA prove that AmE speakers prefer using the preposition *on* in space prepositional phrases denoting ‘positive position’:³⁵

(81) She didn’t know any of the people who *lived on this street*, and she didn’t know anyone else who did either, and that made her wonder all the more what kind of people would carve such great pumpkins. (COCA: 1999 FIC FantasySciFi)

³⁴ The query formulated in COCA and BNC:

[live] [i*] [d*] street (i.e. a lemma of the verb *live* is followed by a preposition, a determiner and a word-form *street*)

[be] [i*] [d*] team (i.e. a lemma of the verb *be* is followed by a preposition, a determiner and a word-form *team*)

³⁵ All the hits were carefully looked at in BNC and COCA and only the relevant hits for this analysis, viz. containing the prepositions *in* and *on*, were selected for presenting them here.

(82) “I saw Tampa lose to St. Louis in the 1999 NFC championship, and I was thinking, Man, if I *was on that team*, they would’ve won.” (COCA: 2003 MAG SportsIII)

As concerns BrE, there are only four relevant results excerpted from BNC, still the preposition *in* prevails:

(83) The law sees the case as no different in principle from dealing with a murder in a street by prosecuting everyone who *lives in that street*, on the basis that one of them must have done it. (COCA: K96 W_non_ac_soc_science)

(84) Who’s *in this team*, I’d like to know? (COCA: AT4 W_fict_prose)

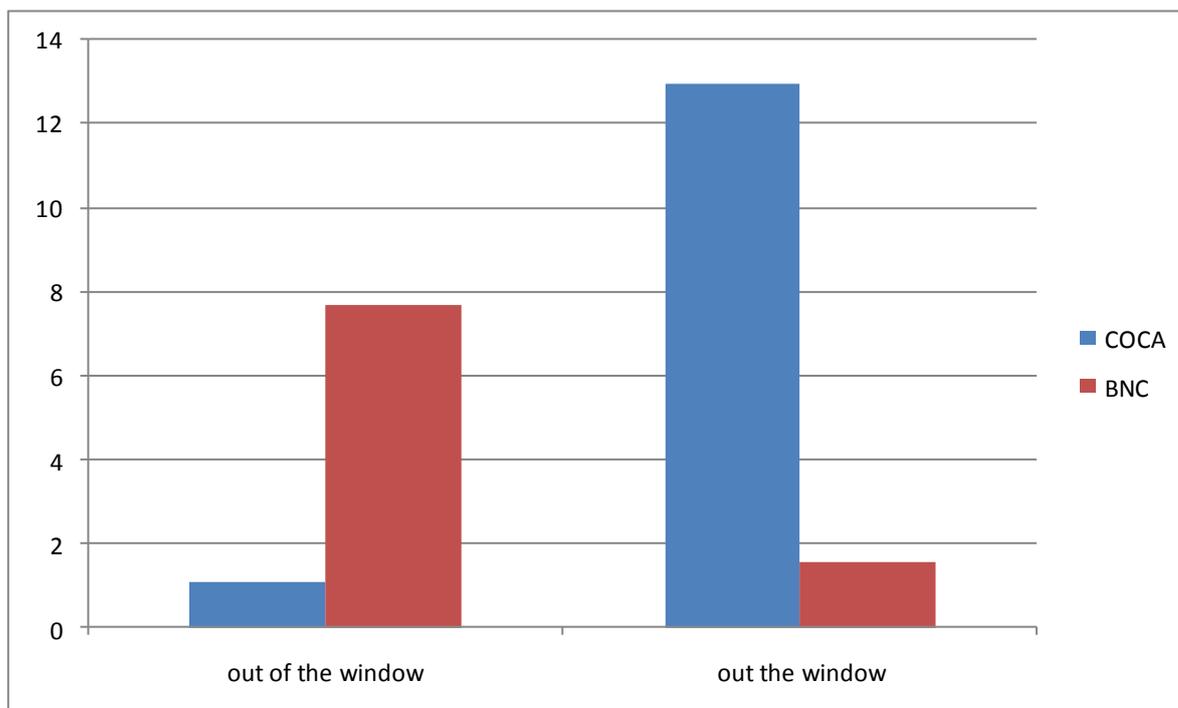
4.2.3. Analysis of the Space Prepositions Used for Describing ‘Negative Position and Destination’, Differing in Form in BrE and AmE

The final part of the subchapter analyses two space prepositions with the meaning ‘negative position and destination’ differing in form in the two varieties, viz. *out of/out*:

‘negative position and destination’	
BrE/AmE	AmE/informal BrE
<i>out of</i> the window	<i>out</i> the window

Table 39. Space prepositions with the meaning ‘negative position and destination’ differing in form in the two varieties: *out of/out* (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 79)

The exact phrases ‘out of the window’ and ‘out the window’ will be looked at in COCA and BNC. Afterwards, the data from both corpora will be presented in the form of a histogram and compared with each other.



Histogram 4. The actual difference in the use of two prepositional phrases, viz. *out of the window/out the window* in BrE and AmE (frequency per million words)

Out the window displays a preference for AmE, while *out of the window* is more frequent in BrE than in AmE. In AmE there are 490 instances of *out of the window* and 6020 instances of *out the window*, in BrE *out of the window* – 738, *out the window* – 149. In this way, the results from two corpora support the statement that the time prepositional phrase with the meaning ‘negative position and destination’ *out the window* is mostly typical of AmE than of BrE:

- (85) I tried to look annoyed, but glancing *out the window*, I couldn’t fight the feeling that I could let it all go. (COCA: 2012 FIC Bk: TheseDaysAreOurs)
- (86) She shrugged, then turned and stared *out the window* for the rest of the drive. (COCA: 2012 FIC Bk: TellWolvesImHome)
- (87) The next morning I looked *out of the window* of my warm bedroom into the backyard and saw a child enter the open gate from the garden, look cautiously round, lift the lid from an over-flowing garbage can and quickly and efficiently pick out the scraps of bread and other left-overs from our supper tables the previous night. (BNC: 2012 FIC Bk: TellWolvesImHome)
- (88) She looked *out of the window* at what used to be tundra just a few decades back and now became the pale scrub of pines and oaks. (COCA: 2007 FIC Analog)

5. Conclusion

This bachelor thesis aimed to analyze time and space prepositional phrases in contemporary British and American English by using two methods, viz. the ‘corpus-driven approach’ and the ‘corpus-based approach’. The research revealed that although most prepositional phrases denoting time and space are used identically in British and American English, there are some significant cases when American speakers tend to use different time and space prepositional phrases than British speakers would for describing the same meaning.

The investigation was successful due to a number of reasons. The analysis of time and space prepositional phrases was based on a semantic classification of prepositional phrases in *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk et al., 1985: 673-695), which proved to be ideal for this kind of research since the work takes as its starting point the meaning of prepositional phrases. By applying this semantic classification, the theoretical part resulted in the description of time and space prepositional phrases and outlined the problematic cases concerning their usage in British and American English. The practical part divided all the problematic cases into three groups, which made it possible to effectively apply two methods, viz. the ‘corpus-driven approach’ and the ‘corpus-based approach’.

The first problematic group, which comprises the difference in form of time and space prepositional phrases, was investigated by means of the ‘corpus-driven approach’. Besides supporting, in many cases, the theoretical part, it also provided interesting insight into the other frequently-used time and space prepositions in British and American English. Concerning the formal aspect, the analysis of the data showed that while AmE speakers prefer using such forms of space prepositions as *amid*, *among* and *along*, BrE speakers tend to use their longer forms, viz. *amidst*, *amongst* and *alongside*. The results of the investigation support the theoretical part since they show a significant difference in the use of prepositions *round/around* and *toward/towards* in BrE and AmE. The forms of space prepositions *round* and *towards* are much more frequent in BrE than in AmE, whereas AmE speakers prefer using the forms *around* and *toward*. The analysis also revealed that AmE speakers often use prepositions *atop*, *aside*, *aboard*, *past*, etc., which can also function as adverbs. Although in the theoretical part it was claimed that the use of space prepositions denoting ‘relative position and destination’, such as *in front of*, *behind*, *beneath*, *underneath*, *below*, *above* and *under*, varies considerably in BrE and AmE, the results of excerption showed that there is no considerable difference in the use of these prepositions in the two varieties.

By applying the ‘corpus-based approach’, which essentially means formulating a specific query for each problematic case, the second and third problematic groups were analyzed, focusing mainly on the difference in the presence/absence of a preposition in BrE and AmE and the case when different prepositions are used for describing the same meaning in the two varieties. Firstly, the analysis revealed that the time preposition *on* is frequently omitted before the dates and the days of the week in AmE but not in BrE. Besides, in AmE the time prepositions *on* and *in* are often omitted before the postmodified nondeictic phrases containing *the*, e.g.: will be announced *the day of the Games* (COCA: 2004 MAG ChildLife), happened *the summer of 1954* (COCA: 2011 FIC Bk: TonguesAngels). Secondly, the research showed that AmE speakers often use the preposition *on* for denoting ‘holiday periods’, e.g.: *on the weekend, on Easter, on Christmas*. Thirdly, the analysis of two different space prepositions used for describing ‘relative position’ in BrE and AmE, *behind* and *in back of*, proved that the latter is not typical of BrE but is frequently used in AmE. Concerning ‘negative position and destination’, AmE speakers prefer using the simple preposition *out* instead of the complex preposition *out of*, which is more typical of BrE. Lastly, it is important to mention that the study of the time prepositions *for* and *in* used for denoting ‘duration’, as in the phrases *for/in years, for/in weeks, for/in ages*, revealed that both *for* and *in* are possible in negative and positive sentences in the two varieties, although the theoretical part stated that “*in* [...] can be used only in negative sentences” and is especially typical of AmE (Quirk et al., 1985: 689-690). On the whole, by means of the ‘corpus-based approach’ nine problematic cases were analyzed in the second subchapter of the practical part, however only the most remarkable results of the investigation are mentioned here.

Two subchapters of the practical part resulted in a great number of examples relevant for this topic, which were excerpted from two large contemporary corpora British National Corpus 1980s-1993, comprising 100 million words, and Corpus of Contemporary American English 1990-2012, comprising 450 million words.

On the basis of the results of this bachelor thesis one may state that in some cases the difference between the use of time and space prepositional phrases in British and American English is considerable and this fact should not be undervalued. The thesis provides the ground for further research into the prepositional phrases in British and American English and, in general, the differences between these two varieties.

6. Resumé

Tématem této bakalářské práce jsou časové a prostorové předložkové vazby v britské a americké angličtině. Bakalářská práce se skládá z úvodu, teoretické části, metodologie, výzkumu a závěru.

Úvodní kapitola seznamuje s cílem práce, kterým je analýza časových a prostorových předložkových vazeb v britské a americké angličtině na základě sémantické klasifikace (Quirk, R. a kol., 1985). Kapitola také informuje, jak bude vypadat teoretická část, metodologie a výzkum. Ukazuje také, že relevance zvoleného tématu spočívá v tom, že neexistuje podrobný popis rozdílu v používání časových a prostorových předložkových vazeb v britské a americké angličtině na základě sémantické klasifikace, ani není dostatečný počet dostupných příkladů ilustrujících problematické příklady.

Teoretická část této bakalářské práce se věnuje popisu primárních časových a prostorových předložek a soustředí se hlavně na jejich použití v britské a americké angličtině. Za základ teoretické části je vzata sémantická klasifikace časových a prostorových předložkových vazeb, která je vymezena v gramatice *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk, R. a kol., 1985). Hlavním úkolem teoretické části je sumarizovat a analyzovat, co je známo a napsáno o tomto tématu v odborné literatuře, jako *Mluvnice současné angličtiny na pozadí češtiny* (Dušková, L. a kol., 2006), *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk, R. a kol., 1985), *English Prepositions Explained*. (Lindstrombergh, S., 2010) *International English: A Guide to the Varieties of Standard English* (Trudgill, P. and J. Hannah, 1994), *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber, D. a kol., 1999), *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* (Huddleston, R. and G. K. Pullum, 2002). Je třeba zdůraznit, že daná práce je zaměřena pouze na analýzu základních časových a prostorových předložek a nezabývá se metaforickými významy, ustálenými frázemi a předložkovými slovesy. V teoretické části se využívají nákresy, které mohou lépe ilustrovat význam konkrétních předložek.

První podkapitola teoretické části se věnuje popisu významů základních časových předložek, např.: 'time position', 'measurement into the future', 'duration'. Kromě toho se podrobně popisují příklady vynechávání časových předložek. Problematické momenty, tj. rozdíly v použití předložkových vazeb v britské a americké angličtině se zvýrazňují v textu červenou barvou.

Druhá podkapitola teoretické části se věnuje popisu nejfrekventovanějších významů základních prostorových předložek, např.: 'positive position and destination', 'negative position', 'relative position and destination', 'passage', 'movement with reference to an axis

or a directional path'. Stejně tak, jako v předchozí kapitole, jsou problematické příklady, jako rozdíly v použití předložkových vazeb v britské a americké angličtině, zvýrazněny v textu červenou barvou.

Kapitola popisující metodologii je zaměřená na vymezení materiálu, metod, a nástrojů, používaných v praktické části. Tato kapitola informuje, že materiál je čerpán ze dvou velkých synchronních korpusů současné britské a americké angličtiny – Korpusu současné americké angličtiny (450 milionů slov) a Britského národního korpusu (100 milionů slov). Oba korpusy jsou přístupné prostřednictvím Brigham Young University (<http://corpus.byu.edu/>). Pro analýzu problémových příkladů v použití časových a prostorových předložkových vazeb v britské a americké angličtině byly využity dvě metody - 'corpus-driven approach' a 'corpus based approach' (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001).

Praktická část je zaměřena na analýzu problematických příkladů, tj. rozdílů v použití časových a prostorových předložek v britské a americké angličtině, které byly podrobně popsány v teoretické části. Jak už bylo uvedeno výše, byly tyto příklady zvýrazněny v textu teoretické kapitoly červenou barvou. Celkově se praktická část soustředí na tři problémové oblasti (Trudgill a Hannah, 1994: 79-81):

- (a) předložky, které se liší pouze ve formě v britské a americké angličtině, např. *round* (BrE)/*around* (AmE),
- (b) rozdíl v přítomnosti/nepřítomnosti předložek v britské a americké angličtině, např. *I'll do it on Monday* (BrE)/*I'll do it Monday* (AmE),
- (c) různé předložky používané pro vyjádření téhož významu v britské a americké angličtině např. *at Christmas* (BrE)/*on Christmas* (AmE).

První podkapitola praktické části je založena na 'corpus-driven approach', tj. na analýze frekvenčních údajů o předložkách v Britském národním korpusu a Korpusu současné americké angličtiny, které byly získány bez předchozí hypotézy (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001: 84-100). Byla porovnána četnost předložek, jejichž frekvence v každém z korpusů přesahuje 100 výskytů. Všechny předložky byly řazeny podle relevance, a výsledky srovnání jejich výskytu v obou korpusech jsou shrnuty v tabulkách (je důležité zdůraznit, že výzkum je zaměřen výlučně na časové a prostorové předložky). Výhoda metody spočívá v tom, že vedle popisu problematických příkladů z teoretické části, pomohou výsledky získat zajímavá nová fakta o rozdílech v použití časových a prostorových předložek v britské a americké angličtině. Praktická část v mnohém podporuje část teoretickou a ještě jednou dokazuje, že se skutečně v

současné americké angličtině takové formy časových předložek jako *around* a *toward* využívají mnohem častěji než v britské angličtině. Avšak tato metoda ukazuje také to, že v situaci, kdy v americké angličtině jsou využívány formy časových předložek *amid*, *among* a *along*, v britské angličtině se upřednostňují jiné formy, *amidst*, *amongst* a *alongside*. Vedlejším výsledkem práce jsou tabulky, které ukazují v americké angličtině relativně vyšší zastoupení předložek, jako *atop* a *past*, které se mohou v určitém kontextu chovat jako příslovce. I když na základě teoretické části bylo možné očekávat, že využití prostorových předložek označující 'relative position and destination', například *in front of*, *behind*, *beneath*, *underneath*, *below*, *above* a *under*, se značně liší v britské a americké angličtině, výsledky excerptce ukázaly, že neexistuje žádný významný rozdíl v použití těchto předložek v britské a americké angličtině.

Druhá podkapitola praktické části se opírá o 'corpus-based approach', což znamená, že pro každý problematický případ popsany podrobně v metodologii je formulován konkrétní dotaz, jehož výsledky v britském národním korpusu a korpusu současné americké angličtiny jsou navzájem porovnávány. Podkapitola si klade za cíl popsat tímto způsobem dvě problémové oblasti, především rozdíl v přítomnosti / nepřítomnosti předložky v britské a americké angličtině a případ, kde se pro vyjádření stejného významu používají v britské a americké angličtině různé předložky. Výsledkem práce je například to, že časová předložka *on* se často vynechává před dny v týdnu a daty v americké angličtině, ale už ne v britské. Druhým zajímavým momentem je to, že v americké angličtině se často využívají předložky *on* před názvem svátku, např. *on Christmas* a *on Easter*, a také se potvrzuje, že známá vazba *on the weekend* je mnohem častěji používána v americké angličtině. Analýza dvou různých prostorových předložek *behind* a *in back of* využívaných pro popis 'relative position' v britské a americké angličtině ukazuje, že víceslovná předložka *in back of* není typická pro britskou angličtinu, ale je často používána v americké angličtině. Pokud jde o 'negative position and destination', v americké angličtině mluvčí raději používají jednoduchou předložku *out*, zatímco v britské angličtině dávají přednost víceslovné předložce *out of*. Celkově s pomocí Britského národního korpusu a Korpusu současné americké angličtiny druhá podkapitola praktické části analyzovala devět problémových příkladů, které se týkají rozdílů ve využití časových a prostorových předložkových vazeb v britské a americké angličtině.

Bakalářská práce nejen prozkoumala rozdíly mezi mluvčími britské a americké angličtiny v použití časových a prostorových předložkových vazeb, ale vedla také k vytvoření databáze příkladů, které mohou být dále použity. Výsledky bakalářské práce jsou shrnuty v závěrečné kapitole.

7. References and Sources

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