

***SOMETHING UP WITH WHICH I WILL NOT PUT:
PREPOSITIONS, PARTICLES, AND PIED PIPING IN ENGLISH**

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Squib 2 – Final Draft

3 December 2004

1. Introduction

Winston Churchill, in response to an editor who had awkwardly rearranged one of his sentences to avoid ending it in a preposition, is said to have scribbled on the draft (Gowers 1948):

- (1) *This is the sort of English up with which I will not put.

The wit in his reply comes from the fact that in spite of the editor's adherence to a prescriptivist rule against sentence-final prepositions in English, pied piping of prepositions often results not only in a sentence being clumsy, but in a sentence being outright ungrammatical, as shown by Churchill's very reply to the editor: in (1), the prepositional elements in the English phrasal verb *put up with* cannot undergo pied piping grammatically.

This squib investigates the nature of pied piping. Under what conditions can prepositions and particles (henceforth, p-words¹) be pied piped? The phrasal verb *put up with* in (1) may be classified as a "monotransitive phrasal-prepositional" verb according to Greenbaum's (1996) *Oxford English Grammar*, which distinguishes seven types of prepositional or phrasal verbs in English.²

- (2) Categorization of verbs taking prepositions and particles

1. intransitive phrasal verbs (e.g., *give up*)
2. transitive phrasal verbs (e.g., *find out* [something])
3. monotransitive prepositional verbs (e.g., *look after* [someone])
4. doubly transitive prepositional verbs (e.g., *blame* [something] *on* [someone])
5. copular prepositional verbs (e.g., *serve as* [something])
6. monotransitive phrasal-prepositional verbs (e.g., *look up to* [someone])
7. doubly transitive phrasal-prepositional verbs (e.g., *put* [something] *down to* [someone])

This squib focuses on the sixth and seventh types, the so-called monotransitive and doubly transitive phrasal-prepositional verbs (henceforth, PPV), which both consist of a verb followed by two p-words. Pied piping data with these PPVs present some interesting questions regarding the status of multiple p-word strings as well as single p-words that will be addressed in §4.

2. P-Words: Particles vs. Prepositions

First, a closer look needs to be taken at p-words themselves. P-words seem to separate into two distinct classes in a number of ways, as seen in the following examples.³

¹ The term "p-word" is used here as a cover term for both particles and prepositions.

² Greenbaum uses the term "phrasal verb" to refer to a verb that takes a particle as opposed to a preposition.

³ Verbs and p-words are set in boldface to make clearer their different position with respect to each other in different examples.

- (3) a. Bilbo **ran up** the bill.
 b. Bilbo **ran** the bill **up**.
 c. Bilbo **ran** it **up**.⁴
 d. *Bilbo **ran up** it.
 e. What did Bilbo **run up**?
 f. ***Up** what did Bilbo **run**?
 g. This is the bill which Bilbo **ran up**.
 h. *This is the bill **up** which Bilbo **ran**.
- (4) a. Bilbo **ran up** the hill.
 b. *Bilbo **ran** the hill **up**.
 c. *Bilbo **ran** it **up**.⁵
 d. Bilbo **ran up** it.
 e. What did Bilbo **run up**?
 f. **Up** what did Bilbo **run**?
 g. This is the hill which Bilbo **ran up**.
 h. This is the hill **up** which Bilbo **ran**.

The contrasts to note are (3b)-(4b), (3c)-(4c), (3d)-(4d), (3f)-(4f), and (3h)-(4h). As seen in (3b), the p-word may shift to the right of a full noun object, and (3d) shows furthermore that the p-word must shift to the right of an object when it is a pronoun. On the other hand, in (4b-c), the p-word cannot shift past a full noun or pronominal object. In addition, in (3f,h), pied piping of the p-word with a wh-phrase in wh-questions and relative clauses results in ungrammaticality, while in (4f,h), such pied piping occurs grammatically.

Thus, there are at least three clear differences between the type of p-word in (3) and the type of p-word in (4). The p-word in (3) is seen to (i) optionally shift to right of a full noun object, (ii) obligatorily shift to the right of a pronominal object, and (iii) be unable to move via pied piping with a wh-phrase in questions and relative clauses. In contrast, the p-word in (4) is seen to (i) be unable to shift to the right of a full noun object, (ii) be unable to shift to the right of a pronominal object, and (iii) optionally move via pied piping with a wh-phrase in questions and relative clauses. These two classes of p-words may be called, respectively, particles and prepositions. Their differences are summarized in (5).

(5) Characteristics of particles vs. prepositions

<i>Particle</i>	<i>Preposition</i>
Can shift to right of full noun object	Cannot shift to right of full noun object
Must shift to right of pronominal object	Cannot shift to right of pronominal object
Cannot be pied piped	Can be pied piped

The characteristics distinguishing particles and prepositions may thus be used as diagnostics to test whether a given p-word should be analyzed as a particle or a preposition.

⁴ The pronoun *it* in (3c,d) refers to the bill.

⁵ The pronoun *it* in (4c,d) refers to the hill.

3. Multiple P-Words

Many verb phrases contain multiple p-words. Note the following examples which contain two p-words.

- (6)
- a. Latoya **caved in to** the pressure.
 - b. *Latoya **caved in** the pressure **to**.
 - c. *Latoya **caved** the pressure **in to**.
 - d. Latoya **caved in to** it.
 - e. *Latoya **caved in** it **to**.
 - f. *Latoya **caved** it **in to**.
 - g. What did Latoya **cave in to**?
 - h. **To** what did Latoya **cave in**?
 - i. ***In to** what did Latoya **cave**?
 - j. There are many things which Latoya **caved in to**.
 - k. There are many things **to** which Latoya **caved in**.
 - l. *There are many things **in to** which Latoya **caved**.
- (7)
- a. Noam **looks up to** many people.
 - b. *Noam **looks up** many people **to**.
 - c. *Noam **looks** many people **up to**.
 - d. Noam **looks up to** them.
 - e. *Noam **looks up** them **to**.
 - f. *Noam **looks** them **up to**.
 - g. Who(m) does Noam **look up to**?
 - h. ??**To** who(m) does he **look up**?
 - i. ***Up to** who(m) does he **look**?
 - j. These are the people who(m) Noam **looks up to**.
 - k. ??These are the people **to** who(m) Noam **looks up**.
 - l. *These are the people **up to** who(m) Noam **looks**.

(6) and (7) are examples of monotransitive PPVs in Greenbaum's terms. In (6), the second p-word is a preposition, as it occurs grammatically unshifted before a pronoun (cf. 6d), cannot be shifted after the object (cf. 6b,e), and may undergo pied piping grammatically (cf. 6h,k), while the first p-word is a particle, as it cannot undergo pied piping (cf. 6i,l). (7) is similar in that the first p-word seems to be a particle due to its inability to undergo pied piping (cf. 7i,l). However, the status of the second p-word in (7) is less clear: it occurs grammatically unshifted before a pronoun (cf. 7d) and cannot be shifted after the object (cf. 7b,e), but pied piping of it results in severe degradation in grammaticality (cf. 7h,k).

In addition, note the following examples which take two arguments.

- (8)
- a. Sasha **found out** the truth **from** Sergei.
 - b. Sasha **found** the truth **out from** Sergei.
 - c. *Sasha **found** the truth **out** Sergei **from**.
 - d. Sasha **found** it **out from** Sergei.
 - e. *Sasha **found out** it **from** Sergei.
 - f. *Sasha **found** it **out** Sergei **from**.
 - g. Who(m) did Sasha **find** it **out from**?
 - h. **From** who(m) did Sasha **find** it **out**?

- i. ***Out from** who(m) did Sasha **find** it?
 - j. It is Sergei who(m) Sasha **found** it **out from**.
 - k. It is Sergei **from** who(m) Sasha **found** it **out**.
 - l. *It is Sergei **out from** who(m) Sasha **found** it.
- (9)
- a. Ioannis **chalked up** the failure **to** experience.
 - b. Ioannis **chalked** the failure **up to** experience.
 - c. *Ioannis **chalked** the failure **up** experience **to**.
 - d. Ioannis **chalked** it **up to** experience.
 - e. *Ioannis **chalked up** it **to** experience.
 - f. *Ioannis **chalked** it **up** experience **to**.
 - g. What did Ioannis **chalk** it **up to**?
 - h. ??**To** what did Ioannis **chalk** it **up**?
 - i. ***Up to** what did Ioannis **chalk** it?
 - j. It is experience which Ioannis **chalked** it **up to**.
 - k. ??It is experience **to** which Ioannis **chalked** it **up**.
 - l. *It is experience **up to** which Ioannis **chalked** it.
- (10)
- a. Gabriela **put down** the idea **to** her advisor.
 - b. Gabriela **put** the idea **down to** her advisor.
 - c. *Gabriela **put** the idea **down** her advisor **to**.
 - d. Gabriela **put** it **down to** her advisor.
 - e. *Gabriela **put down** it **to** her advisor.
 - f. *Gabriela **put** it **down** her advisor **to**.
 - g. Who(m) did Gabriela **put** it **down to**?
 - h. ??**To** who(m) did Gabriela **put** it **down**?
 - i. ***Down to** who(m) did Gabriela **put** it?
 - j. It is her advisor who(m) Gabriela **put** it **down to**.
 - k. ??It is her advisor **to** who(m) Gabriela **put** it **down**.
 - l. *It is her advisor **down to** who(m) Gabriela **put** it.

In (8)-(10), the first p-word again seems to be a particle: it can shift past an object (cf. 8b,d; 9b,d; 10b,d), must shift past a pronoun (cf. 8e, 9e, 10e), and cannot undergo pied piping (cf. 8i,l; 9i,l; 10i,l). The second p-word in (8) seems to be a preposition: it cannot shift past an object (cf. 8c,f) and can undergo pied piping grammatically (cf. 8h,k). On the other hand, the second p-word in (9) and (10) once again receives conflicting judgments with respect to the p-word diagnostics enumerated above: it cannot shift past an object (cf. 9c,f; 10c,f), suggesting that it is a preposition, but it cannot undergo pied piping grammatically, either (cf. 9h,k; 10h,k), suggesting that it is a particle.

Note also the contrast between the monotransitive PPV in (11) and the very similar transitive phrasal verb + prepositional phrase structure in (12).

- (11)
- a. Ashanti **put up with** his nagging.
 - b. *Ashanti **put up** his nagging **with**.
 - c. *Ashanti **put** his nagging **up with**.
 - d. Ashanti **put up with** it.
 - e. *Ashanti **put up** it **with**.
 - f. *Ashanti **put** it **up with**.
 - g. What did Ashanti **put up with**?

- h. ??**With** what did Ashanti **put up**?
 - i. ***Up with** what did Ashanti **put**?
 - j. These are the things Ashanti **put up with**.
 - k. ??These are the things **with** which Ashanti **put up**.
 - l. *These are the things **up with** which Ashanti **put**.
- (12)
- a. Francesco **put up** his brother **with** his sister.
 - b. Francesco **put** his brother **up with** his sister.
 - c. *Francesco **put** his brother **up** his sister **with**.
 - d. Francesco **put him up with** her.
 - e. *Francesco **put up** him **with** her.
 - f. *Francesco **put him up** her **with**.
 - g. Who(m) did Francesco **put up** his brother **with**?
 - h. **With** who(m) did Francesco **put up** his brother?
 - i. ***Up with** who(m) did Francesco **put** his brother?
 - j. This is the person who(m) Francesco **put up** his brother **with**.
 - k. This is the person **with** who(m) Francesco **put up** his brother.
 - l. *This is the person **up with** who(m) Francesco **put** his brother.

The first p-word in both (11) and (12) seems to be a particle, as evidenced by its inability to undergo pied piping (cf. 11i,l; 12i,l) and its ability in (12) to shift past the object *his brother*. The second p-word in (12) is clearly a preposition: it occurs grammatically before a pronoun (cf. 12d), cannot shift past a pronoun (cf. 12f), and may undergo pied piping (cf. 12h,k). However, the status of the second p-word in (11) is less clear, since while it displays the inability to shift characteristic of prepositions (cf. 11d,f), it does not display the ability to be pied piped like a preposition (cf. 11h,k).

Thus, the first two p-word diagnostics enumerated in §2 having to do with shifting of the p-word past an object work well with respect to differentiating particles and prepositions, but the third diagnostic having to do with pied piping applies inconsistently. Certain words that seem to be prepositions according to the shifting diagnostics cannot undergo pied piping. The question remains: what accounts for this wrinkle in the pied piping pattern?

4. Complex Prepositions, Complex Particles, and Particle + Preposition Strings

Prepositions in English may be simple or complex. Note the following examples in (13).

- (13)
- a. Tatiana **came in from out of** the room.
 - b. *Tatiana **came in from out** the room **of**.
 - c. *Tatiana **came in from** the room **out of**.
 - d. Tatiana **came in from out of** it.
 - e. *Tatiana **came in from out** it **of**.
 - f. *Tatiana **came in from** it **out of**.
 - g. What/Where did Tatiana **come in from out of**?
 - h. ***Of** what/where did Tatiana **come in from out**?
 - i. **Out of** what/where did Tatiana **come in from**?
 - j. **From out of** what/where did Tatiana **come in**?
 - k. ***In from out of** what/where did Tatiana **come**?
 - l. This is the room which Tatiana **came in from out of**.
 - m. *This is the room **of** which Tatiana **came in from out**.
 - n. This is the room **out of** which Tatiana **came in from**.

- o. This is the room **from out of** which Tatiana **came in**.
- p. *This is the room **in from out of** which Tatiana **came**.

The p-word string *out of* displays prepositional behavior: it occurs grammatically before a pronoun (cf. 13d), cannot shift past an object partially or totally (cf. 13b,c,e,f), and can undergo pied piping (cf. 13i,n). However, the string cannot be split when it undergoes pied piping. The whole string must be pied piped, or else ungrammaticality results (cf. 13h,m). Thus, it seems this prepositional string is best analyzed as a single unit, a complex or compound preposition.⁶ In contrast, note that other groupings of the prepositions in (13) into possible complex prepositions either cannot be pied piped grammatically (e.g., *in from*, *in from out* in 13k,p) or can be separated via pied piping (e.g., *from out*, *from out of* in 13i,n), suggesting that these are not in fact complex prepositions.

Since it appears that there are complex prepositions, then it stands to reason that there might also be complex particles. This could account for the pied piping issue raised above because if the second p-word were not actually a preposition, but the second element of a complex particle, then it would be expected that it could not be pied piped. However, there are two main problems with this account. First, one might expect a complex particle to behave as one unit just as a complex preposition does; however, all instances of a would-be complex particle shifting past an object are ungrammatical (e.g., 6c,f; 7c,f; 11c,f). Second, it does not account for the pied piping difficulties in doubly transitive PPVs because these cannot be easily analyzed as containing a complex particle, since the p-words are separated by the first object.

Thus, it seems that the p-word string in a monotransitive PPV cannot be analyzed as a complex particle, but must instead be analyzed as a sequence of particle and preposition. What, then, causes the pied piping difficulties with the prepositions seen above?

5. Pied Piping and the Argumenthood of Prepositions

In fact, it appears that a prepositional phrase (henceforth, PP) in a monotransitive PPV may be either an adjunct or an argument of the verb and that the extent to which the PP is an argument of the verb is inversely correlated with how easily the preposition may be pied piped. The more argument-like the PP, the less easily the preposition may be pied piped; conversely, the more adjunct-like the PP, the more easily the preposition may be pied piped. If one uses the ease with which the PP may be dropped as an index of its adjuncthood, then the above correlation can be rephrased as the PP-Drop Pied Piping Generalization:

- (14) PP-Drop Pied Piping Generalization

The more easily a PP drops, the more easily the preposition may be pied piped.

Intuitively, this generalization makes sense in that it might be expected that a more argument-like preposition would be more averse to being separated from the verb that it is an argument of. The PP-Drop Pied Piping Generalization accounts for all of the monotransitive and doubly transitive PPVs above. In (6), the PP *to the pressure* may be dropped, and consequently, the preposition may be pied piped. In (7), the PP *to many people* cannot be dropped, and so the preposition may not be pied piped. In (8), the PP *from Sergei* may be dropped, and the preposition may be pied piped. In (9) and (10), the PPs *to experience* and *to her advisor* cannot be dropped; thus,

⁶ Other prepositions—such as *into*, *within*, and *throughout*, which consist morphologically of two prepositions but are written as one word—seem to behave similarly as one unit.

the prepositions may not be pied piped. In (11), the PP *with his nagging* cannot be dropped; the preposition may not be pied piped. In (12), the PP *with his sister* may be dropped, and so the preposition may be pied piped. In (13), the PP *from out of the room* may also be dropped; the preposition may thus be pied piped.

Examples (15) and (16) behave similarly.

- (15) a. Julius **went along with** the plan.
 b. Julius **went along**.
 c. *Julius **went along** the plan **with**.
 d. Julius **went along with** it.
 e. *Julius **went along** it **with**.
 f. What did Julius **go along with**?
 g. **With** what did Julius **go along**?
 h. ***Along with** what did Julius **go**?
 i. This is the plan which Julius **went along with**.
 j. This is the plan **with** which Julius **went along**.
 k. *This is the plan **along with** which Julius **went**.
- (16) a. Ndidi **feels up to** the task.
 b. *Ndidi **feels up**.
 c. *Ndidi **feels up** the task **to**.
 d. Ndidi **feels up to** it.
 e. *Ndidi **feels up** it **to**.
 f. What does Ndidi **feel up to**?
 g. ***To** what does Ndidi **feel up**?
 h. ***Up to** what does Ndidi **feel**?
 i. This is the task which Ndidi **feels up to**.
 j. *This is the task **to** which Ndidi **feels up**.
 k. *This is the task **up to** which Ndidi **feels**.

In (15), the PP *with the plan* may be dropped (cf. 15b) and the preposition may be pied piped (cf. 15g,j), while in (16), the PP *to the task* may not be dropped (cf. 16b) and the preposition may not be pied piped (cf. 16g,j).

6. The PP-Drop Pied Piping Generalization and Single P-Words

The PP-Drop Pied Piping Generalization applies not only to monotransitive and doubly transitive PPVs, it also applies to classes of verbs that take only one p-word, as seen in the following examples.

- (17) a. Kentaro **went over** the fence.
 b. Kentaro **went**.
 c. *Kentaro **went** the fence **over**.
 d. Kentaro **went over** it.
 e. *Kentaro **went** it **over**.
 f. What did Kentaro **go over**?
 g. **Over** what did Kentaro **go**?
 h. This is the fence which Kentaro **went over**.
 i. This is the fence **over** which Kentaro **went**.

- (18) a. Kentaro **went over** the homework.
 b. *Kentaro **went**.
 c. *Kentaro **went** the homework **over**.
 d. Kentaro **went over** it.
 e. *Kentaro **went** it **over**.
 f. What did Kentaro **go over**?
 g. ***Over** what did Kentaro **go**?
 h. This is the homework which Kentaro **went over**.
 i. *This is the homework **over** which Kentaro **went**.

In both (17) and (18), the p-word appears to be a preposition: it cannot shift past a full noun object (cf. 17c, 18c) or pronominal object (cf. 17e, 18e). However, the grammaticality of pied piping differs between (17) and (18), and this difference correlates with the ability of the PP to be dropped. In (17), the PP may be dropped (cf. 17b) and the preposition may be pied piped (cf. 17g,i); however, in (18), the PP may not be dropped (cf. 18b) and the preposition may not be pied piped (cf. 18g,i).

The p-word diagnostics enumerated in §2 should then be qualified with respect to pied piping. Although the ability of a p-word to be pied piped suggests that it is a preposition, the inverse is not true: the inability of a p-word to be pied piped does not mean that it is not a preposition. Thus, the line of reasoning taken in §3 above to conclude that the initial p-words in (6) and (7) are particles instead of prepositions is invalid. These p-words, and all initial p-words in monotransitive PPVs more generally, may be concluded not to be prepositions for a different reason. While prepositions take objects by definition,⁷ these p-words do not take an object. Therefore, they cannot be prepositions and must instead be particles.

7. Conclusion

The PP-Drop Pied Piping Generalization accounts for when pied piping of a preposition is allowed with monotransitive and doubly transitive PPVs as well as with verbs taking a single PP. As the PP-Drop Pied Piping Generalization highlights the meaningfulness of argumenthood attached to a PP, these facts favor considering these verbs as “transitive” for a PP as opposed to a DP. In other words, the phrasal verb *look up* should be analyzed as selecting for a *to*-PP, as opposed to *look up to* selecting for a DP. This more effectively captures the pied piping facts, since it is only in the cases where the PP is not selected for by the verb that the preposition may be pied piped.

It should be noted that the PP-Drop Pied Piping Generalization has implications for pedagogical approaches to teaching these sorts of phrasal verbs. While second-language learners usually learn *look up to* as a verbal unit that takes an object, they need to learn, for example, that *look up* selects for a PP but that *find out* does not in order to learn when pied piping of a preposition is grammatical.

An interesting issue is raised in §4 regarding complex particles. Do complex particles exist? If so, do they behave just like simple particles? In addition, more questions arise from looking at passive formation, as most, but not all, of the PPVs in the examples above can be passivized (e.g., *The plan was gone along with* vs. **The task was felt up to*). Thus, it seems that there must be additional subcategories in Greenbaum’s (1996) typology of transitive and intransitive phrasal verbs to account for these facts. Are PPVs always transitive, or can they be intransitive as well? These are all questions left for future research.

⁷ In Minimalist terms, all lexical items having a category feature [P] also have a selectional feature [uD].

References

Gowers, Ernest. 1948. *Plain words: a guide to the use of English*. London: HMSO.

Greenbaum, Sidney. 1996. *The Oxford English Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford UP.