

Extension exercises

Chapter 7: Prepositions

Exploring English

Listen to a few minutes of someone speaking naturally (for example, not reading aloud or reciting a poem), and if possible record them so that you can repeat the listening. How clearly do they pronounce the prepositions? How easy or possible is it to recognise them on the basis of sound alone?

Researching how people use English

Devise a brief questionnaire to find out people's reactions to variant and/or non standard use of prepositions. Make a list of short phrases and read these aloud to four or five other proficient users of English. Ask them to respond immediately by saying 'normal', 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable'. The following is an example for you to use or adapt.

- (i) It's different to mine.
- (ii) We discussed about it a lot.
- (iii) It's similar with mine.
- (iv) We got off of the bus at the traffic lights.
- (v) I looked up the street.
- (vi) Who did you come with?

- 1 To what extent do the different people agree with each other?
- 2 Do they agree with you?
- 3 Do their opinions in any way conflict with what you teach?

If you have access to a corpus of English and a concordancing programme, you can also compare these responses to the data available in the corpus.

Course materials

Examine two or more coursebooks from the same series:

- 1 At what stage in the course do prepositions first appear? Is attention paid to them explicitly at this stage?
- 2 At what stage in the course are learners first required or asked to produce prepositions? Are the prepositions simply contained in larger units of language (for example, *I come from . . .* might be taught as a functional expression) or are they explained in their own right?
- 3 When verbs, adjectives or nouns are taught, is attention paid to prepositions which normally accompany them?