

MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS IN KENYAN ENGLISH: FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE DIFFICULTY IN CHOOSING THE “RIGHT” PREPOSITION

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The literature (mainly by Mwangi 2003 & 2004) on the use of English prepositions in Kenyan English has shown how these were used differently from Standard International English usage. The present study sought to find further evidence for this different usage. It did so by giving a written grammar task to a convenience sample composed of Form Two students of the St. Joseph Nyachenge Secondary School in the Gucha District of Kenya. The task focused on the use of just five prepositions: *in*, *at*, *on*, *over* and *during*. It required of the respondents to fill in blank spaces with the appropriate preposition, from a list of prepositions to choose from. The results indicate that three (*over*, *during* and *in*) of the five prepositions were highly misused, at a rate of more than 60%. Although it is not very clear from this study what the main sources of difficulty were for the respondents in choosing the right preposition, the following seem to be good candidates: for some prepositions (like *over*) it is the different nuances of meaning that seem to have mattered most; for others (like *in*), the key factors seem to have been the frequency of use of the noun phrase serving as the object of the preposition in question on the one hand and, on the other, the respondents' own perceived space dimensions of that noun phrase.

1. INTRODUCTION

The existing literature on the use of prepositions in Kenyan English has highlighted several respects in which this variety of English differs from Standard International English. Buregeya (2008), for instance, notes the following:

... Kenyan English differs from Standard International English in five respects: one, there are prepositions which Kenyan English hardly uses; two, there are those which it uses with meanings or in combinations which are not found in Standard International English (StdIntE); three, there are those that it uses in lieu of other, different prepositions in StdIntE; four, there are those it uses where no preposition is required in StdIntE; five, there are those it drops, while they are required in StdIntE. (p. 38)

The present study focuses only on Buregeya's third observation, namely the prepositions which Kenyan English uses "in lieu of other, different prepositions in StdIntE". Its aim is to see the extent to which certain prepositions, taken as a sample, are indeed misused one for the other.

Mwangi's (2003) book on the use of prepositions in Kenyan English is the study to start from if one is to carry out a detailed investigation into the use of specific prepositions in this variety of English. One of the claims that the author makes is that

... the most frequent prepositions are also the most semantically versatile, making them more vulnerable to overuse (or misuse) through generalisation by Kenyan speakers of English. Such a speculation, however, can be confirmed after the analysis of individual prepositions. (p. 96)

She reports that "[t]he 10 most frequent prepositions in ICE-K and ICE-GB" are *of, in, to, for, on, with, at, by, from, and about* (pp. 95-6).¹

It would have been interesting to check Mwangi's "speculation" by testing all the ten prepositions indeed, but for methodological reasons related to the length of the test that was to be used to collect the data, we decided to test the use of just five prepositions: three (of the ten most frequent) prepositions which directly indicate location, namely *in, at, and on*, and another two, namely *over* and *during*. In relation to the former three, Mwangi (2003: 68-9) describes how in Standard International English they have different locational properties:

At is used for locations without dimensions, hence it indicates a mere point in relation to which something can be located as in example [a] below. ... *On* denotes physical contact between the object being located and its reference point. The reference point is therefore viewed as a one-dimensional space (a line) as in [b], or two-dimensional space (a surface) as in [c]. *In* is used when a location is viewed as three-dimensional as in [d], but it can also be used for two-dimensional locations as in [e]. It denotes the enclosure of an entity in a surface or a volume.

[a] Please note that we will continue to offer guests 15% discount on normal Published Rates *at Serena Beach Hotel*....

[b] ... There were traffic lights *on the road*. ...

¹ ICE-K stands for "International Corpus of English-Kenya", while ICE-GB stands for "International Corpus of English-British component". Mwangi's (2003) study is based on data drawn from three main sub-corpora of the International Corpus of English (ICE). The third sub-corpus is the ICE-EA, for "International Corpus of English-East Africa component".

[c ... [I] realised that the chips *on the tray* had been scooped off. ...

[d] ... For example, when *in court*, someone talks differently [from] someone who is *in church*.

[e] [The project] will be very helpful to farmers *in the field*.

One must admit that the different nuances in dimensional properties of the three prepositions will not always be clear to the majority of non-native speakers of English.

With regard to the preposition *over*, it was chosen because it is a potentially difficult one to master if we go by Mwangi's (2003) observation that "a total of 40 different senses are given for *over* in the [Collins Cobuild Dictionary, 1987]", senses that can be "grouped into broader semantic categories, which total 13 in number as shown in table 16" (p. 147). Forty different senses would definitely be too many for a second language learner of English, even if, as Mwangi further notes, "these senses are all related to a central meaning" (ibid.). In this respect, she quotes Lakoff (1987: 417) as explaining that "the spatial sense is generally taken as the more central sense" (ibid.). As for the preposition *during*, it was included because Mwangi (2003: 157) reports that in Kenyan English (KenE) it is often used, to express duration, where *over* would be used in British English (BrE), as in *What are you doing during Christmas* (KenE) vs. *What are you doing over Christmas* (BrE).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. The respondents

The research was carried out at the St. Joseph Nyachenge Secondary School in the Gucha District of Kenya. The choice of this school was based on convenience sampling since this is the institution where one of the authors was teaching prior to pursuing her postgraduate studies. So, she would be easily assisted in the data collection process. The class from which the sample of respondents was selected comprised forty students in total (twenty-three girls and seventeen boys). From the forty, thirty respondents (sixteen girls

and fourteen boys) were selected randomly.

2.2. The questionnaire

The use of the five prepositions was tested using a questionnaire that asked the respondents to fill in the blank spaces with suitable prepositions. They were required to choose from the following prepositions: *on*, *in*, *at*, *over*, *during*, *for*, and *since*. Since the first five prepositions were the focus of the study, *for* and *since* were simply included as distractors and were actually not expected in any of the blank spaces. Below are the nineteen sentences that composed the questionnaire². The expected answers are indicated in brackets.

1. There are extra flights to London __ the winter. (**in**)
2. She has not changed much __ the years. (**over**)
3. They met __ Monday night and had dinner together. (**on**)
4. __ the fight for independence, men never stayed at home. (**during**)
5. He built up the business __ a period of ten years. (**over**)
6. I only saw her once __ my stay in Rome. (**during**)
7. Her mother found her lying __ the bed. (**on**)
8. __ the evening, she had to go back to her parents. (**in**)
9. They were asked to wear white blouses __ black shorts. (**over**)
10. I hope that your brief stay __ Kenya has been full of fun. (**in**)
11. When the match ended __ 3 p.m., we rushed home for a late lunch.
(**at**)
12. She wouldn't tell me what was wrong __ the phone. (**over**)
13. The group project being carried out by university students will greatly benefit farmers __ the field. (**in**)
14. The company offers travelling allowances on condition that you spend a weekend __ the Samburu Serena Lodge once a year. (**at**)
15. When the fashion show ended __ 11 p.m., the finalist sought audience with the reporters. (**at**)

² Initially we had planned to use twenty sentences. In the event, through some error, sentence 20 turned out to be exactly the same as sentence 2. So, the respondents' answers to sentence 20 were ignored in the final tally.

16. Committee members were not represented __ the entire meeting.
(during)
17. The newspaper __ the weekend reported that the rate of crime had increased three-fold in the last couple of months. (at)
18. Ben was surprised to learn that there were traffic lights __ the road.
(on)
19. Mary is quite interesting. When __ the office, she speaks and acts differently. (in)

Table 1 below shows how many times each of the five prepositions was targeted and in which sentences.

Table 1: Number of times each target preposition was tested and in which sentences

Preposition	No. of times it was tested	Tested in sentences
During	3	4, 6, 16
Over	4	2, 5, 9, 12
On	3	3, 7, 18
In	5	1, 8, 10, 13, 19
At	4	11, 14, 15, 17

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

The overall results are summarized in Table 2. But several detailed tables will be necessary for a clearer illustration of the main findings of the study.

Table 2: Frequency of correct uses of each of the five prepositions by all the respondents

Student	Over /4	During /3	In /5	At /4	On /3	Total /19	%
S1	1	0	1	3	2	7	36.8
S2	0	0	3	2	2	7	36.8
S3	0	1	2	2	3	8	42.1
S4	1	0	3	3	3	10	52.6

S5	0	1	1	3	2	7	36.8
S6	1	2	2	2	3	10	52.6
S7	2	1	1	2	3	9	47.4
S8	1	1	2	0	3	7	36.8
S9	1	2	1	2	2	8	42.1
S10	1	1	3	0	3	8	42.1
S11	1	1	1	1	2	6	31.6
S12	1	1	0	2	3	7	36.8
S13	0	0	1	2	2	5	26.3
S14	0	0	2	2	3	7	36.8
S15	0	0	2	3	2	7	36.8
S16	0	2	1	1	1	5	26.3
S17	0	0	4	2	2	8	42.1
S18	0	2	3	1	1	7	36.8
S19	1	1	0	2	3	7	36.8
S20	0	0	1	2	3	6	31.6
S21	1	0	2	1	2	6	31.6
S22	0	1	2	2	2	7	36.8
S23	0	1	2	2	2	7	36.8
S24	0	1	0	3	2	6	31.6
S25	1	0	1	3	2	7	36.8
S26	0	0	0	4	3	7	36.8
S27	1	2	2	0	3	8	42.1
S28	2	0	1	3	2	8	42.1
S29	0	1	1	2	3	7	36.8
S30	1	1	4	3	1	10	52.6
Misuses per preposition	17	23	49	60	70	219	38.4
Out of	120	90	150	120	90	570	
%	14.2	25.5	32.7	50	77.8		

4.2. Discussion

The figures in the bottom row of Table 2 indicate that for only one of the five prepositions did the respondents make the correct choice in more than 50% of the cases: that is the preposition *on*, which recorded the highest rate (of about 78%) of correct uses. It was to be used in the phrases *on Monday* (in sentence 3), *on the bed* (in sentence 7), and *on the road* (in sentence 18). The table also shows that the preposition *over* was the most difficult to choose, with a rate of about 14% of correct uses. We find this rather surprising because the phrases where it was expected, namely *over the years* (in sentence 2), *over a period of ten years* (in sentence 5), and *over the phone* (in sentence 12), seem to be “natural” collocations, in the sense that

we hear them often. The only one that does not is *to wear white blouses over black shorts* (in sentence 9). This made us want to know which prepositions had been wrongly used for *over* in which phrase. To this end, we drew a table (Table 3 below) showing us which prepositions were used by each one of the fifteen (that is, exactly half of the entire sample of thirty) respondents who could not score even a single correct use of *over* (out of the four expected).

Table 3: Prepositions used **instead of *over*** by the 15 students who scored 0 out of 4

	...over the years	...over a period of ten years	...over black shorts	...over the phone
S2	...with	...for	...with	...by
S3	...for	...for	...on	...for
S5	...since	...for	...during	...on
S13	...during	...in	...in	...in
S14	...for	...for	...for	...during
S15	...of	...in	...for	...in
S16	...for	...for	...in	...in
S17	...with	...for	...with	...by
S18	...for	...in	...in	...in
S20	...during	...in	...in	...in
S22	...for	...for	...in	...for
S23	...during	...for	...with	...that
S24	...since	...for	...in	...for
S26	...at	...on	...and	...where
S29	...for	...since	...on	...at

The first observation to make from Table 3 is that it was *for*, not *during*, that was the most misused for *over*: twenty (that is 33%) of all sixty misuses involved *for*. The second most misused preposition was *in*, which appeared fifteen times, that is, 25% of the sixty misuses. *During* appeared only five times (that is, four times less than *for*). So, Mwangi's (2003) suggestion, quoted earlier, that the preposition *during* tends to be often used for *over*, seems to apply just to the phrase *over Christmas*, but not to the notion of duration in general.

A further, and rather striking, although less significant, observation to make about Table 3 is the fact that some respondents (See S2, S17, S23 and S26) filled in some blanks not only with prepositions that were not among the

list of those they had been provided with, in particular *with*³, but also with non-prepositions, namely *and*, *that*, and *where*.

Now, to return to Table 2, the preposition *during* recorded the second lowest rate (only 25.5%) of correct uses. It was expected to appear in the phrases, *during the fight for independence* (in sentence 4), *during my stay in Rome* (in sentence 6), and *during the entire meeting* (in sentence 16). Table 4 below gives an idea of which prepositions were wrongly misused for *during*.

Table 4: Prepositions used instead of *during* by the 12 students who scored either 0 or only 1 out of 3

	...during the fight for independence	...during my stay in Rome	...during the entire meeting
S1	...on	...for	...for
S2	...for	...at	...in
S4	...on	...in	...by
S19	✓	...since	...for
S20	...since	...since	...for
S21	✓	...on	...on
S22	...since	...since	...over
S23	✓	...since	...by
S25	...since	...in	...in
S26	...at	...on	...at
S28	...for	...at	...at
S29	✓	...at	...at

Note: A ✓ has been used to mark a correct use.

Table 4 shows that in thirty-two (i.e. 89%) of the thirty-six responses from the twelve respondents (that is, a little over one third of the entire sample), other prepositions were wrongly used instead of *during*. But we cannot say that anyone of them was overwhelmingly misused for *during*: the prepositions *at* and *since* were the most misused, but they appeared only 7 times (i.e. 22% of the 32 misuses) each. They were followed by: *for* (6 times), *on* (5 times), *in* (4 times), and *by* (2 times), while *over* was used just once. So, for this particular sample of learners, there is apparently no preposition that seems to be the preferred one for *during*.

³ However, it is equally surprising that nobody used the preposition *with* in sentence 12 in the questionnaire, to come up with something like *She wouldn't tell me what was wrong with the phone*.

Table 2 further shows that the preposition *in*, testing both its temporal and locational uses, recorded the third lowest rate (32.7%) of correct uses. Table 5 below shows which prepositions were wrongly used for it by half of the total sample of respondents.

Table 5: Prepositions used **instead of *in*** by the 15 students who scored either 0 or only 1 out of 5

	...in the winter	...in the evening	...in Kenya	...in the field	...in the office
S1	...to	...during	/	...on	...since
S5	...on	...during	...at	/	...on
S7	...at	...at	/	...on	...at
S9	...during	...at	/	...at	...at
S11	...during	...at	/	...at	...at
S12	...at	...during	...at	...at	...since
S13	...during	...during	...at	...at	...since
S16	...during	...since	/	...at	...at
S19	...at	...during	...at	...at	...since
S20	...during	...at	/	...during	...at
S24	...during	...at	...over	...for	...at
S25	...during	...during	/	...at	...at
S26	...on	...at	...when	...on	...on
S28	...during	...during	/	...over	...at
S29	...at	...during	/	...at	...since

The first observation to make about Table 5 is that sixty-five (i.e. 87%) of the seventy-five answers from half of the entire sample are misuses of other prepositions for *in*. Thirty (i.e. 46%) of the sixty-five misuses were those of the preposition *at* for *in*: in eight (i.e. 27%) of the thirty respondents said **at the office*, instead of *in the office*, which, one would speculate, might have been inspired by the frequent phrase *at work*; in another eight they said **at the field*, instead of *in the field*, justification for which is less apparent.

Seventeen (i.e. 26%) of the sixty-five misuses were those of the preposition *during* for *in*: in eight of them the respondents said **during the evening*, instead of *in the evening*, while in another eight they said **during the winter*, instead of *in the winter*. Both misuses are understandable to the extent that both *winter* and *evening* indeed last for some ‘duration’⁴.

⁴ In the *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* (7th edition, 2005), meaning 5 of the preposition *in* is indeed ‘during a period of time’, as in: *in*

Seven of the sixty-five misuses were those of *on* for *in*, in the following phrases: **on the field* (3 times), **on the winter* (2 times) and **on the office* (2 times). Five were those of *since* for *in*. Interestingly, all of them were instances of the phrase **since the office*. Thus, the respondents produced the following strange construction: *Mary is quite interesting. *When during the office, she speaks and acts differently.*

Another interesting observation to make about Table 5 is that the only phrase whose preposition the respondents clearly had little difficulty in choosing is *in Kenya* (which was expected in the sentence *I hope that your stay in Kenya has been full of fun*). Actually, of the only ten correct answers produced by the fifteen respondents, nine are instances of *in Kenya*. One can speculate that this phrase is so frequently used in the English these learners are exposed to that it would hardly escape their attention.

The preceding three tables (3 to 5) focused on identifying which prepositions were wrongly used for the three most “difficult” prepositions for the respondents. But it would also be interesting to know which ones of the three that indicate location were easy or difficult to choose and the extent to which they were wrongly used for each other. This is what Table 6 below does.

Table 6: Wrong prepositions used **instead of in, on and at** in their locational meanings

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15
...in Kenya	✓	✓	✓	✓	...at	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	...at	✓	✓	✓
...in the field	...on	...at	...at	...for	✓	...at	...on	...for	...at	...for	...at	...at	...during	...over	✓
...in the office	...since	✓	✓	...was	...on	✓	...at	✓	...at	✓	...at	...since	...at	✓	X
...on the road	...at	...at	✓	✓	✓	...at	✓	✓	...over	✓	✓	✓	...in	✓	...over
...on the bed	✓	✓	✓	✓	...in	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
...at the ...Lodge	✓	...in	...in	✓	✓	...in	...since	...since	...in	...since	...in	...during	...in	✓	✓

Table 6 (contd.): Wrong prepositions used by the entire sample **instead of in, on and at** in their locational meanings

	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	S21	S22	S23	S24	S25	S26	S27	S28	S29	S30
...in Kenya	✓	✓	✓	...at	✓	✓	✓	✓	...over	✓	...when	✓	✓	✓	✓
...in the field	...at	...at	...at	...at	...during	...for	...over	✓	...for	...at	...on	...on	...over	at	✓
...in the office	...at	✓	...at	...since	...at	✓	✓	reach	...at	...at	X	...at	...at	since	✓
...on the road	...at	...at	...at	✓	...in	✓	...at	✓	✓	...at	✓	✓	...at	✓	over
...on the bed	...at	✓	...at	✓	✓	...in	✓	...in	...in	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	...in
...at the ...Lodge	...in	...in	...in	...during	...in	...for	...in	✓	✓	✓	✓	...since	✓	during	✓

As indicated in the leftmost column of Table 6, the phrases at issue here are the following six: *in Kenya* (see No. 10 in the questionnaire), *in the field* (see No. 13), *in the office* (see No. 19), *on the road* (see No. 18), *on the bed* (see No. 7), *at the Samburu Serena Lodge* (No. 14). This means that for the entire sample of thirty respondents, the table contains 180 answers.

Of the 180 answers, exactly ninety (i.e. 50%) of them are misuses. Thirty-seven (i.e. 41%) of the ninety misuses are those of the preposition *at* wrongly used for either *in* or *on*, which makes *at* the preferred location preposition of the three for this particular group of learners. This would seem to contradict Mwangi's (2004) observation that "In [Kenyan English] there is a tendency to iron out semantic distinctions denoted by the use of prepositions with, for example, *at* and *on* losing out in various contests to *in*" (pp. 28-9). In this study, it is the prepositions *in* and *on* which, instead, seem to have lost out to *at*, if one considers the fact that twelve (out of 30) respondents said **at the field*; eleven said **at the office*, nine said **at the road*, and three said **at Kenya*.

Eighteen (i.e. 21%) of the 180 answers are misuses of *in* for either *on* or *at*, with eleven of the eighteen being instances of **in the Samburu Serena Lodge* (instead of *at the Samburu Serena Lodge*). This makes *in* apparently the second preferred location preposition for the respondents. Several other prepositions were wrongly used for *in*, *on*, and *at*, but to a lesser extent: there were seven wrong uses of *over*, seven of *since*, six of *for*, five of *on*, and five of *during*⁵.

Turning now to the issue of how easy or difficult the choice of each one of the three prepositions was, the first observation to make is that Table 6 presents a mixed picture for the preposition *in*. This was at the same time the easiest and the most difficult to choose, depending on which noun phrase served as its object: in the case of the phrase *in Kenya*, it was correctly chosen in an overwhelming twenty-five (i.e. 83%) of the thirty possible uses, while in that of the phrase *in the field* it was correctly chosen only in four

⁵ Notice in passing that the table also contains words which are not prepositions, namely the verbs *was* and *reach* (used for the preposition *in* in the case of the phrase *in the office*) and the conjunction *when* (used also for *in*, but in the case of the phrase *in Kenya*), and two cases, represented by an X, where the respondents did not insert any word at all.

(i.e. 13%) of them, and in that of the phrase *in the office* it was correctly chosen only in ten (i.e. 33%). Clearly, it must have been the collocation of *in* and the proper noun *Kenya* that was familiar to the respondents, and not the preposition itself.

Of course, it may also be that the space dimensions of the noun *Kenya* were quite clear for the respondents, which does not seem to have been the case for the other nouns, *field* and *office*. By and large these two were not seen as two-dimensional locations, which, to refer back to the earlier quotation from Mwangi (2003), would require the use of *in*. Regarding *field*, nineteen (i.e. 63%) of the respondents seem to have viewed it either as a location without dimensions (twelve of them said **at the field*) or as a one-dimensional one (four said **on the field* and three said **over the field*). The other misuses for it were **for the field* and **during the field*. As for the noun *office*, eleven (i.e. 37%) of the respondents seem to have viewed it as a location without dimensions, since they chose to say **at the office*. Only one said **on the office*, while five said **since the office*.

Now, in relation to the preposition *at*, which was expected only in the phrase *at the Samburu Serena Lodge*, it was, overall, the second most difficult to choose: nineteen (i.e. 63%) of the thirty possible uses of it were misuses, with eleven (i.e. 37%) of them replacing *at* by *in*, to give the phrase **in the Samburu Serena Lodge*. It must be this type of location-indicating expression that led Mwangi (2003) to suggest that *at* was losing to *in*. (Note that this phrase was indeed adapted from a similar one used as an example in Mwangi, p. 68.) And indeed if we look at the noun *lodge* in terms of locational dimensions, it is two-dimensional, and not dimensionless, which would make it difficult to understand why *at*, and not *in*, should be the right preposition. Fitikides' (2000) justification for the use of *at* would be the following:

We use *at* when we're talking about an address, a public place or building ([e.g.] a bus stop, the Post Office, the library, etc.) and cases in which the location is irrelevant but what we do there is what matters ([e.g.] school, the dentist, dance class etc.)" (p. 84)

So, *at* in the case of *at the Samburu Serena Lodge* would be justified by

what we would be doing at that lodge, not the building itself.⁶

Finally, if figures for the overall correct uses (that is, by all the thirty respondents) of each one of the six locative phrases had been added in a column on the right hand side of the table, they would have indicated the following decreasing ranking: *in Kenya* (83% of correct uses), *on the bed* (77%), *on the road* (53%), *at the Samburu Serena Lodge* (37%), *in the office* (33%), and *in the field* (13%). If we ignore the apparently exceptional case of *in Kenya*, these percentages show that *on* was the easiest choice of all the three location-indicating prepositions. This seems to corroborate what is implicitly suggested (for Standard International English) in Fitikides (2000), where, under the heading “Prepositions often confused” (see p. 83), it is only *in* and *at* that are illustrated with to represent location prepositions that are often confused for each other.

5. CONCLUSION

The main observations made in this study are the following: of the five prepositions (*over*, *during*, *in*, *at* and *on*) targeted in this study, *over* and *during* were found to have been quite difficult for the respondents to choose, most likely because they are not, according to the literature, among the most frequent prepositions in English in general, and were thus least familiar to the sample of learners used in the study; overall, *on* was the easiest to choose; *at* was the most frequently chosen and, hence, the most misused for the other prepositions; *in* presented the most confusing picture, as it was at the same time the easiest to choose (in the phrase *in Kenya*) and the most difficult one (in the phrase *in the field*).

In terms of the respondents’ overall performance, it was quite low, with the mean being just 38% (as indicated in the bottom right hand corner of Table 2). One reason for this might be that prepositions will not have yet been mastered at the Form-Two level of education in Kenya. But such a statement obviously has to be qualified because the sample used was not

⁶ Such a subtle nuance can only add to the confusion if we bear in mind that we suggested that the phrase **at the office* was not the right choice in our sentence (19): *When in the office, Mary speaks and acts differently.*

chosen randomly. Another reason may have to do with the design of the task used, specifically with the inclusion of the distractor prepositions *for* and *since*: these two were largely, and wrongly, chosen for prepositions *over* and *during*, which, incidentally, turned out to be the two most misused in the study.

So, for further research on the use of prepositions in Kenyan English, improved tasks should be used to elicit the data and more advanced learners, those for whom the learning process could be said to have stabilized (not to say fossilized!), should form the sample of the study. And, of course, if the aim is to have a general picture, in the line of the research by Mwangi (2003 & 2004), more (than just five) prepositions need to be targeted. One good candidate to study would be the preposition *to*, which, from what various dictionaries suggest, is one of the prepositions (if not *the* one) that have the largest number of meanings. Further, since this study focused only on the prepositions which Kenyan English tends to use for different ones in Standard International English, there is plenty of room for research on this topic, research that would address the other aspects of the use of prepositions that seem to be characteristic of Kenyan English.

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