

FUNCTIONAL TRANSPOSITION OF ‘AROUND’ AND ‘ROUND’ IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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***Abstract.** The research studies the process of functional transposition of the lexical units ‘around’ and ‘round’, which function in English as both adverbs and prepositions. It is proved that the category of the adverb was the initial one and served as the basis for their functional transposition into the category of the preposition. It is hypothesized that, despite representing a range of common meanings and being characterized by a common morphological structure, ‘around’ and ‘round’ have followed different developmental pathways and their transpositional patterns are distinctive as well.*

***Keywords:** adverb, functional transposition, Middle English, Modern English, Old English, preposition*

1. Introduction

The theory of functional transposition is an absolutely novel interpretation of the interrelationship between lexical units that belong to the closed and the open or closed and closed word classes.

Functional transposition is defined as a diachronic-synchronic functional process and its outcome, which presupposes the ability of lexical units, by means of grammaticalization and lexicalization and without addition of any morphological and/or syntactical markers, to acquire and realize functions inherent to other word classes, and, in this way, remain within its original word class (Kovbasko 2022c: 63).

The concept that some lexical units can simultaneously belong to different parts of speech, i.e. “a linguistic sign can change its grammatical value and yet retain its semantic value by adopting the function of a lexical category (noun, verb, adjective, adverb) to which it did not previously belong” (Bally 1932: 116), is not new. Hence, much depends on the linguists’ views on the processes which represent such shifts. For instance, Sweet (1892: 38) stated that “in English, as in many other languages, we can often convert a word, that is, make it into another part of speech without any modification or addition, except, of course, the necessary change of inflection, etc.”, and made conversion the most recognizable process of functional shifts.

An attempt to redefine the conventional idea of conversion is offered by other scholars who assert that “the term ‘conversion’ is used by many linguists instead of transcategorization. We prefer transcategorization since it is more

transparent than conversion, which does not make clear that one is referring to the notion of category” (Ježek, Ramat 2009: 394). Their approach has found its proponents, however, the terms may slightly differ: e.g., *transcategorization* (Halliday, Matthiensen 1999; Ramat 2019), *transcategoriality* (Robert 2005; Hancil 2018), *recategorization* (Dubinsky, Williams 1995; Vea 2015).

Categorial shifts are also described under the terms of *translation* (Tesnière 1959), *derivation* (Kisselew et al. 2016), and *zero-derivation* (Arista 2019). They are also word-formation processes and, in any case, they take morphological and/or syntactic markers, even if they are zero markers (Sanders 1988: 165), which makes it easier to analyse inflectional languages or declinable words. Functional transposition, in its turn, focuses on the interrelationship between open and closed or closed and closed word classes, does not take into account lexical units that add any morphological and/or syntactic markers of the new category after transposition, and does not form any new words, but just makes transposed items function in new categories (Kovbasko 2022a, 2022b).

The current paper is an attempt to analyse the lexical units ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’, which have much in common in terms of etymology, morphology, and semantics, because they are a distinct example of functional transposition between the categories of the adverb (open word class) and the preposition (closed word class). My aim is to trace the process of functional transposition of ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’, which overlap semantically and display inner overlapping within the categories of the preposition and the adverb in Present-day English. It is hypothesized that, despite representing a range of common meanings and being characterized by a common morphological structure, ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’ have followed different developmental pathways and their transpositional patterns are distinctive as well. The study of the transpositional potential of these lexical units requires, firstly, the analysis of their historical semantics in order to track the emergence and development of each meaning individually, and, secondly, a diachronic corpus analysis of both lexical units.

2. Methodology

A classic periodization into Old, Middle, and Modern English (Hogg, Denison 2006), is completely inappropriate, due to the protracted gaps in-between the three key historical points. Therefore, the decision was taken to split up the periodization into 16 time spans, which could provide a thorough and substantial study on functional transposition (see Table 1 below).

#	Time span	#	Time span	#	Time span	#	Time span
1	–850	5	1150–1250	9	1500–1570	13	1780–1850
2	850–950	6	1250–1350	10	1570–1640	14	1850–1920
3	950–1050	7	1350–1420	11	1640–1710	15	1920–1990
4	1050–1150	8	1420–1500	12	1710–1780	16	1990–2020

Table 1. Key historical scopes of the English language in studying functional *transposition*

This periodization does not deny the traditional one, but represents it in a more detailed way. Old English (OE) consists of the first 4 historical scopes (850–

1150); Middle English (ME) includes the next 4 scopes (1150–1500); Modern English (ModE, 1500–2020) comprises the remaining 8 scopes, which are subdivided into Early Modern English (EModE, 1500–1710), Late Modern English (LModE, 1710–1920), and Present-day English (PDE, 1920–2020).

The extent of each scope is 70–100 years, which is explained by the need to balance the research and to succeed in corresponding to the traditional division. In order to collect more manuscripts and lexical units for further research, the first six historical scopes equal 100 years each. The other historical scopes range from 70 to 80 years, to balance them with the previous periods in terms of the number of manuscripts under study; they are fully adequate for the transpositional shifts to be institutionalized in the language. The last scope of PDE covers 30 years; however, the retrieved statistical data is more than enough for the analysis.

In order to study the phenomenon of functional transposition in the English language, the following corpora have been selected:

- The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts: Diachronic and Dialectal (HCET, - 850–1710), which covers the texts (c. 1.5 m words) from early OE to the end of EModE. The extracted texts have been analysed without resorting to any corpus software;

- The Corpus of Late Modern English Texts (CLMET), which represents written texts of the British English (c. 15 m words) from 1710 and up to 1920, has been analysed by means of the Lancsbox software;

- The Corpus of Historical American English (COHA), which is the largest structured corpus of historical English and contains over 475 m words, and The British National Corpus (BNC), which is a collection of 100 m words of British English from the late 20th and early 21st centuries; both represent PDE and provide statistical data, so there is no need to apply any corpus software;

- The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) has been analysed to retrieve additional examples, which may have been missed from the corpora analysis.

Therefore, a massive empirical basis, together with the elaborated periodization, provides a thorough and comprehensive review of functional transposition in the English language.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Functional semantics of ‘around’ in diachrony

3.1.1. The preposition ‘around’

In the beginning, the preposition ‘*around*’ represented locality, identifying the place or location (see 1), and the direction of movement (see 2):

- (1) Rewlers of rewmes around all þe erthe. (OED: *Langland, W.: The Vision of William concerning Piers Plowman iii. 264*)
- (2) A lambent flame arose, which gently spread Around his brows. (OED: *Dryden, J.: The Works of Virgil: Containing his Pastorals, Georgics, and Æneis*)

The institutionalization of the preposition ‘*around*’ intensified the development of locality and resulted in the new meaning, ‘*on all sides of, in all directions from*’, which was expressed both directly (see 3), and indirectly (see 4):

- (3) The Prospects around me. (OED: *Steele: The Spectator, №.118, 1*)
 (4) To pour the radiance of unclouded reason around the last struggles of dissolution. (OED: *Hallam, H.: View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages I: 496*)

Moreover, the metaphorization of locality caused the development of the meaning ‘*about, approximately*’, which showcased overlapping of locality and temporality, e.g.:

- (5) Presuming he was born around three o’clock in the afternoon, he is under Leo and the Sun. (OED: *N.Y. Mercury (Farmer)*)

The core meaning ‘*on or along the circuit*’, in combination with the deictic centre, stimulated the metaphorization of locality, which was represented by the preposition ‘*around*’, and propelled the formation of several new meanings: ‘*avoid, bypass*’ (see 6), and ‘*to waste time*’ (see 7):

- (6) ... you can’t get around the fact that this book was written not for a generation but for a media eager to snap up fresh-tasting morsels (BNC: *The Face: 1460*)
 (7) I just hang around the flat all day getting bored (BNC: *So Very English: 1821*)

Nevertheless, these meanings are not fully institutionalized, compared to those which directly represent locality.

3.1.2. The adverb ‘around’

The analysis of the diachronic semantics of ‘*around*’ testifies that the word existed and started functioning as an adverb. This is quite obvious, if we take into account the morphological structure of this lexical unit, which merges the preposition ‘*a*’ and the noun ‘*round*’ into the expression ‘*in (a/the) round*’. Moreover, since the 19th century, it has been speculated that such constructions served as the basis for the adverbs “the chief use of which is to shorten discourse, by expressing in one word what would otherwise require two or more” (Bullions 1859: 66). Therefore, the primary function of the adverb ‘*around*’ is to shorten the phrase ‘*in the round, in circumference; in a round, in a circle*’ and represent locality in discourse, e.g.:

- (8) They [i.e. the eggs] beon more feor aroun. (OED: *Kyng Alisaunder: 6603*)
 (9) Non was set at non ende, But alle a round, for alle were hende. (OED: *Manning, R.: The Story of England: 368*)

The examples and their time spans showcase that the adverb ‘*around*’ was transposed into the category of preposition on the basis of this meaning.

In the course of time, one may observe the development of locality in the meanings represented by the adverb ‘*around*’, for instance, its extension to ‘*on all sides, in every direction*’, e.g.:

- (10) ... *God, that made this world aronde*, (OED: *Sir Beves: 1373*)

The formation of the adverb ‘*around*’ and its further functional transposition into the preposition category did not give rise to any new meanings. On the other

hand, the above-mentioned meanings had been represented by the preposition and adverb ‘*about*’ since the early OE period, e.g.:

- (11) Gif friðgeard sy on hwæs lande abuton stan oððe treow oððe wille oððe swilces ænigge fleard, (HCET: *Anonymous: Laws (Eleventh Century): 819*)
- (12) & ealle ða steorran þe hire on fæste sind turniað onbutan mid hire. (HCET: *Aelfric: De Temporibus Anni: 348*)

Sentences (11) and (12) exemplify the use of the preposition and the adverb ‘*about*’ in the functions which were inherent to the preposition and adverb ‘*around*’ in the first stages of the ME period. So, the fact that the unit ‘*about*’ had appeared and became institutionalized several centuries earlier than the unit ‘*around*’ explains the extremely low frequency of the latter. The unit ‘*around*’ required over three centuries to reach the frequency level sufficient enough for it to be analysed. This is also explained by the fact that throughout the ME period, the unit ‘*about*’ acquired and institutionalized a number of functions, which shifted the focus and semantic directionality of the lexical unit. Due to these factors, ‘*around*’ managed to become institutionalized in the language and acquire additional meanings in ModE, e.g.:

- (13) Exercised and walked around with the officers in A.M. (OED: *Journal of the Rev. Ammi R. Robbins: 6*)
- (14) In looking around, the President had a right to select an officer who would honestly ... discharge his duty (OED: *The Congressional Globe: Containing the Debates and Proceedings ... of Congress: 492*)

In examples (13) and (14), one can observe how the adverb ‘*around*’ represents locality, with the meaning ‘*here and there, with no fixed direction; all about*’.

The research proves that nowadays the adverb ‘*around*’ continues acquiring the new metaphorized meanings of both locality, ‘*when someone is spending time not doing anything important*’ (15), and temporality, ‘*something that happened before or things that happen regularly*’ (16), and even of existence, ‘*existing*’ (17):

- (15) When you’ve botched a job a dozen times, you don’t hang around waiting to try one more time, you abandon it (BNC: *The Big Glass: 2886*)
- (16) We both like to joke around and play up (BNC: *Today: Sports Pages: 5730*)
- (17) They have been around since Egyptian times, which makes them one of our oldest decorating materials (BNC: *Do It Yourself Magazine: 760*)

These meanings have not been fully institutionalized yet, so it testifies that they are recent developments. However, the tendencies to a more extensive use of phrasal verbs, language economy, and metaphorization of speech suggest that these meanings will be institutionalized. Moreover, I presuppose that the unit ‘*around*’, which is currently developing, will acquire new locative and temporal meanings, as well as represent some other semes. To substantiate these presuppositions and trace the tendencies of the lexical unit development, it is necessary to conduct a diachronic corpus analysis of the preposition and adverb ‘*around*’.

3.2 Diachronic corpus analysis of ‘around’

The lexical unit ‘*around*’ appeared and was sporadically used in the first half of the ME period, but it became widespread only at the end of the EModE period. Due to this, the decision has been taken to analyse its development since the 16th century, i.e. after its quantitative institutionalization in the language.

The beginning of the EModE period is characterized by the revival of the lexical unit ‘*around*’, which had almost never been used before, e.g.:

(18) and at eche end of the front a round towr, (HCET: *Leland, J.: Itinerary: 591*)

(19) The fontaine, where they sat arounde. (OED: *Spenser, E.: The Shepheardes Calendar: June 60*)

At that time, the adverb ‘*around*’ had the meanings ‘*in the round, in circumference; in a round, in a circle*’ and ‘*on all sides, in every direction*’. The first meaning became the basis for the functional transposition of the adverb ‘*around*’ into the category of the preposition, which occurred in the mid ME period. So, over three centuries, the lexical unit ‘*around*’ did not reveal any significant semantic shifts, apart from the use of the adverb for rhyming couplets and lines (see (20) and (21)):

(20) All their heads around
With chaplets green of cerial-oak were crowned.
(OED: *Dryden, J.: The Flower & Leaf: 229*)

(21) Nor war or battle’s sound
Was heard the world around.
(OED: *Milton, J.: On the Morning of Christs Nativity iv*)

The tendencies changed in the early LModE period. First of all, the use of adverbs in verse rhyming lost its significance and, as a result, the frequency of the adverb ‘*around*’ decreased. A certain growth in the category of the preposition ‘*around*’ is observed due to the transposition of the meaning ‘*on all sides of, in all directions from*’ from the category of the adverb (see 22), the metaphorization of the existing meanings (see 23), and the development of temporal meanings (see 24):

(22) ... and at last she open’d her unwilling Eyes, and gaz’d around her, as if she had been in another World: (CLMET: *Chetwood, W.: The Voyages and Adventures of Captain Robert Boyle: 3601*)

(23) Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole, Spontaneous beauties all around advance, (CLMET: *Pope, A.: Moral Essays. Epistle IV. Of the Use of Riches: 67*)

(24) There are not the chances around these days as there were some years ago (CLMET: *So You Want to Be an Actor: 2156*)

The adverb ‘*around*’ continued its lexicalization, by actualizing the meaning of certain verbs in discourse, e.g.:

(25) Theophano looked around for a protector, (CLMET: *Gibbon, E.: The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire: 20581*)

In example (25), ‘*around*’ is generally interpreted as an adverbial particle. To my mind, it is an erroneous approach, as the so-called adverbial particles are nothing but grammaticalized adverbs or lexicalized prepositions, which are characterized by their own basic semantics and highlight or specify the meaning of the verb they are combined with. Whether these are grammaticalized adverbs or lexicalized prepositions depends on the primary and secondary etymology of the units (see the theory of etymological functionalism, Kovbasko 2022c). In the case of ‘*around*’, I argue that we face the process of grammaticalization of the adverb, which started its fossilization in combination with certain verbs. This point of view is supported by statistical data, as the frequency of the adverb has gradually been decreasing in favour of the adverbial particle. It means that the category of the adverb ‘*around*’ split into the adverb which continued its development, by acquiring new meanings and functions, and the adverb which fossilized in the role of a dependent constituent of phrasal verbs, being unable to acquire new meanings. To trace back this functional and semantic split in the category of the adverb ‘*around*’ throughout the ModE period, the statistics in Table 2 has been collected and displayed separately for the adverb ‘*around*’ and its grammaticalized counterpart – the adverbial particle ‘*around*’.

PoS		1500– 1570	1570– 1640	1640– 1710	1710– 1780	1780– 1850	1850– 1920	1920– 1990	1990– 2020
Pre P	Qnt.	1	21	39	236	862	989	114228	282022
	%	33.3	51.2	60	69.4	68%	65.4	54.4	49.6
Adv	Qnt.	2	20	26	53	162	145	6774	35100
	%	66.7	48.8	40	15.6	12.8	9.6	3.2	6.2
Adv Part	Qnt.	----	----	----	51	243	378	89149	250957
	%	----	----	----	15	19.2	25	42.4	44.2

Table 2. Correlation of ‘*around*’ as preposition, adverb, and adverbial particle in Modern English

It is worth stating that till the beginning of the 18th century, the lexical unit ‘*around*’ had been functioning rather sporadically, as only ten examples have been registered in the EModE texts under analysis. The statistics do not trace the predominance of any ‘*verb + around (adv)*’ construction, the frequency of which would showcase the use of ‘*around*’ as a constituent of phrasal verbs. In each case the lexical unit ‘*around*’ represented locality. In the early LModE period, the tendencies started changing and a number of new phrases combining ‘*around*’ and certain verbs, such as ‘*cast*’, ‘*flock*’, ‘*gaze*’, ‘*look*’, etc. (see 26), were formed. Later, the set of such verbs embraced other units, including ‘*breathe*’, ‘*close*’, ‘*gather*’ (see 27):

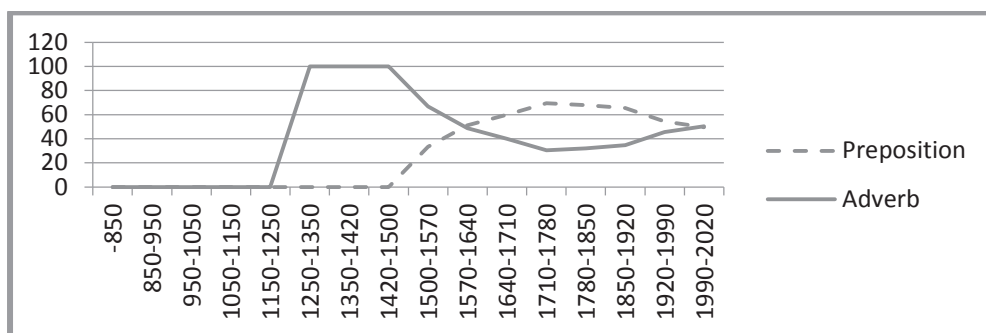
(26) ... there cast your eyes around, and view the number of the stars ... (CLMET: *Lennox, C.: The Lady’s Museum: 918*)

(27) Where each old poetic mountain Inspiration breathes around, (CLMET: *Cary, H. F.: Lives of English Poets: 390*)

The increase in the frequency of the constructions ‘*verb + around (adv)*’, where ‘*around*’ was used to specify the meaning of certain verbs, resulted in the

reduction of the use of the adverb ‘*around*’ in other constructions. According to the PDE statistics, the language is still characterized by an increase in the use of phrasal verbs, in which ‘*around*’ is one of the constituents. However, this happens not at the expense of the adverb ‘*around*’, the frequency of which has become stabilized and even has a tendency to grow, but at the expense of the preposition ‘*around*’, whose frequency is gradually decreasing. This is indicative of the moderate grammaticalization of the adverb ‘*around*’, which is losing the ability to form new meanings and is solely used to represent the already institutionalized or even fossilized meanings, aiming at modifying the meanings of the verbs they are used with.

The development of the unit ‘*around*’, its functional transposition into the categories of preposition and adverb are represented in Graph 1. It must be mentioned that the adverbial particles are graphically represented within the category of the adverb to which they belong. It is done so, because the adverbial particles do not make an independent part of speech and, in fact, they are either ordinary adverbs fossilized in combination with certain verbs or lexicalized prepositions, which have lost their prepositional complements, and have transposed into the category of the adverb. That is why, Graph 1 represents the statistics on the adverb and adverbial particle ‘*around*’ under one generalized term – adverb.



Graph 1. Functional transposition of ‘*around*’ in English

It is worth mentioning that the correlation between the adverb and the preposition ‘*around*’ came into focus in the EModE period, when their frequency achieved the level adequate for the statistical research. Nevertheless, the adverb ‘*around*’ appeared in the ME period, but, at that time, it was used extremely rarely. In the early EModE period, the frequency of the adverb ‘*around*’ grew and its transposition into the category of preposition started. Throughout the EModE period, the frequency of the preposition was steadily growing, reached its peak in the mid LModE period and then started its gradual decrease. However, the major change, which contributed to this, was the split of the adverb ‘*around*’ into a locative adverb and an adverbial particle. Due to this tendency, the adverb ‘*around*’ has generally regained its position as compared to the preposition ‘*around*’ (see Graph 1), but the number of the adverbs ‘*around*’ capable of acquiring new meanings has constantly decreased. That is why, the correlation between the adverb and the preposition ‘*around*’ in PDE equals 50.4% and 49.6% respectively; but almost 90% of all registered ‘*around*’ adverbs are fossilized and are used as constituents of phrasal verbs. These figures are in high contrast with those of

EModE, when adverbs acquired new meanings and were used as the units of locality. It means that the adverb ‘*around*’ has been losing its primary locative functions.

3.3. Functional semantics of ‘round’ in diachrony

3.3.1. The preposition ‘round’

The preposition ‘*round*’ started functioning in the ModE period and represented locality, with the meanings ‘*so as to encircle, or make the complete circuit of*’ and ‘*so as to include, traverse, visit, etc., in turn or successively; also, all about (a certain area)*’, showing movement and its direction:

(28) Full thirtie times hath Phœbus Cart gon round Neptunes salt Wash. (OED: *Shakespeare, W.: The Tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke: 165*)

(29) Anon wee’l drinke a Measure the Table round. (OED: *Shakespeare, W.: The Tragedie of Macbeth iii, iv: 12*)

Moreover, the preposition ‘*round*’ focused on the position of the object, with the meaning ‘*around; about; on the circuit or outer bounds of*’, e.g.:

(30) Put it round the brims of your plate. (OED: *Evelyn, J.: Sculptura; or, the History and Art of Chalcography and Engraving in Copper: 32*)

In the course of time, representation of locality by the preposition ‘*round*’ has developed and metaphorized, acquiring such meanings as ‘*throughout, all through; from beginning to end of*’ (see 31), ‘*in all (or various) directions from; on all sides of*’ (see 32), and ‘*so as to revolve about (a centre or axis)*’ (see 33):

(31) The King ... was often weary of time and did not know how to get round the day. (OED: *Burnet, G.: History of his Own Time I: 472*)

(32) When we come to look round us from the Ascent we have made. (OED: *Rogers: J.: Sermon Series 12: 347*)

(33) Venus, Her Motion round her own Axis [is performed] in 23 Hours. (OED: *Chambers, E.: Cyclopædia; or, an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences s.v.*)

The metaphorization of the sense of locality has additionally helped the preposition ‘*round*’ to acquire some temporal meaning. So, all these meanings formed the basis for further overlapping of the preposition with the adverb ‘*round*’.

Therefore, the core meanings of the preposition ‘*round*’ were initially of a locative nature and were formed in the first half of ModE. This contributed to their full institutionalization, unlike other meanings, for instance, ‘*of time: about; approximately*’, which appeared in the 20th century.

3.3.2. The adverb ‘round’

The adverb ‘*round*’ was formed in the ME period with the primary meaning ‘*of motion: with a circular course, so as to return again to the point of departure*’ and served as the basis for the transposed preposition ‘*round*’ as well as the adverb and preposition ‘*around*’, e.g.:

- (34) Al round it orn aboute is heued, ase it were a dyademe, And al-round þare-a-bouten it lay. (OED: *Becket, T.: Materials for the History of Thomas Becket: 167*)

This meaning proves that ‘round’ was not a derivative of the adjective *round*, but was formed in the language as the adverb, because the meanings which bring it closer to the adjective, for instance, ‘so as to form a ring or circle; so as to have a circular form or section’, appeared later:

- (35) His heer was by his erys ful round yshorn. (OED: *Chaucer, G.: The Canterbury Tales. Prologue: 589*)

In the ME period, the sense of locality metaphorized and ‘round’ started to function as an adverb of manner:

- (36) Lo, my toppe I dryve in same, – Se, it torneth rounde! (OED: *World and the Child. A Propre New Interlude of the Worlde and the Chylde, otherwyse Called Mundus & Infans: 79*)

Another basic adverbial meaning, ‘in every direction from a centre; on all sides’, was observed in ME, e.g.:

- (37) He will ... refe vs þe remys þat are rounde. (OED: *York Mysteries xxx: 165*)

Therefore, the functional semantics of the adverb ‘round’ in the ME period is focused solely on locality, which later became the basis for transposition into the category of the preposition and served as a key component for the lexical unit ‘around’.

In the ModE period, the representation of locality took the second place; however, a number of new meanings, viz. ‘from all sides; all over’, ‘through, throughout; from beginning to end’, ‘in the neighbourhood or vicinity’, were formed:

- (38) King Henrye frownd, and turned him rounde. (OED: *Barton, A. i. iii. in Percy, T.: Reliques of Ancient Egypt Poetry II: 177*)
- (39) The flowers of the acacia ... may be kept all the year round. (OED: *Chambers, E.: Cyclopædia; or, an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences s.v.*)

In sentence (38), the adverb ‘round’ is used in the meaning ‘in the opposite direction’ and sentence (39) is an example of the reversed transposition of ‘round’, as the adverb represents the meaning ‘through, throughout; from beginning to end’, which was formed within the category of the preposition. So, transposition between the classes was bidirectional.

3.4. Diachronic corpus analysis of ‘round’

The first examples of the lexical unit ‘round’ are registered in the early ME period and showcase its use as the adverb, e.g.:

- (40) In chirche whan I preche, I peyne me to haue an hauten speche; I rynge it oute as rounde as eny belle. (OED: *Chaucer, G.: The Canterbury Tales. Prologue: 3*)

- (41) For I am kyng and well knowen in these realmes rounde. (OED: *World and the Child. A Propre New Interlude of the Worlde and the Chylde, otherwyse Called Mundus & Infans: 5*)

Throughout the ME period, the use of ‘round’ as an adverb grew constantly; however, it was not enough to speak of its full institutionalization. It proves the hypothesis that non-institutionalized lexical units are not capable of functional transposition, or, in other words, in order to be transposed, the lexical unit must be fully institutionalized in the language.

The situation changed in the early EModE period, when the number of adverb ‘round’ uses was high enough for us to state that the category was institutionalized, e.g.:

- (42) And this shall cause the lande to lye rounde, whan it is sowen at the nexte tyme, and then shall it not drowne the corne. (HCET: *Fitzherbert, A.: The Boke of Husbandry: 136*)
- (43) Then came the Lewes rounde aboute him, and sayde vnto him: How longe dost thou make vs doute? (HCET: *Tyndale, W.: The New Testament (Tyndale): 729*)

As the process of institutionalization was completed at the next stage (1570–1640), it became possible to transpose the adverb ‘round’ into the class of preposition, e.g.:

- (44) ... for standing in a plaine field, or rather upon some high mountaine void of bushes and trees, and looking round about, you shall see your selfe inuironed ..., (HCET: *Blundevile, T.: A Briefe Description of the Tables of the Three Speciall Right Lines Belonging to a Circle: 281*)

The analysis of the category of the adverb ‘round’ illustrates the formation of the adverbial construction ‘round about’, whose frequency exceeds 20%.

The fact that the absolute majority of the primary meanings of the preposition ‘round’ were transposed during one stage supports the relevance of the category and explains the sharp increase in its frequency at the next stage (1640–1710) of the EModE period:

- (45) His shoes were clean, his money was in his pocket: but nothing was about his neck, and a mark was all round it, (HCET: *Burnet, G.: The Reign of Charles the Second: 538*)
- (46) ... a full inch above and below the head of the Stock, work it up round the Scion till it be sharp at the top, (HCET: *Langford, T.: Plain and Full Instructions to Raise All Sorts of Fruit-Trees That Prosper in England: 369*)

The adverb has followed the already determined tendencies and has been used (around 20%) as part of the construction ‘round about’ (see 47), and in combination with verbs, specifying new meanings (see 48):

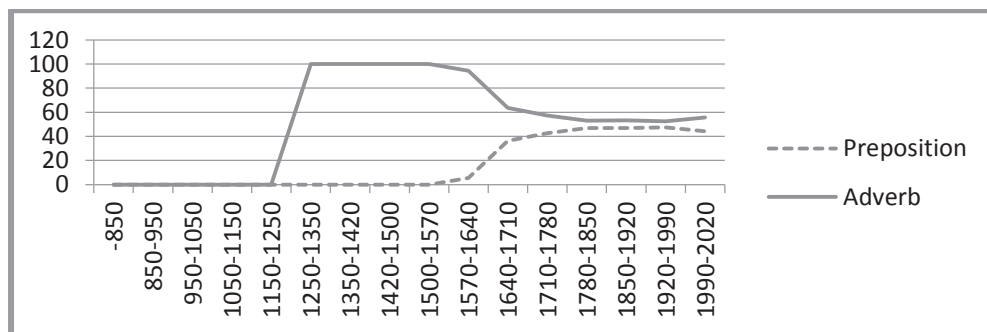
- (47) ... which should be divided into a paved Court to go round about the Schoole, (HCET: *Hoole, C.: A New Discovery of the Old Art of Teaching Schoole: 746*)
- (48) We came to the House, and beset the House round, some to the back Gate, and some to the fore Gate; (HCET: *Anonymous: The Trial of Lady Alice Lisle: 264*)

Nevertheless, the frequency of the preposition ‘*round*’ was growing and reached over 40 per cent in the early LModE period (see Table 3).

PoS		1500– 1570	1570– 1640	1640– 1710	1710– 1780	1780– 1850	1850– 1920	1920– 1990	1990– 2020
Pre P	Qnt.	0	2	16	20	39	64	5677	7563
	%	---	5.6	36.4	42.7	47	46.8	47.4	44.3
Adv	Qnt.	11	34	28	27	44	73	6311	9519
	%	100	94.4	63.6	57.3	53	53.2	52.6	55.7

Table 3. Correlation of ‘*round*’ as preposition and adverb in Modern English

The statistics in Table 3 illustrates that the functional transposition of the adverb ‘*round*’ into a preposition started in the middle of the EModE period and the transposed category developed rapidly. This is explained by the relevance of the transposed unit and by the fact that the majority of its meanings were transposed at the very beginning and during one stage. After this swift growth of the preposition use, the correlation between the categories was stabilized in the range of 42%–48% for the transposed lexical unit. The process of functional transposition of the lexical unit ‘*round*’ in the English language is represented in Graph 2.



Graph 2. Functional transposition of ‘*round*’ in English

The key points on the graph are the formation of the adverb ‘*round*’, which happened in the early ME period, its transposition that occurred 300 years later in the middle of the EModE period, and a rapid increase in frequency of the transposed category in the late EModE period. Since the early LModE period, the correlation between the categories has become rather stable; however, it is characterized by slight fluctuations.

4. Conclusion

My research hopefully proves that the relationships between the lexical units ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’, despite their morphological and semantic similarity, are rather complicated, as all their common factors derive from the transpositional processes that took place in ME.

First of all, both units were actualized as adverbs in the first half of the ME period (1250–1350) and, in fact, were not interwoven. The adverb ‘*round*’ was formed as the independent lexical unit and bore no relation to the adjective it is associated with, because the adjectival meaning appeared after the adverbial one. The adverb ‘*around*’ was a combination of the preposition ‘*a*’ and the noun ‘*round*’ forming the expression ‘*in (a/the) round*’. It means that ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’ started their developmental paths independently; however, initially, they both functioned as locative units and their semantics was identical. The reason which propelled the formation of two semantically identical adverbs was the inability of each item to institutionalize to the full extent. As a result, for almost 300 years they were coexisting in the language and became institutionalized only in the early ModE period. This assumption is additionally proved by the fact that both units were institutionalized in the same period (1500–1570), because the speakers were cognitively ready to perceive them as locative adverbs. This readiness also gave the start to the process of their functional transposition into the category of the preposition.

As, at that time, both adverbs functioned as synonymic locative units, the process of transposition revolved around the common sense of locality; nevertheless, this was the milestone in their further development, when their paths diverged but some interference was preserved. The adverb ‘*around*’ was the first to be transposed into a preposition, whose actualization and institutionalization in the language coincided and whose frequency, due to the cognitive readiness of the speakers, was high. At the same time, this influences the transpositional processes of the adverb ‘*round*’, because the speakers did not see the need for another preposition with the same meaning. It postponed the transposition of the adverb ‘*round*’ into a preposition for another period (1570–1640) and its institutionalization for the late EModE period (1640–1710). Since its institutionalization, the preposition ‘*round*’ has developed quite gradually and its frequency has fluctuated within a range of 5% for the last 300 years. The preposition ‘*around*’ was the first to be transposed and, naturally, showed a higher frequency rate, but when ‘*round*’ became institutionalized as a preposition, the use of the preposition ‘*around*’ started its decrease, which has been observed since the beginning of the LModE period. In PDE, the correlation between the initial and the transposed categories of both lexical units is described by self-regulation, which has been achieved over the last 500 years, and has resulted in an almost equal frequency rate – 49.6% and 44.3% for the prepositions ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’ and 50.4% and 55.7% for the adverbs, respectively.

Functional transposition is one of the two characteristic processes which describe the development of ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’. The other is the fossilization of the adverbs ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’, which led to the functional split in the category of each adverb into adverbs capable of acquiring new meanings and the so-called adverbial particles that modify certain verbs and together form phrasal verbs.

Therefore, the case of the lexical units ‘*around*’ and ‘*round*’ is one of the numerous instances of functional transposition between open and closed or closed and closed word classes.

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